



**JWMSG Report**  
September 2019

## Highlights

The **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan** calls upon the citizens not to partake on the elections claiming they are nor legitimate and asks jihadists to disrupt the election process by attacking the security forces securing the elections. Later, the Emirate praised the citizens for cooperating with the above request and stressed that because of such cooperation the elections failed.

Sheikh **Ayman al-Zawahiri**, **al-Qaeda** leader, calls upon jihadists, Palestinians in particular, to concentrate their efforts on breaching the Israeli siege on Gaza and perpetrate attacks on Israeli targets worldwide such as attacking Israeli embassies. Similarly, he called upon attacks on targets associated with Israeli allies such as the UK, US, France and Russia. He also justified the 9-11 attacks and condemned the US and Iranian operations against the Sunnis and clarified that the US only understands forceful language as manifested on the ground in Afghanistan thanks to the Afghani Taliban that forced the US government to come to the negotiation table.

**Sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi**, the leader of **ISIS** praises the organization's members for their willingness to sacrifice their lives, being loyal to their leadership and the path it shows and for obeying Allah's way. Staying this course, he clarified, will lead to victory as promised by Allah. In addition, al-Baghdadi encouraged them to keep up with the propaganda efforts and the fighting and focus on liberating ISIS members and their family members who are Sunni prisoner as well as exact revenge on whomever had hand in their incarceration.

**Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimeen**, an umbrella organization for Salafi jihadists in Mali condemned the leaders of the Sakhil (G5) for cooperating with France. The organization warned the Burkina Faso government that continued cooperation with France will lead to further attacks in its territory.

**Sheikh Abu Ubaydah**, the leader of **al-Shabab al-Mujahidin**, the **al-Qaeda** extension in Somalia took pride in the growing number of attacks against the Somali regime and their recent success. Further, he praised the stability in the territories under his rule and clarified that his organization wishes to implement Sharia on the entire Somali territory, establish a khalifate, drive the Christians off Muslim lands and preserve the resources of the Islamic nation. In addition, he said that his organization will oppose any International Court decision bringing Somali control in the Indian Ocean to an end.

**Sheikh Abu al-Abed Ashdaa**, a former senior member of **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham**, fiercely criticized the organization's leadership and its leader **Abu Muhammad al-Julani**. He accused them of financial corruption and military and political errors that caused, inter alia, to the departure of hundreds of troops and a low state

of preparedness for the war with the Syrian military planning to invade Idlib. Sheikh **Abd al-Mouhseini**, a senior Salafi jihadist in Idlib joined Ashdaa's criticism and called the organization's members to depose al-Julani and appoint an honest leader in his stead. In response, senior ranking members of the organization accused Ashdaa of falsifying reality and expanding the rift and division within the organization.

ISIS fiercely criticizes in an al-Naba (its official publication) article the Nigerian (Christian) regime for persecuting Muslims in the country. In light of the above, ISIS threatened to the Nigerian government as well as other Christian regimes in western Africa that they would pay dearly for their crimes against Muslims. ISIS called upon its members in northern Nigeria to expand jihad to the entire Nigerian territory and the African Alliance member states' territories until they will convert to Islam and failing that live under Islamic rule pay taxes to Muslims.

**Abu Jandal al-Halili**, a senior **ISIS** member, advises ISIS leadership to reexamine its decision making process and speed up the discussion over the theological debates and dilemmas it faces and reach a solution quickly as having an unresolved dilemma weakens the troops morale and unity of ranks.

# Table of Contents

Highlights .....	2
Publications .....	6
Ideology .....	6
Publications by Al-Qaeda .....	6
Publications by the Islamic State .....	9
Strategy .....	13
Opinion Leaders in the Jihadist Discourse .....	14
Magazines .....	19
Reports from the Field .....	25
Afghanistan-Pakistan .....	25
The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan .....	25
ISIS in Pakistan .....	27
The Arabian Peninsula .....	27
Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) .....	27
ISIS .....	27
Humat al-Tawhid .....	27
Iraq .....	28
ISIS .....	28
Al-Sham [The Levant] .....	28
Syria .....	28
Hayat Tahrir al-Sham .....	28
Huras al-Din .....	31
Ansar al-Din Front .....	31
Ansar al-Tawhid .....	32
The Palestinian Immigrants in al-Sham .....	32
ISIS in Syria .....	32

The Gaza Strip-Sinai Peninsula.....	33
ISIS in the Sinai Peninsula .....	33
The Salafi Nation Army in Jerusalem (SNAJ) .....	35
Africa .....	40
Mali.....	40
Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen .....	40
Somalia .....	41
Al-Shabab-Al-Mujahideen .....	41
The Islamic State in Somalia .....	43
Nigeria .....	44
The Islamic State in West Africa .....	44
	44
The West.....	44

