

Periodical Review: Summary of Information from the Jihadi Forums

The First Half of December 2011

This report summarizes notable events discussed on Jihadi Web forums during the first half of December 2011. Following are the main points covered in the report:

- A new audio file by Ayman Al-Zawahiri is issued, in which he addresses the isolationist trends of the Egyptian Coptic Patriarch Pope Shenouda III, officially announces the death of Attiya Allah for the first time, and sets conditions for the release of an American hostage.
- Abu Yahya Al-Libi entreats Libyan revolutionaries not to lay down their arms, and to impose Shari'a [religious law] as national law.
- An audio file of Anwar Al-Awlaki's father is issued.
- Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb announces the kidnapping of five Western citizens.
- Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb tries to enlist the support of the Berber population in Algeria.
- The Taliban in Afghanistan publish new volumes of three magazines (*Al-Somood*, *In Fight*, and *Nawai Afghan Jihad*), which cover the jihadi arena in Afghanistan.
- Ibrahim Al-Rubaysh calls on Muslims to help the Sunni population of Dammaj, Yemen, who are besieged by Houthis.
- Increasingly, the discourse on jihadist Web forums is devoted to the release of Salafi Jihadist prisoners.

New Publications

Ideology

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Sahab published the eighth installment in a series of audio files titled, "A Message of Hope and Good Tidings to Our Brethren in Egypt" by Sheikh Ayman Al-Zawahiri.¹ Al-Zawahiri opens by saying that most of his comments will concern recent clashes between military forces and Copts in Egypt. However, he first wishes to express support for the Palestinian people and encourage them to continue their armed struggle against Israel until the liberation of all Palestinian lands. He extends blessings to Palestinian families on the release of their relatives from prisons in Israel in exchange for the release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, but stresses that the remainder of Palestinian prisoners will be freed through Jihad, and not through negotiation.

Al-Zawahiri then blesses all those who participated in, or were responsible for, the attack on the gas pipeline from Egypt to Israel. According to Al-Zawahiri, the continued piping of natural gas to Israel is an unforgivable transgression, initiated by Mubarak and carried on by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). He further claims that SCAF is insensitive to the desires of the people and is trying to impose its will on them. As an example, he cites SCAF's denunciation of the invasion of the Israeli Embassy in Cairo by an angry mob at the end of August 2011. Al-Zawahiri states emphatically that the revolution in Egypt has yet to attain its goals, which will be reached only when Egypt has become an Islamic state, free of outside influence and internal corruption.

Al-Zawahiri also mentions Sheikh Abu Abd Al-Rahman Attiya Allah Al-Libi, one Al-Qaeda's eminent ideologues. In late August, the media reported that Al-Libi was killed in a drone strike in Afghanistan. However, Al-Qaeda had yet to officially confirm the report, and in fact, contradictory reports swirled about that Al-Libi was still alive. It is in this audio file that Al-Zawahiri admits for the first time that Attiya Allah was indeed killed in Afghanistan on August 22, 2011 by an air-to-ground missile. Al-Zawahiri eulogizes Al-Libi, with a summary of his life story.

Al-Zawahiri then turns to the issue he initially said would be the focus of his talk: clashes between Copts and the military in Egypt. Al-Zawahiri says he is

¹ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

aware of the sensitivity of the issue, and insists that Al-Qaeda is not hostile toward Coptic Christians: "...we do not seek war with them, since we are engaged in a war against the greatest enemy of the Muslim nation [i.e. the US, the West and Israel – JWMG] and because they are our compatriots, with whom we wish to live in peace and stability in our homeland".

At the same time, Al-Zawahiri draws the attention of Egyptian Christians and Muslims to what he calls the "subversive acts" against Islam of Nazeer Gayed (Pope Shenouda III), the spiritual leader of the Copts in Egypt. According to Al-Zawahiri, since being anointed patriarch in the early 1970s, Gayed has tirelessly promulgated his belief that the Muslims invaded Egypt and should be evicted from it, as they were from Andalusia, with an independent country established in Egypt for Orthodox Copts, which he would head. Also according to Al-Zawahiri, Shenouda spreads biased propaganda about discrimination against, and oppression of, the Copts in Egypt, which he uses to recruit Copts in the Diaspora. Al-Zawahiri decries the alliance between the Copts and Hosni Mubarak, and sees Shenouda's establishment of churches without a license as yet another of his nefarious deeds. According to Al-Zawahiri, Shenouda pretends he is willing to accept democracy, yet instead does as he pleases, and would not respect any law or constitution based on Shari'a. Al-Zawahiri claims that Shenouda is now facing a serious problem: an increasing number of Egyptian Christians are drawing closer to Islam. As an example he cites Wafa Konstantin, a Coptic woman convert to Islam whom he claims was murdered by the Coptic church for having converted. He claims that her story was neither widely reported nor sufficiently investigated by human rights organizations. Al-Zawahiri warns the Christians that Nazeer Gayed is thus leading them to oblivion. At the same time, he clarifies that "Anyone who would translate my words into threats and explosions and assassinations, well, this is an outgrowth of media policy toward Al-Qaeda and the mujahideen in general. I am not threatening explosions and assassinations, but I am saying that Muslims must be wary...I am not calling for war in Egypt at this moment...the current war in Egypt is being fought for da'wa [proselytizing]."

Al-Zawahiri then briefly discusses the role of Al-Azhar, one of the most important Muslim institutions in the world. In Al-Zawahiri's opinion, the Mufti of Al-Azhar sins by collaborating with the evil regime (both Mubarak's regime

and SCAF). Al-Zawahiri believes the scholars of Al-Azhar must disengage from the regime and reinstate Al-Azhar's independence.

Another issue of importance to Al-Zawahiri is that of imprisoned Al-Qaeda and Taliban activists. He claims Al-Qaeda has not forgotten these prisoners, and is working for their release. To this end, in August 2011 Al-Qaeda kidnapped a Jewish US citizen named Warren Weinstein, a former clerk for USAID who had been living in Pakistan for the past five years. Al-Zawahiri reports that Al-Qaeda will free him if the following demands are met:

1. The border crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip is opened to goods and persons.
2. The US and its allies cease all forms of attack against Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia and the Gaza Strip.
3. Anyone arrested and accused of belonging to Al-Qaeda or the Taliban, even if he was extradited to another country – such as Sheikh Abu Musab Al-Suri, one of Al-Qaeda's most important strategists – and even if he is not a Muslim, must be released, and all charges against him dropped.
4. Sayyid Nosair and Ramzi Yousef, both implicated in the 1993 terrorist attack against the World Trade Center in New York, must be released.
5. Sheikh Umar Abd Al-Rahman must be released, and all charges against him dropped.
6. The relatives of Sheikh Ibn Laden must be released.
7. All women prisoners arrested on suspicion of belonging to Al-Qaeda or the Taliban, such as Afiya Sadiqi, must be released, and all charges against them dropped.

At the conclusion of these remarks, Al-Zawahiri clarifies the following three points, directed at the family of the hostage:

1. "The hostage will be treated with respect and will not be tortured, unlike the Muslim prisoners tortured in American prisons."
2. "...I warn you about the lies and manipulation of Obama, who wants to kill this man so as to be relieved of the burden of [t]his problem. Obama is a liar; he lied, is lying and will lie....he may tell you 'I sought to release your relative, but Al-Qaeda was rigid,' but don't believe him....He may tell you 'I tried to communicate with them but they didn't respond,' but don't believe him...he may tell you 'I'm using every effort to release your relative,' but don't believe him."

3. "...I assure you that your problem is not with us but with Obama. Our demands are fair: they seek release of our prisoners and an end to the aggression your government is practicing against us. So keep pressuring Obama if you want to see your relative again. Obama has the legitimacy, capability, and authority to release your relative...a simple signature from him...would solve the problem in seconds. Obama can [decide to] liberate your relative, or he can [decide to] keep him in prison for many years and – if he acts stupidly he could kill him...so keep pressuring [Obama] and do not [take your eyes off] him and do not believe his lies."



A banner listing Al-Qaeda's demands for the release of its American hostage, which appears on multiple jihadist Web forums

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Masada, which functions under the aegis of the jihadist Web forum Sumukh Al-Islam, published an article by Sheikh Abu Mariyyah Al-Shami titled, "The Unique Generation...A Generation of Work and Building a Collective". In it, Al-Shami stresses the importance of establishing a generation of believers who will promote Islam, keep the tenets of Shari'a, and fight Islam's enemies.²
- Dr. Nasser Al-Awlaki, the father of Anwar Al-Awlaki, published an audio file in English in which he criticizes what he calls the ceaseless political witch-hunt against his son, which culminated in the US' assassinating him for his da'wa [proselytizing] and teachings. Nasser Al-Awlaki also condemns the assassination of his 16-year-old grandson, Anwar's son, also in Yemen, and also by a US missile. According to Dr. Al-Awlaki the (grand)father, his son's blood was not spilled in vain, as his principles will continue to arouse growing sympathy.³

² <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

³ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).



The banner for the audio file released by Anwar Al-Awlaki's father

- The Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) published the fourth part of an article by Hasan Umar titled, "The War of Islam continues: An Islamic Perspective on Current Events – Thoughts on the Revolution in Egypt. A Warning to the Muslims against the Slogan 'Long Live the Crescent and the Cross'". In the Foreword, Umar insists that the article's purpose is neither to foment religious war nor encourage aggression against Christians, but rather to criticize the despicable use, particularly in Egypt, of the slogan "Long Live the Crescent and the Cross" – in the press, on signs, and at demonstrations. Umar claims it is absolutely forbidden – and has been since the dawn of Islam – to display or use the cross, as this is considered heresy.⁴



A banner prohibiting the display of the Christian cross and the Muslim crescent together

- A prominent member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida named 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda (lit. "Loves Al-Qaeda") posted a thread titled, "Conspiracies against the Revolution Are One Thing and Conspiracies of the Revolution Are Another". According to 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda, the Arab Spring is a natural response to the regimes' continuous oppression and tyranny against their people, and not the