## Publications

### Ideology

#### [Publications by Al-Qaeda](#)

- **Al-Sahab** media outlet, an **al-Qaeda** platform posted the following:
  - A speech by **Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda leader**, titled “They Are Still Fighting You”. At the outset al-Zawahiri mentions that 18 years have elapsed since 9-11 attacks and still the US continues to expose its crusading Zionist aggression towards Muslims. He mentioned that by moving its embassy to Jerusalem and supporting the annexation of the Golan Heights the US revealed its true colors. Further, per Zawahiri many Zionist personalities were not Jews such as Napoleon, Balfour and Trump and “these Zionists are plotting against Muslims everywhere and will give their lives for Israel and therefore we must take the battle against them everywhere”. He called Palestinian jihadists to examine Palestine’s situation today “most of it is under Israeli sovereignty and the rest has been divided to the West Bank and Gaza. As to the West Bank, it is controlled by the Israeli intelligence and Gaza is under siege”. He stressed that Israel’s military operations in Gaza in response to missile launches by jihadists and the assistance Israeli receives from other states such as al-Sisi’s Egypt oppress and curb jihadists in Palestine. “Therefore, Muslims and mujahidin should break the siege and take the battle against Israel and the global crime forces everywhere”. He stressed that Israelis must be persecuted in all corners of the world but that must be done only according to Sharia and only if it would be beneficial as such modus operandi will serve to send a message that the jihad was carried out as a punishment for the Israelis crimes in Palestine and will “change the equation against the leaders of our enemies and inform them that they will have to answer [for their actions]”. Later, he called to Palestinian jihadists to focus on executing attacks against Israel and its allies among them the US, UK, France, Russia and other European countries all over the world the same way they are plotting against us. We have to drive them out of every place at time and place [we see fit]”. Further, per him the battle in Palestine is not an isolated campaign and it has to be regarded as a part of a global campaign led by the crusaders and Zionists against the Islamic nation. He blamed the US for supporting Israel and Muslim regimes such as Pakistan Libya and Egypt and for erecting bases across the middle east and Turkey. He added that since 9-11 attacks the enemies of Islam wish to hurt the real meaning of jihad and present it as terrorism and applying violence to innocents. Per him, the 9-11 planes were supposed to have crashed on the Pentagon and the White House and kill people who were involved in hurting Muslims and therefore they couldn’t have been innocents. He further stressed that as long as there are states who harm Muslim lives and invade Muslim countries they to be harmed and not just military targets. Among those states he counted the US, UK, France, Russia, India, China. He also called jihadists to attack Israeli embassies and other Israeli interests globally. He also blamed Iran for systematic attacks on Sunnis which is made possible due to a US-Israeli collusion. Per him, Iran is a US partner in the war in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. He added that the Iran sponsored Shiite militias fought ISIS and received US air support. In light of the above he said that US only understands force, much like what has happened in Afghanistan where it had to start negotiating with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in order to leave Afghanistan<sup>1</sup>.



Al-Zawahiri's speech

- **Al-Bayyan** media outlet (close with **Hurras al-Din**, the **al-Qaeda** extension in Syria) posted the following<sup>2</sup>:
  - An article titled “The Anniversary for the Flight of the Eagles” by a writer named **Adnan Hadid** to commemorate the 9-11 attacks. In the article the writer praised perpetrators and described them as heroes that dared to hit the heart of America. Per him, with these attacks those al-Qaeda shahids wished to instil a legacy of fight and jihad against the west and by that shape the future jihadi generations. Further, per him the number of jihadi theatres globally has risen and Muslims from four corners of the earth wish to emigrate them and join the battle. On another note, the writer condemned the Arab countries for their willingness to sacrifice the Palestinian and Jerusalem issues for the benefit of the Jews and by that bury the Palestinian problem and ignore the blood of all the shahids everywhere who bled for these causes. Per him, this was unacceptable, and jihad must be carried out everywhere<sup>3</sup>.



The cover page for “The Anniversary for the Flight of the Eagles” article

<sup>1</sup> 11.9.19. <https://emaad.net/ولايزالون-بقاتلونكم>

<sup>2</sup> <https://bayaan.info/archives/3541>. It should be noted that at the beginning of September al-Bayyan issued an apology for not posting new content on its web site and Telegram account since July 2019 and attributed that to technical difficulties.