⁴ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

result of a Western conspiracy. He claims that the West, and especially the US, have shown deep anxiety over their regional interests, which they have tried to preserve in various ways – for example, by initially supporting the Mubarak regime and then switching their allegiance to the revolutionaries. 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda nevertheless admits that the West is constantly involved in the region – promoting democratic rule, trying to win the hearts of the revolutionaries – always in an effort to protect its interests. 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda warns that capitulation to the dictates of the West and the agenda it is trying to impose must be avoided. Rather, the revolution must be used to the extent possible to promote Shari'a and establish the Islamic caliphate.⁵

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Sahab published a video clip by Abu Yahya Al-Libi, a senior leader of Al-Qaeda, titled, "What Is Intended for Libya?". In it, Al-Libi praises the Libyans for successfully overthrowing the Qaddafi family, which had ruled Libya for some 40 years. Now, Al-Libi says, the Libyan people must concentrate on establishing a regime in which Shari'a will reign supreme as the sole rule of law. Al-Libi warns the Libyan revolutionaries not to give up their arms, lest they be unable to cope with future threats and defend their religion, their money and their honor. He suggests that the 'ulamaa [scholars] and clergy take this opportunity to spread the word of God. Al-Libi exhorts the Libyan people, with dedication and determination, to prevent the meddling of the West, which wishes to protect its interests in the region, such as its access to Libya's oil.⁶

[ليبيا ماذا يتراد لها]

للشيخ المجاهد / أبي يحيى الليبي حفظه الله



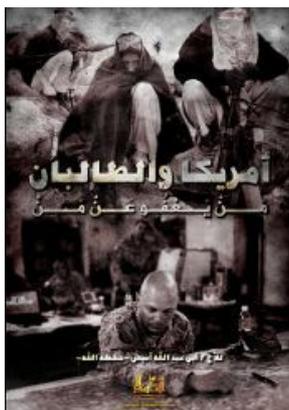
Abu Yahya Al-Libi preaches to the Libyans

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Masada published an article by Sheikh Abu Abdallah Anis titled "America and the Taliban...Who Will Grant Clemency to Whom?". Anis disdains a recently-published item, according to which the US intends to grant special clemency to Mawla Umar, a leader of the Afghani

⁵ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁶ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

Taliban, as a first step toward negotiations with the Taliban and a political agreement. Anis sees this as a joke, as irrefutable proof of the defeat of the US and its allies in Afghanistan. Moreover, it is proof to him of the inability of the US to win a decisive victory in Afghanistan, and constitutes recognition of the military prowess of the Taliban, whose might equals that of the Crusader forces and the Afghani Muslim forces that have joined them. According to Anis, "All of these forces together have not succeeded and will not succeed in overcoming the Taliban...this is causing them to make haste [to] find a peaceful solution" and establish good relations with the Taliban. Yet, Anis insists, this is a futile dream that will never come true. He claims the US continues to sink in the mire of Afghanistan, where it has sustained immense financial damage. It is thus clear to Anis that victory belongs to the Taliban, with US suffering a humiliating defeat.⁷



"America and the Taliban...", an insider's assessment of America's defeat in Afghanistan

- The Al-Maqreze Center for Historical Research, located in London and operating under the guidance of Sheikh Hani Al-Sibai, its director and an Egyptian exile, published a Friday sermon that addressed the martyrdom of Sheikh Attiya Allah. It also addressed the betrayal of the Pakistani government and army, with Shamsi Airfield hosting American drones that daily bomb innocent civilians in Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁸

⁷ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Adiyyat published a video clip titled, "Al-Qaeda and the Revolutions" in honor of Sheikh Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Al-Qaeda's current leader.⁹
- 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda (lit. "Loves Al-Qaeda"), a prominent member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida, posted a thread titled, "[Now] It's the Preachers' Turn". 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda claims that, when the tyrannical Arab regimes reigned, the laity was disaffected from the clergy, which was repressed by the government and arrested out of fear for the balance of power. As a consequence, the public was not sufficiently exposed to Islam. Now, however, since the outbreak of Arab revolutions and the toppling of several Arab regimes, the clergy have a golden opportunity to re-establish ties with the laity and disseminate the "true form of Islam". In light of this new reality, 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda advises the clergy to take certain steps, such as guiding people on the right path, committing multiple acts of charity, praising the mujahideen by disseminating their publications, remaining honest, and behaving with integrity. 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda insists that the clergy have an important role to play in the wake of the Arab revolutions, primarily in bringing the public closer to religion and Shari'a.¹⁰
- The jihadist media outlet Al-Fajr published an audio file titled "Lesson in Incitement to Jihad", by senior Al-Qaeda leader Sheikh Attiya Allah, who was assassinated in late August 2011. In the recording, Attiya Allah discusses the virtues of jihad, praises those who fulfill the commandment of jihad, and reminds his listeners that doing so is a religious legal obligation.¹¹

⁹ <http://www.atahadi.com/vb/> (Arabic).

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

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



"Lessons in Incitement to Jihad"

- The Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) published a book by "A Muslim Keen for Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad]", titled, "Chapters in the Shameful Deeds of the Secularists: Bilal Fadl, Satan's Herald [Muezzin]".¹²

Strategy

- A prominent contributor to the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida, 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda (lit. "Loves Al-Qaeda") posted a thread under the heading, "Should We [Sit and] Watch While Our Prisoners, Heroes, Are Executed?!!!! Voice Your Opinion of the Release of Our Prisoners from the Prisons of the Criminals". 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda expresses disappointment at the phlegmatic, passive reaction of the Muslim nation to the execution of Muslims by the Iraqi government. According to 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda, the Iraqi government, which is in league with the Americans and Shiites, won't balk at any means of stopping the Muslims in Iraq. He claims that the Islamic State of Iraq and Ansar Al-Islam are the only ones who have promised to free their brothers from Iraqi prisons, while the rest of the Muslims stand by idly. 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda reminds his readers that Allah commanded the Muslim nation to release Muslim prisoners – a pillar of jihadism. He therefore entreats Muslims to oppose the Iraqi government, and to kidnap the children of Iraqi leaders in Iraq and elsewhere as leverage for the release of prisoners. 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda concludes this thread by asking other members of the forum to suggest other ways of freeing the prisoners. In response, forum members made various suggestions, such as

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

sending car bombs into the prisons; using snipers and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) to eliminate prison guards and then having mujahideen physically storm the prison; collecting intelligence about prominent Iraqis in Iraq and the Diaspora, and disseminating it on jihadist Web forums to help the mujahideen kidnap or kill them.¹³

- Muawiyya Al-Qahtani, a member of the jihadist web forum Al-Fida, posted an announcement titled, "A Campaign to Assassinate the Staff of the Al-Arabiyya Network and Rip Off Their Putrid Heads". Al-Qahtani calls for the elimination of Al-Arabiyya employees, because of the television network's unjust propaganda against the mujahideen. To this end, Al-Qahtani posts a list of employees as targets for assassination.¹⁴

Guidebooks and Instruction Pamphlets

- A member of the jihadist Web forum Shumukh Al-Islam posted a detailed and illustrated explanation of how to board an airplane with explosive packages that can be used to blow up the plane. For example, the writer recommends organizing in small groups of several men each, who will board the plane under assumed names. He claims that in this way, they will be able to blow up airplanes over the Pacific Ocean, causing the deaths of 4,000 people and paralyzing international air travel.¹⁵



"Explosive packages to detonate the airplanes of the infidel"

- Another member of the jihadist Web forum Shumukh Al-Islam made several recommendations for preventing spying on mobile phones.¹⁶

¹³ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

¹⁴ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

¹⁶ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

- The English-language jihadist Web forum Ansar Al-Mujahideen published an article titled, "Jihady Groups/Lone Wolf: Strong Security Is of Great Importance 1", which advises the reader on maintaining security when establishing a jihad cell. For example, the article claims that, first and foremost, the mujaheed must know [and trust] his partners, for his own security.¹⁷
- The jihadist media outlet Al-Ansar, which functions under the aegis of the Salafi-Jihadist Ansar Al-Islam in Iraq, published a DVD titled, "Inexhaustible Weapons: Part Two", which details weapons development and manufacture by group members.¹⁸



"Inexhaustible Weapons: Part Two"

Promoting the Myth of Martyrdom

- In the wake of Ayman Al-Zawahiri's announcement of the death of senior Al-Qaeda leader Jamal Al-Masrati Attiya Allah in an American air strike on August 22, 2011, a large number of jihadist activists and entities expressed their condolences and offered eulogies in his memory: Al-Fida;¹⁹ the Abdallah Azzam Brigades (a Salafi-Jihadist group affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Al-Sham region);²⁰ the supreme leadership of the Salafi-Jihadist group Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen in Somalia;²¹ the Islamic State of Iraq;²² Salafi-Jihadist Sheikh Abu Saad Al-Amili, a very prominent contributor to jihadist Web

¹⁷ <http://ansar1.info/> (English and Arabic).

¹⁸ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

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

²¹ <http://www.as-ansar.com/vb/> (Arabic).

²² <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

forums;²³ and the Al-Maqreze Center for Historical Research in London, headed by Egyptian exile Hani Al-Sibai.²⁴

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Sahab published the third audio file in a series titled, "The Virtues of Martyrdom and the Miracles of the Martyrs" by Sheikh Harith Bin Ghazi Al-Nazari, also known as Muhammad Al-Murashidi.²⁵
- The jihadist media outlet Al-Furqan, which is affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq, published "Risen Alive 5", the next video clip in a series on "The Wills of the Martyrs".²⁶
- The Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) published an announcement regarding the "Martyrdom of One of Its Commanders and Knight of Knights", in which it announced the death of a senior member of Al-Qaeda named Abd Al-Mueed Bin Abd Al-Salam in Karachi, Pakistan, on November 18, 2011. The GIMF reported that Al-Salam had played an important role in the propaganda arm of Al-Qaeda, for which he set up and developed jihadist Web sites and forums in multiple languages. Al-Salam also helped establish the media outlet Al-Qadisiyyah, which translates materials into the most widely-spoken languages on the Indian subcontinent.²⁷
- Abu Al-Ayna Al-Khurasani, the monitor of the jihadist Web forum Shumukh Al-Islam, published a biography of a martyr named Talha Al-Maghrabi – the seventh in a series of biographies titled, "Memories".²⁸

Magazines

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan issued new volumes of jihadist magazines in Arabic, English and Urdu, which focus on jihad in Afghanistan: Volume 67 (December 2011) of *Al-Somood*, in Arabic;²⁹ volume 35 (October 2011) of the English-language magazine *In Fight*;³⁰ and a new volume in Urdu of *Nawai Afghan Jihad*, for December 2011.³¹

²³ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

²⁴ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

²⁵ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

²⁶ <http://atahadi.com/vb/> (Arabic).