<sup>3</sup> 11.9.19. <https://bayaan.info/archives/3569>

- An article titled “Continued Heroism and a Vision Proven Right” by a writer named **Jihad Salih**. In the article the writer praises the 9-11 attackers. Per him, for two decades the Taliban and al-Qaeda are fighting a fierce war against the crusading west headed by the US. He mentioned that under Pres. Trump the US has failed in its fighting and the proof is their negotiating with the Taliban in an attempt to end the fighting in Afghanistan. He added that even if Trumps reneges out of the peace talks, the Taliban victory is an undisputed fact and the negotiations just add a political color to it. Later, the writer mentions that examining the US-Muslim campaign over the past 18 years shows that the US has failed, and the mujahidin keep expanding. Further, the 9-11 attacks caused tremendous damage to the US economy that its impact is seen even today and has affected even the global economy. Further, the global power balance has shifted, and Russia and China are encroaching on traditional Us spheres of influence, especially in the middle east. Furthermore, he described the 9-11 attacks as genius al-Qaeda strategy that its fruits are bearing now in light of the decline of the US power. Per him, the Arab Spring revolts also contributed to the weakening of their respective regimes and caused many young people to join various jihadi theatres<sup>4</sup>.
- **Bayt al-Maqdis** media outlet, affiliated with jihadi Salafi school of thought in Gaza published an article titled “A Reminder to the Preacher and [the warrior] Jihadist”, by **Sheikh Sammy Bin Mahmoud al-Uraydi**, a senior member of **Hurras al-Din**, the **al-Qaeda** extension in Syria. The beginning of the article [MICHAEL – IN HEBREW YOU SAID THIS WAS A BOOK SO WHICH IS IT] included a preface by **Sheikh Abu Ubayda Yusuf al-Anabi**, a senior member of **al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)** and **Sheikh Nail Bin Ghazi**, a senior jihadi Salafi cleric in Gaza close with al-Qaeda circles. In the article Uraydi discusses what is the right code of conduct for preachers and jihadists according to Sharia<sup>5</sup>.

### [Publications by the Islamic State](#)

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<sup>4</sup> 11.9.19. <https://bavaan.info/archives/3580>

<sup>5</sup> 26.9.19 Telegram.

- Al-Furqan** media outlet, an ISIS affiliate, posted an audio clip titled “Say, They Did!” that contained a speech by **Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi**, ISIS’ leader. At the beginning of the speech al-Baghdadi said that Allah destined his followers to win over their enemies and whomever fulfils jihad will prevail. Later in the speech he praised ISIS operatives for their willingness to sacrifice their lives, their adherence to ISIS’ way, their progress towards their goals, their show of loyalty, their obedience to Allah and for the enemy’s failure to defeat them. He also praised ISIS activity against the enemy forces at the height of the khalifate’s power where it conducted battels on multiple fronts simultaneously, which is considered innovative in terms of modern-day jihad, and even after the loss of their Iraqi and Syrian strongholds. Per him, ISIS operatives not only proved their mettle but also managed to expand to new territories. Further, he called upon its operatives to keep their military and propaganda activities. Moreover, al-Baghdadi listed a number of issues for his people to pay attention to: (i) taking responsibility for disseminating god’s word and bringing people closer to Islam and Muhammad’s way; (ii) accepting any repenting Muslim and guiding him to the righteous way until he familiarizes himself with Islam and ISIS’ goals; (iii) trusting that Allah destined ISIS’ operatives to victorious despite the difficulties along the way “as the number [of our warriors] isn’t as theirs and our might isn’t as theirs [...]”; (iv) focusing efforts to liberate ISIS fighters and family members rotting in Shiite jails and the Muslim countries so that they can be saved from torture and humiliation as well as focusing on assisting the family members of said prisoners who reside in refugee camps. He further called to exact revenge on any person that had a hand in such incarceration including investigators and judges. It should be noted that al-Baghdadi’s speech included many quotes from the Quran and Hadith to provide religious legitimacy to ISIS as an organization and its modus operandi as well as to reinforce ISIS image as one that acts for and on behalf of the true Islam<sup>6</sup>.



Al-Baghdadi’s speech banner

<sup>6</sup> 16.9.19 Telegram

- **ISIS** continues the campaign titled “The Best Outcome is Reserved for Those Who Trust Allah” that launched at the end of June 2019. Within the campaign ISIS operatives, whether in its various official “provinces” or not, renewed their pledge of allegiance to al-Baghdadi. At the beginning of September 2019, the propaganda office of ISIS in Iraq posted a clip showing members pledging allegiance to al-Baghdadi. At the beginning of the clip, the representative for ISIS’s Iraqi extension condemned the US aggression in the region. Per him, for the past twenty years the west has fought on Iraqi soil but had to withdraw. He stressed that ISIS will be victorious, and that Allah is with the jihadists who will be patient until victory will be achieved<sup>7</sup>.



ISIS operatives in Iraq province pledge allegiance to al-Baghdadi

<sup>7</sup> 2.9.19. <https://pastethis.to/sY16f3UIG9OBFTv>

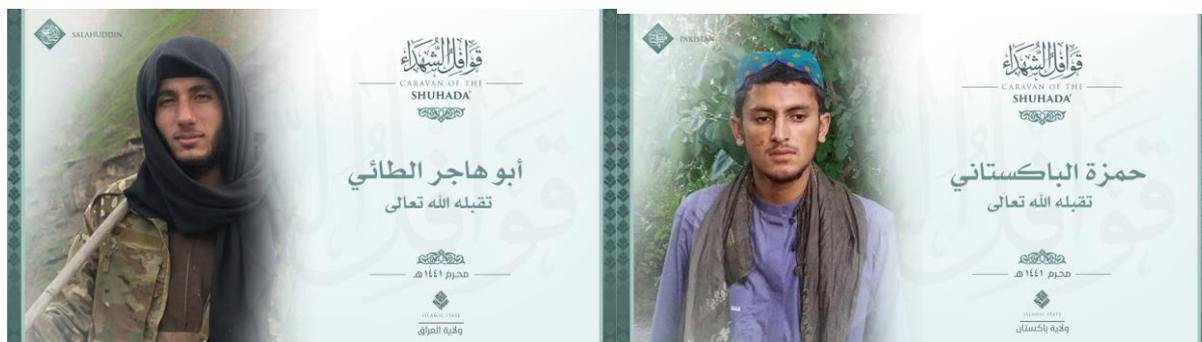
- **Al Turath al-Ilmi** media outlet, assisting ISIS with propaganda posted the following:
  - A booklet titled “Secret Advice Sent to the Emir and Governors of the Islamic State”, by **Abu Jandal al-Haili**, a senior ISIS member. Per al-Haili, the booklet contains a collection of advice sent in 2018 to al-Baghdadi and some of his governors in Syria in light of their defeat in this theatre. The advice has subtle criticism regarding the conduct of ISIS leadership and expresses concern for the unity of its ranks. For example, the writer advised al-Baghdadi, the governor of Syria and the Chief Qadi that it would benefit them to consult not only with the Shura council members (considered their confidants) but also with others, including ranks and file soldiers and women. He even sent a message to the magistrates in ISIS offense department that it is important to deliver a fair verdict in a trial and only after meticulous collection and review of the evidence, seeing witnesses, consulting with Shura members etc. Further, the writer clarified that one of ISIS’ weaknesses is the internal rift caused by judicial conflicts on various theological issues that need to be clarified and put to bed such as the absence of a formally recognized Shura council. He added that the role of the judges is to fix the leader’s conduct “as we are all in one boat” and silence in the face of misconduct among the leadership might bring calamity over the organization. Per the booklet, al-Haili was born in KSA in 1984 and worked as an Islamic studies teacher. He was arrested and spent six years in jail for his support of **Fatah al-Islam**, an **al-Qaeda** inspired Lebanese organization in 2006. Upon his release he was expelled from KSA. Later, he joined ISIS in Homs, Syria, to fight the Assad regime but following his injury in battle has been appointed to several roles, among which as a Qadi for the fighters in Syria, the Emir of the monitoring department and the Emir of the judiciary. Additionally, is among the writers for **al-Nasiha** Telegram account<sup>8</sup>.
- **Al-Wafa** media outlet, assisting with ISIS propaganda posted the following:
  - An article calling Muslims in Sudan to wake up and return to the right Islamic path. At the outset of the article the writer said that in July 2012 the Sudanese torched the German embassy and broke into the US and UK ones in response to the debut of an American movie that mocked Muhamad. Per the writer, this response proved that the Muslims in Sudan are protective of Allah’s teaching and Muhammad’s way however since then seven years have elapsed and there is a division in Sudan that stems from ignorance and breaking away from the right Islamic path. The writer, called upon the Sudanese to unite, open a jihad against the regime and establish an Islamic state.
- A Telegram account identified with **ISIS in the Philippines** posted an English booklet by **At-Tibyan** media outlet titled “The Islamic Ruling on the Permissibility Self Sacrificial Operations –Suicide or Martyrdom?”. The booklet justifies from a religious point of view suicide attacks against enemy forces<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> 9.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>9</sup> 9.9.19 Telegram.

- **Sarh al-Khilafa** media outlet, assisting with ISIS propaganda posted on its Telegram account a pamphlet on the importance of obeying the Emir/leader of the Muslims. It quoted a saying by Muhammad on the importance of pledging an allegiance to the leader to give it religious legitimacy<sup>10</sup>.
- A series of banners in memoriam of a few ISIS fighters killed as shahids while fighting the enemy as well as banners in memoriam of several operatives in Pakistan and Iraq<sup>11</sup>.