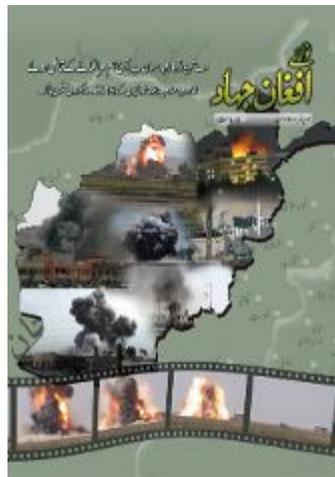
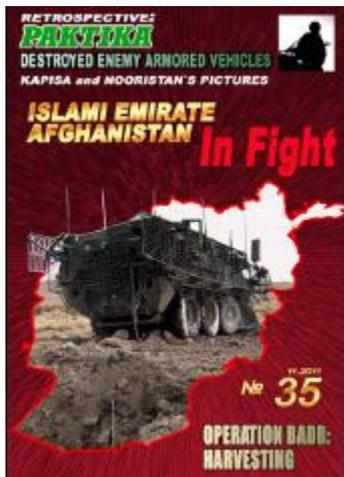
²⁷ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

²⁹ <http://atahadi.com/vb/> (Arabic).

³⁰ <http://www.ansar1.info/> (English and Arabic).

³¹ <http://www.ansar1.info/> (English and Arabic).



New volumes of, from left to right, *In Fight*, *Nawai Afghan Jihad*, and *Al-Somood*

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

- A member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida published a second report detailing terrorist attacks perpetrated by mujahideen in the Kabardino, Balkaria and Karachi regions in 2010-2011.³²
- Umar Media, which functions under the aegis of the Pakistani Taliban, published a video clip titled, "The Path of Truth".³³

Iraq

- The Islamic State of Iraq announced that it had carried out a wave of terrorist attacks, including (19) attempted assassinations of military and security personnel in southern Iraq. It also published a report documenting 22 additional terrorist attacks that it had carried out in the same region.³⁴
- A member of the jihadist Web forum Shumukh Al-Islam called on "sleepers cells in Europe, America and the Arab world" and mujahideen throughout the world to stop the Iraqi government from executing Abdallah Azzam Al-Qahtani, the senior member of the Islamic State of Iraq responsible for the organization's security. Al-Qahtani had served in the Saudi Ministry of the Interior until joining the mujahideen in Iraq in 2004. He was arrested in Iraq in 2010. According to the contributor, since Al-Qahtani was considered a

³² <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

³³ <http://ansar1.info/> (English and Arabic).

³⁴ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

"military-security genius", every effort must be made to free him. The contributor expressed his confidence that the mujahideen would succeed in perpetrating the terrorist attack(s) that would secure Al-Qahtani's release.³⁵



Abdallah Azzam Al-Qahtani, a "military-security treasure"

- The Islamic State of Iraq announced that it was embarking on a series of terrorist attacks in Iraq, planned by its Ministry of War, in retaliation for the execution of Muslim prisoners, to avenge the blood of Sunnis who died in Iraqi prisons, and to deter Shiites from continuing their crimes. The announcement claimed the attacks would begin in Basra and Al-Taji. And indeed, the Islamic State of Iraq attacked tens of police, army personnel, intelligence agents and security forces in Al-Basra. The Islamic State of Iraq also published a report detailing the (30) terrorist attacks it had carried out in the south of Iraq.³⁶

The Arabian Peninsula

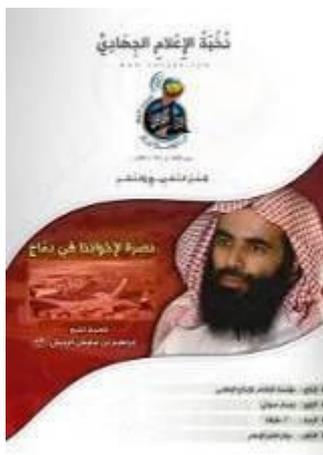
- The jihadist media outlet Al-Malahim, which functions under the aegis of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), published an audio file by Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Rubaysh, its spiritual ideologue, titled, "Helping Our Brethren in Dammaj".³⁷ In it, Al-Rubaysh discusses the siege imposed by the Houthis – a Shiite minority in Yemen supported by Iran – against the Sunni residents of Dammaj, Yemen. Given this state of emergency, Al-Rybaysh called on the