Right to left: Banners in memoriam of ISIS shahids in Pakistan and Iraq

## Strategy

- **Bayyan** media outlet, close with **Hurras al-Din**, the **al-Qaeda** extension in Syria posted an article titled “The Campaign in Hama: Why and How?” by **Adnan Hadid**. The writer discussed the threat to the rebels in northern Syria and suggested tools to contend with this threat. At the outset it said that for four months the Russian forces, Syrians and Shiite militias have been trying to eliminate Islamic presence in the western and northern Hama which has a considerable strategic importance all over Syria. Per the writer, this is an asymmetric war where the enemy has obvious superiority. Despite the Muslims wish to fight this enemy they have to contend with an organized and structure array. Later in the article the writer analyzes the geopolitical arena in connection to Hama and addresses the various fighting actors’ interaction such as the collaboration between Turkey and several jihadi factions. At the end of the article the writer proposes a few tools to contend with the increasing threat on Idlib. Thus he suggested to annihilate Alawi villages by artillery which will force the inhabitants to leave and will cause a reduction in farmland that provides food to the Assad regime; concentrating an effort to hit the Kurds who support Assad to widen the rift between them and the Turks; in light of the latest fighting in northern Syria - rallying and inciting the local residents against the Turks, Russian and Syrian forces; increasing awareness to the danger involved in opening a door for foreign forces to secure and safeguard territories under the rebels controls; forming special forces among jihadists that will specialize in targeting the enemy’s transportation routes and scaring the residents off these roads; making an efforts to hit Iranian

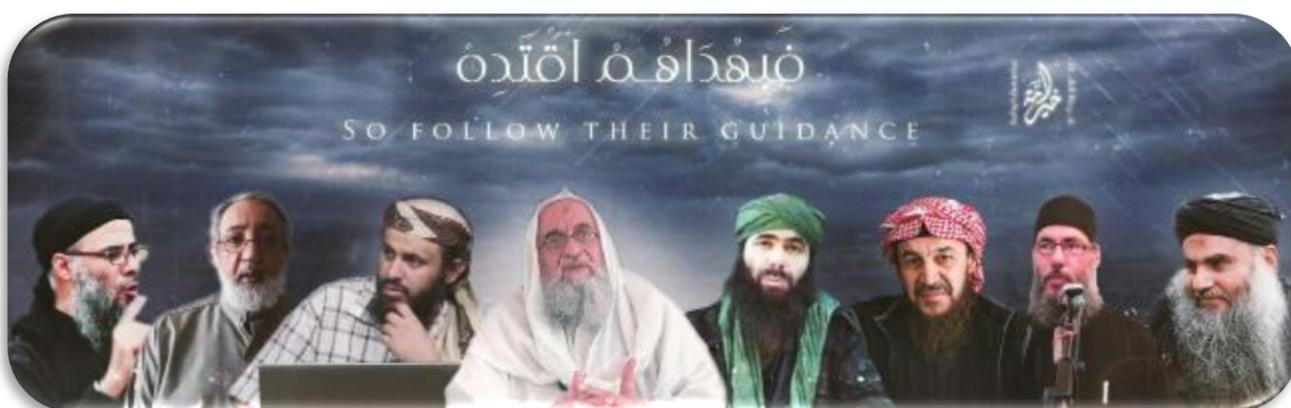
<sup>10</sup> 9.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>11</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

strongholds as well as Shiite mosques and holy sites, Iranian embassies and consulate (e.g. the Iranian consulate next to the university in Aleppo), assassinating the leaders of the Shiite communities settling in Syria such as the Afghan, Pakistani and Iraqi and launching artillery barrages against the settlement themselves<sup>12</sup>.

### Opinion Leaders in the Jihadist Discourse

This section deals with the statements of opinion of several clerics, military commanders and publicists affiliated with Salafi-jihadist terrorist organizations seeking to shape the jihadist discourse and influence thoughts and actions in the field. The statements and their publication received a large number of views among global jihad activists, hence their importance.



The photo shows prominent ideologues affiliated with Al-Qaeda, below the words: "Follow Their Guidance". The poster was published on social networks by the Khayr al-Umma media group, which is involved in media for Al-Qaeda

- Sheikh **Abu Qatada al-Filastini** published the following on his Telegram channel<sup>13</sup>:
  - Addressing the notion that the Taliban follows the Maturidi school of thought, per it some non-Muslims will be redeemed in the afterlife. Per him, as long as the fighting against the infidel rages on there is no place for this approach however it has its place in Sunni theology studies. He stresses that despite any such differences one must collaborate with the Taliban in jihad against the infidels.
  - Speedy recovery wishes to Sheikh Hani al-Sibai that had to cancel Friday's sermon due to an eye infection.
  - Stressing the importance of the faith in Allah as only it will lead to victory. Further, he called upon the fighters to either hold on until victory or die trying.
  - An article calling to hit commerce and economical centers in infidel countries. Per him, hitting the commerce and economy is part of an attrition strategy applicable when smaller groups want to tire a superior force.



<sup>12</sup> September 2019 Telegram

<sup>13</sup> Feb???????, 2019 Telegram

- A ruling on the importance of medical assistance during a jihad activity. Per him fighting and rendering medical assistance to jihad is as good as fighting itself.
- **Sheikh Hani al-Sibai**, a senior jihadi Salafi cleric identified with al-Qaeda posted the following<sup>14</sup>:
  - Videos of various Friday sermons he gave on issues like the hard time experienced by the Indian preacher **Zakir Naik** in light of India’s accusations that he was a racist and extremist; the death of **Sheikh Kamal Salam**, one of **Sayd Kutb** disciples; the reasons for Donald Trump to stop the peace talks with the Afghani Taliban; the missiles arsenal held by the Houthi and threatens the Saudis; the elections in Tunisia; the importance of rebelling against al-Sisi and more.
  - Al-Sibai’s supporters posted on a Telegram Channel they operate condemnation to Facebook and YouTube for removing al-Sibai content off their platforms. They called for the preservation of this content and its re-dissemination on other YouTube channels and other Facebook accounts. They also announced the launch of a new Facebook page for the Sheikh’s followers and well wishes for his eye infection.



Sheikh al-Sibai with one of his followers

- **Sheikh Tarik Abd al-Haleem**, close with **al-Qaeda**, posted the following<sup>15</sup>:
  - A call for another revolution in Egypt against al-Sisi’s regime to install an Islamic rule in Egypt. Per him, the revolution in Egypt did not yet end and needs to be continued. He stated that it was not enough to topple al-Sisi and there was a need to install an Islamic government that will take care of the Muslims well-being.
  - Accusing **Abu al-Fatah al-Farali**, a former senior member of **Hyat Tahrir al-sham** Shura council in perverting Muhammad’s teachings and criticized him for supporting **Abu Muhammad al-Julani**, its leader. Also accused him of straying from the righteous path.



<sup>14</sup> Feb???????, 2019 Telegram

<sup>15</sup> September 2019 Facebook

Al-Farali also criticized al-Julani for collaborating with the Turks. In another post he accused Erdogan, the Turkish president of collaborating with the west and his adherence to a secular rule.

- **Sheikh Abd al-Razzaq al-Mahdi**, close with **Hyat Tahrir al-Sham**, postings<sup>16</sup>:

- Clips documenting his tours in tunnels dug by Hyat Tahrir al-Sham operatives.
- Addressing jihadi leaders in Idlib to look at the Afghani Taliban as a role model in light of its success to maintain its power and regain ground despite the US efforts to break it. Per him, lately the US has declared that it was not successful in breaking the Taliban and came to the negotiation table. The situation on Syria is similar to the one in Afghanistan. For example, the government in Kabul is like the Assad regime and the US is akin to the Russians even though the former is considered stronger than the latter. In light of the above he asks “why has the Taliban defeat the conqueror and the collaborating Kabul regime but we haven’t beat the Russian conqueror and Bashar’s collaborating regime? This is a question for the Emirs and commanders to respond to”.
- Addressing jihadi factions’ leaders to initiate attacks against the enemy. Per him, the situation has become untenable considering the Russians audacity to hurt and expel civilians. He also warned of the enemy’s plan to take over highways and thus disconnect a large part of the liberated areas in Idlib from access to the roadways. He therefore called for the following actions: (i) open up several fronts against the enemy at the times and places deemed fit by jihadi leaders; (ii) augmenting the surprise attacks against the enemy in order to wear it down; (iii) initiate attacks deep behind enemy lines, in Damascus and Latakia, in a manner that that will weaken the regime and its allies, shake the sense of security and put fear in the enemy’s hearts.
- Correspondence praising the fulfilment of jihad accompanied by Hadiths of its importance.
- Addressing a reader’s question regarding the increasing Houthi threat in Yemen and the ways to handle it. Per the reader, the Houthi have gotten stronger and is evident by their taking over cities in Yemen, Sanaa included, and by attacking targets within KSA. Al-Mahdi responded that if the rulers of KSA are serious in their wishes to defeat the Houthi then they have, first and foremost, to repent and atone their sins including by stopping their debauchery and singing; second, they have to liberate all the clerics and preachers from the prisons, including Safar al-Hawali, Salman al-Awda, Sulayman al-Alwan and more, apologize to them and send them back to Yemen to head the campaign against the Houthi that will end with the killing of the last Houthi, the cleansing of Yemen from their filth and returning it to the Sunni.