³⁵ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

³⁷ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

Sunnis to aid their brethren in Dammaj and declare jihad against the Houthis.³⁸



The lead-in to an audio recording by Ibraim Al-Rubyash

The Maghreb [North Africa]

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Andalus, which is affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb [AQIM], published an audio announcement in the Berber language by Mawlud Abu Hazim titled, "Message to Our Brothers from the Amazigh Tribes". In it Abu Hazim surveys the evils committed by the Algerian regime against Muslims – arrests, repression of Islam, bowing to French authority – particularly in Tizi Wazu, a city with a large Berber population. Consequently, Abu Hazim says, it is necessary to overthrow the Algerian regime.³⁹ This address in the Berber language represents AQIM's attempt to draw closer to the Berber population and recruit additional supporters from among the Berbers. It also signals AQIM's intention of increasing its armed activities against the Algerian regime.
- The jihadist media outlet Al-Andalus, affiliated with AQIM, published an announcement in which it took responsibility for "the abduction of two French spies and three Europeans [sic] in Mali". The two Frenchmen, Philippe Verdon and Serge Lazarevic, were abducted on November 24, 2011, in eastern Mali. According to AQIM, the two were working for French intelligence. The other three Westerners (from The Netherlands, Sweden, and South Africa) were

³⁸ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

³⁹ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

abducted on November 25, 2011 in Timbuktu, in eastern Mali. AQIM claimed it had carried out the abductions in response to incessant French attacks against Muslims in the coastal nations [of Africa] and Sarkozy's persistently stupid policy. AQIM added that it had chosen Mali as the site of the two abductions because that country had capitulated to French pressure to hunt down mujahideen and, for example, had conducted a joint military campaign with Mauritanian forces against mujahideen in Wagadou. Consequently, AQIM wished to send two messages:

- a. The first message, directed at the regime in Mali, was that its policy of attacking mujahideen and currying favor with France and Sarkozy is wrong-headed, illogical, and contradicts Shari'a [Islamic religious law], and can't be allowed to continue without a response. It would therefore be best for the government of Mali to abandon this policy.
- b. The second message, directed at French President Sarkozy, was that the hostages would be released if Sarkozy agreed to respond immediately, in the affirmative, to AQIM's demands. Otherwise, the hostages would be executed.⁴⁰



Western hostages being held by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

Al-Sham [Greater Syria]

- The Abdallah Azzam Brigades, a Salafi-Jihadist group affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Al-Sham region [the Levant], denied media reports that it was responsible for firing missiles into Israel on November 29, 2011. It announced that the missiles had been fired to serve the interests of Syria and its ally Hezbollah, and that an organization allied with Syria that had fired them.⁴¹

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

⁴¹ <http://66.225.155.72/~leyothin/vb/> (Arabic and French).

- A member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida asked the emir of the Islamic State of Iraq to help fight Bashar Al-Assad's Baath regime.⁴²
- Another member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida listed the names of 22 jihadists, some of them senior activists, who had been freed after having been arrested and imprisoned in the wake of clashes with security forces in the Jordanian city of Zarka in April 2011.⁴³
- The media outlet Riah, affiliated with Masadat Al-Mujahideen fi Filastin [The Lion's Den in Palestine], a Palestinian Salafi-Jihadist group, took responsibility for setting fire to a factory for the production of fertilizer and other chemicals, gas balloons and plastics in the Tulkarm Industrial Zone in Israel on December 9, 2011.⁴⁴

Africa

- A member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida quoted an item published by the Mauritanian Noukachott News Agency, according to which a Nigerian group known as Al-Qaeda in the Land Beyond the Sahel, affiliated with Al-Qaeda, published a video clip in which it took responsibility for abducting a British citizen named Christopher MacManus several months ago in the city of Abuja, Nigeria. The group announced its intention of executing MacManus if UK Prime Minister David Cameron did not meet its demands.⁴⁵



Charles MacManus, a British citizen kidnapped by a Nigerian group affiliated with Al-Qaeda

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Kataib, which functions under the aegis of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, published an announcement regarding the battle its members had waged against a Kenyan army encampment in Juba Province in

⁴² <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁴³ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁴⁴ <http://www.atahadi.com/vb/> (Arabic).

⁴⁵ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

Sudan. More than 80 Kenyan soldiers were killed in the battle, and guns and other weapons were plundered from ransacked army vehicles.⁴⁶

- A conference of Somali 'ulamaa [scholars], held under the auspices of the Shari'a Council of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, was attended by 85 Somali scholars, who called for waging an aggressive fight against the Crusaders and their allies – especially the Somali government of Sharif Sheikh Ahmad. According to the conference attendees, the Islamic regions of Somalia are [currently] under the control of the only legitimate ruler in Somalia: Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen. The conference was devoted to a discussion of the role of the 'ulamaa in defending Islam; the danger to Islam posed by [Christian] missionary organizations; the history of jihad in Somalia; and Ethiopia's aspirations in Somalia, among other topics. At the conclusion of the conference, the 'ulamaa made various recommendations, such as to change the name of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen to the "Islamic Emirate" of Somalia.⁴⁷
- Abu Hadifa Shatt Al-Arab, monitor of the "Voice of the Caucasus", also reported on the conference of Somali 'ulamaa, and posted photos from its closing session.⁴⁸ He also posted photographs from a party held to mark the opening of the "Library for the Revival of the Sunna of Muhammad" in Shabili Province in lower Somalia.⁴⁹