<sup>16</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

- **Sheikh al-Mohseini**, a senior jihadi Salafi cleric in Idlib<sup>17</sup>:
  - Addressing the al-Khandak (The Trench) campaign, lunched in July 2019 by Hyat Tahrir al-Sham and Hurras al-Din<sup>18</sup>. For example, al-Mohseini mentioned that the campaign raised over \$10,000 in donations and the donor cam from all walks of Syrian life as well as some from immigrants in Turkey who have donated 15,000 Turkish Lira; he even shared a video showing excavation activity to show the donors how and where their monies were spent. Further, he posted videos calling Muslims to keep donating for the campaign and added that half a tunnel was dug, and four people died during its fortification.
  - Expressing solidarity with the protest of Idlib residents against **Mohammad al-Julani, the Hyat Tahrir al-Sham leader**, and their call for his resignation because of his brutality and his attempt to limit other jihadi factions in Idlib, that per the residents' claim weakens the force defending Idlib. He called upon the jihadi leaders to listen to the residents and replace al-Julani with an honest leader. He also said that even Muhammad removed military leaders that strayed. In response to the above, **Abu Maria al-Kahtani**, a senior Hyat Tahrir al-Sham cleric, defended al-Julani and demanded that al-Mohseini choose his words wisely. He accused al-Mohseini of opportunism and for attempting to piggyback on the wave of protest in order to increase the circle of his followers and mentioned that such criticism characterizes righteous hypocrites who wish to harm the jihad efforts against the enemy. Al-Mohseini responded that al-Kahtani was wrong when he protested his call to replace al-Julani. Sheikh Dr. **Mathar Alwys**, a senior Hyat Tahrir al-Sham Shura council member also criticized al-Mohseini and called him a wily fox wishing to rake in political profits<sup>19</sup>. Al-Mohseini responded that al-Kahtani manner of speech is inappropriate. He stressed that as of the beginning of the revolution in Syria the Syrians fought the corrupt and this is the case now as one must act against corrupt people who harm the revolution efforts and jihad.
  - A post condemning Hyat Tahrir al-Sham following the arrest of a journalist named **Ahmad al-Rahhal** who operated on behalf of Shabakat Durar al-Shamiyyah new agency writing on jihadists in Idlib. He said that arresting al-Rahhal was a huge mistake, infringement of freedom of speech and sending a negative message to all journalists. He called upon journalists globally to share that information and stress the severity of arresting journalists. He called upon the organization to release the journalist as he was mistakenly arrested, dedicated his job to cover jihadists and has good intentions. In fact, the reason for the arrest lies with the posting (on social media) of a clip showing **Sheikh Abu Abd al-Ashdaa**, a former senior Hyat Tahrir al-Sham member, fiercely criticizing al-Julani<sup>20</sup>.



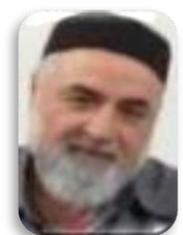
<sup>17</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

<sup>18</sup> The Trench campaign launched in July 2019 to “protect the Syrian revolution and fight the evil Russian campaign [...]” within the campaign funds were raised and the civilians in Idlib recruited to excavate tunnels and trenches to defend from the enemy invasion. For expansion see JWMG updates for July and August 2019 on ICT’s web site.

<sup>19</sup> 9.9.19. <https://amjad.media/>

<sup>20</sup> For expansion see pages 28-29 below

- A call to jihadi leaders in Idlib to maintain the unity of the ranks in light of a summit among the leaders of Iran, Turkey and Russia to find a solution to the civil war in Syria. Per al-Mohseini, the jihadi leaders should act to liberate prisoners from the regime’s prisons, reinforce their ranks and beef up their propaganda efforts.
- A call to his Telegram followers to enroll on his WhatsApp account to listen to a series of five lessons on Islam.
- Expressing support for the demonstrations in Egypt that called for the removal of al-Sisi. He called the demonstrators to keep demonstrating until the fall of al-Sisi that per him treats the Egyptians heavy handedly.
- **Sheikh Abu al-Fatah al-Farali**, the head of the Hyat Tahrir al-Sham Shura council<sup>21</sup>:
  - Praising the leadership of Hyat Tahrir al-Sham’s leader, Abu Muhammad al-Julani and his immense contribution to jihad in Syria. Per al-Farali there is no man more fit than al-Julani to lead the Syrian revolution.
  - A clip explaining the differences between Sharia rule, democracy and dictatorship. Per al-Farali, under Sharia there cannot be a single ruler as opposed to the other regimes.
  - Addressing the failed demonstrations against the mujahidin, al-Julani particularly.. per al-Farali, the failure attests to Syrians support of the mujahidin and especially their support of Hyat Tahrir al-Sham.
  - An address where Hyat Tahrir al-Sham called to join the following factions: Abu Bakr al-Siddiq army, Uthman bin Affan army, Umar bin al-Khattab army and Ali bin Abu Talib army.
  - Praising two young (less than 20 years old) Syrian soldier who have defected and joined the organization and managed to kill 15 Syrian soldiers.
  - Within the framework of the “Jihad in Your Soul” campaign - an invite to a first gathering in the liberated region in northern Syria under the title “Our Revolution Continues”. The invite further said that a raffle will be held among participants and the prizes will be three rifles and a Galaxy phone.
  - Review of the events in Egypt since the 2011 revolution and stressing the continuance of jihadi activity in Egypt.
  - A series of clips reviewing the history of the modern-day jihad movement and commentary on the fourth generation of jihadists in Syria<sup>22</sup>.
- **Abu Basir al-Tartusi**, a Syrian Salafi jihadist cleric posted the following<sup>23</sup>:
  - An open letter to Boris Johnson, the British Premier where al-Tartusi criticizes Johnson’s silence in the face of the genocide Assad perpetrates against his people.
  - Criticizing the Tunisians for not completing their revolution.