Photographs from a conference of Islamic scholars (left) and the opening of an Islamic library (right) in Somalia

- The jihadist media outlet Al-Kataib, which functions under the aegis of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, announced that Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen had ordered the destruction of spoiled food received from the International Committee of

⁴⁶ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁴⁷ <http://hanein.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁴⁸ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

the Red Cross (ICRC), which had been meant to feed 170,000 families affected by the recent drought in Somalia.⁵⁰

- Al-Kataib also announced that a suicide attack had been carried out against the headquarters of a military leadership in south Mogadishu, killing many officers and soldiers.⁵¹
- Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen agreed to meet the requests of families from Burundi for the names of Burundian soldiers killed in armed clashes in Mogadishu, the Somali capital. In an announcement to that effect, Al-Shabab stated: “Responding to the pleas of ten families in Burundi, attached here are the identity cards and a supplementary table detailing the full names, ranks, specialties, dates of birth, town, province, vital statistics, badge numbers, blood groups, and religious beliefs of the soldiers. Al-Shabaab Al Mujahideen also opens the doors of communication to all families in Burundi who suspect that their sons have been killed in Somalia and those willing to discover the fate of their missing soldiers. Families can file for a Missing Soldier Verification Request by forwarding the full name of the missing soldier to the War Statistics Office (WSO), quoting reference number BR/4539, no later than the 20th of December 2011.”⁵²



The identity papers of Burundian soldiers killed in Mogadishu, made available by Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen

The West and Elsewhere

- Jundullah Studio, a jihadist media outlet affiliated with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, published a video clip titled, “What Is Happening in the Tribal Areas 8”.⁵³

⁵⁰ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

⁵² <http://ansar1.info/> (English and Arabic).

⁵³ <http://ansar1.info/> (English and Arabic).

- Minbar Media Project published an announcement by Katibat Jund Al-Khilafa [Soldiers of the Caliphate Brigade], a Salafi-Jihadist organization active primarily in Afghanistan, most of whose members are of Kazakh origin. The announcement reported the deaths of five members of the Brigade's Zahir Baibars Battalion in an attack by Kazakh government forces on their hiding place in Boraldai village on December 3, 2011. The Soldiers of the Caliphate Brigade reported that not only could they not let this action go unanswered, but their determination to increase their attacks against the Kazakh government would be fueled by it. The Brigade further warned the Russian government to stop oppressing Muslims who wanted to free themselves from tyrannical regimes, such as in Syria. The Brigade also cited Russian oppression against the Kazakh people, and warned Russia to desist from its policy of oppression against [all] Muslim peoples, lest it bear the severe consequences.⁵⁴
- A member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida published new photographs of the Salafi-Jihadist Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines, along with a video clip documenting an ambush staged by the group against the Philippine Army in the vicinity of Basilian. thirteen Philippine soldiers were killed in the ambush.⁵⁵



From the video clip documenting the ambush of the Abu Sayyaf Group against the Philippine Army

Miscellaneous

- The Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) published an announcement titled, "Why General Clemency for Political Prisoners [Is Considered] a Legal

⁵⁴ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁵⁵ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

Demand [According to Shari'a]". The announcement concerned political prisoners in Egypt's Al-Akrab prison.⁵⁶

- The Technical Committee of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida asked the forum's members to participate in a contest to design banners on the topic, "The Wound of the Muslim Nation Reopened...The Tragedy Recurs", held from December 3-8, 2011. The winner of the first prize would be allowed to oversee the Web site's graphics and montage department for an entire month, and would also receive a special prize in person from the forum's administrators. The second-prize winner would be appointed general monitor of graphics and montage, and would also be awarded a special prize, in person, by the forum's administrators.⁵⁷



Announcing a contest to design banners for the Web forum Al-Fida

- A prominent contributor to the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida calling himself Asad Al-Jihad2 asked forum members to express their opinion regarding the changes anticipated, regionally and internationally, in the wake of the Arab revolutions. Asad Al-Jihad2 stipulated that the discussion was open to those inside and outside the jihadist movement.

The response to this thread was overwhelming, with forum members making various assumptions and predictions about the future of the region in general. For example, one forum member thought it was very possible that Tunisia, Libya and Egypt would unite as one nation, if the Muslim Brotherhood came to power in all three countries. Another member disagreed, claiming that these countries would continue to be divided among themselves, impeding any such

⁵⁶ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁵⁷ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

unification. Another member claimed that a new age would dawn, in which the clergy would be able to more freely preach the establishment of a caliphate. A prominent contributor named 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda (lit. "Loves Al-Qaeda") opined that, after the revolutions, people would listen in earnest to the voices of the mujahideen and the clergy and move closer to them. Similarly, they would be more willing to accept the idea of implementing Shari'a. Nevertheless, 'Ashiq Al-Qaeda believed it quite possible that Israel would initiate a war to slow down the Arab revolutions, and might even try to strike Iran, despite US warnings against doing so. Another member of the forum claimed that the Arab revolutions undoubtedly served Islam, and that da'wa [proselytizing] and propaganda should be intensified "on the ground" and on the Internet, for the benefit of Islam.⁵⁸

- Another member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida asked forum members to engage in a discussion of "the reasons why some of us write poorly [even when] an article is worthy of being read".⁵⁹
- Yet another member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida posted a thread in which he asked readers to commit suicide terrorist attacks in Pennsylvania, in the US. He claimed there is nothing to fear from security [checks] there.⁶⁰
- A member of the jihadist Web forum Al-Fida calling himself Al-Faruq Umar posted a thread that was very highly rated by the forum's administrators. Umar reported that what prompted him to post this thread was his feeling that the number of visitors to jihadist forums was declining significantly, and that discussion on the forums was circumscribed and shallow. Umar felt this issue should be raised with members of the forums, in an attempt to discover what had led to the decline in the propaganda activities on jihadist forums. He added that, after forum members had expressed their opinion on the matter, he would conduct a survey to help divine the main causes of this trend. Another member responded to this thread, stating his belief that it was possible the problem lay in people's preference for Facebook and Twitter. Another member raised the possibility that technical problems, which had recently plagued Shumukh Al-Islam, were to blame, although he did not know why there had been a decrease in the number of visitors to Al-Fida, which was functioning properly. Another member disagreed with everyone else,

⁵⁸ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁵⁹ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

⁶⁰ <http://www.alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

stating his belief that there was actually a continuing trend of increase in the number of visitors to the forum. He claimed it was possible that people preferred to surf one particular jihadist forum and ignore the others. Another member said that the reason might lie in the security risk that hovered over members of jihadist forums, leading people to prefer interfaces such as Facebook and Twitter. Another member disagreed that propaganda was now concentrated in Facebook and Twitter. He claimed that the decline was due to the topics of the threads posted on jihadist forums, some of which were not worthy of being posted at all, and therefore did not spur surfers to respond to them. He claimed that jihadist forum administrators bore responsibility for ranking the various threads. He also cited the large number of sections on any given jihadist forum as a main reason for the limited participation. He felt this could be changed if the forum monitors brought these sections to the attention of forum members. This contributor continued, writing that he knows of many young people who read the materials published on jihadist forums, save them, and follow news of the mujahideen – without participating in discussions, chats or threads. According to him, the jihadist Web forum Al-Hanein has added Twitter to its propaganda apparatus, using it to send updates from the forum itself. He claimed that jihadist forum administrators should weigh the inclusion of Twitter as an additional propaganda tool, one that could promote the forums themselves. Other members claimed that the Arab revolutions were the main cause of the trend of decline, as Web surfers were currently more involved “in the field”, in Syria and Yemen for example, than on the Internet, and that some had even joined the ranks of the mujahideen.⁶¹

- The jihadist Web forum Al-Tahadi heralded the opening of a thread in which forum members could recommend appointing other forum members to assist the forum’s monitor. The forum administration cited January 1, 2012, as the last date for submitting such recommendations.⁶²
- A member of the Shura Council of the jihadist Web forum Al-Tahadi, who goes by the moniker Izzat Al-Jihad, posted a thread titled, “If You Were the Administrator of Al-Tahadi, What Would You Do? (Express Your Opinion)”.

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

⁶² <http://www.atahadi.com/vb/> (Arabic).

Izzat Al-Jihad asked the other members of the forum to post ideas and advice on how to improve Al-Tahadi.⁶³

- Abu Al-Ayna Al-Khurasani, the monitor of the jihadist Web forum Shumukh Al-Islam, called on Muslims to help free Muslim prisoners in Iraq and promote relevant propaganda. He posted an audio file of a Saudi prisoner in an Iraqi prison, who told of the harsh conditions suffered by the prisoners and of the Iraqi government's plans to execute them.⁶⁴



The suffering of mujahideen imprisoned in Iraq

- The monitor of the jihadist Web forum Ansar Al-Mujahideen in Arabic published a selection of banners on jihadist topics, and displaying prominent past leaders of jihad, which had been designed by members of the forum.⁶⁵



From the selection of banners posted on Ansar Al-Mujahideen

- A member of the jihadist Web forum Shumukh Al-Islam posted a thread highly rated by forum administrators, in which he presented data on the preparation, implementation, and outcomes of the electronic propaganda war being waged by a group of forum members against Egyptian forums. According to this contributor, the goal of the "war" was to make Egyptians

⁶³ <http://www.atahadi.com/vb/> (Arabic).

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

⁶⁵ <http://ns1.as-ansar.com/vb/> (Arabic).

aware of the activities of the mujahideen and of various jihadist publications.⁶⁶

- The Hafidat Safiyya Workshop, a propaganda group appearing on jihadist Web forums, published a comprehensive anthology covering the issue of Muslim women prisoners, and the importance of freeing them everywhere in the world. The anthology also contains books on topics of faith, Tawhid [the Oneness of God], and jihad.⁶⁷



The DVD of the anthology issued by the Hafidat Safiyya Group

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

⁶⁷ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).