<sup>21</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

<sup>22</sup> 4.9.19; 11.9.19; 18.9.19; 25.9.19

<sup>23</sup> September 2019 Telegram

- Addressing the Iranian influence in Yemen, via the Houthi. Per him, Iran is the big winner in Yemen and uses it as part of its war with KSA.
- **Abu Hafs al-Maqdisi**, leader **Jaysh al-Uma al-Salafi fi Bayt al-Maqdis**, a Salafi jihadist faction in Gaza, close with **al-Qaeda** posted the following<sup>24</sup>:
  - Praising the Taliban for their determination to drive the US out of Afghanistan. Per him, “the US is on the verge of collapse. It will not hold against your mujahidin blows and the strong resilience of the Afghan people”. He added that Pres. Trump’s declaration about the end of the peace talks with the Taliban provides an opportunity to drive the US out of Afghanistan. He called upon Taliban operatives to increase their military activity and kill as many American soldiers as possible, “burn the earth beneath their feet and make the sky rain fire and volcanos from your bombs on them”. At the end of his word he mentioned that Jerusalem and al-Aqsa mosque await their liberation by the Muslim **conquerors** (MICHAEL – ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THE LAST WORD? CONQUEROR DOES NOT LIBERATE BUT SUBJUGATES).
  - Criticizing some Gulf states’ leaders for their reliance on US support vs. the Iranian threat. Per him, one who awaits a US or western support is akin to one who awaits the devil to admit him to paradise.

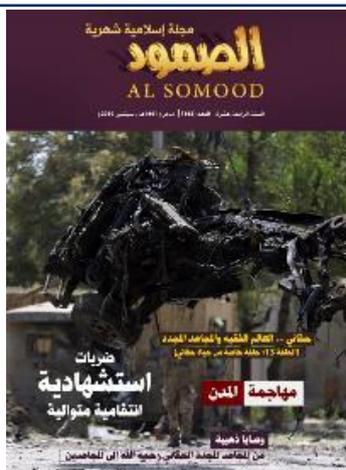


## Magazines

- Vol. 163 of **al-Sumud**, owned by the **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan** saw light. Among other, it contained the following stories: advice to the mujahidin by a senior member of the organization named al-Haqqani; encouragement of suicide attacks because they are acts of revenge against the enemy; the duty of the Islamic nation to the Afghani people; addressing the US violation of the Afghani women rights; addressing the beginning of the end of the US occupation in Afghanistan<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

<sup>25</sup> September 2019 Telegram.



Al-Sumud cover page

- Vol. 20 of the periodical **Baytuki**, a women’s magazine identified with **al-Qaeda** saw light. Among the issues dealt with: the importance of parents keeping secrets from children so they will not embarrass them in front of guests; dealing with a violent child; Q&A on child rearing; the Islamic rule regarding animosity between wives who are married to the same person; the importance of trust between couples; incorporating Lavender into the marriage; Q&A on problems between husband and wife<sup>26</sup>.



Baytuki cover page

<sup>26</sup> 1.9.19

- Vol 10 of the periodical **Ibnat al-Islam**, a women’s magazine identified with Salafi jihadists close to al-Qaeda in Gaza. Among the issues dealt with: Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri’s speech on the importance of wearing a veil especially in light of the enemy’s attempts to prevent this religious duty; the role of the Palestinian woman in the liberation of Palestine; an op-ed on jihadi literature dealing with child rearing and their indoctrination; the Muslim refugees; the importance of donating to the poor; a collection of various correspondence collated from social media on Israel, the western and Muslim societies, al-Qaeda and more; republic of an old article by a senior member of AQAP on the importance of victory and defeat in jihad; the marriage as an institute in Islam; the parents role in educating children on jihad; the importance of Jerusalem in Islam and it being a source for religious disputes and conflicts; Kashmir and the suffering if the Kashmiri Muslim by the Indians; letters to the editors<sup>27</sup>.



Ibnat al-Islam cover page

<sup>27</sup> 26.9.19

- Vols. 198-201 of **al-Naba**, owned by ISIS. The periodical contained reviews of the progress of the organization's battles and achievements in various theatres around the middle east as well as various editorials as follows<sup>28</sup>:
  - Vol. 198 – The opening article harshly criticized the rebel organizations in Syria that support a truce with the Assad regime. It said that these organization rely on lies and provide false excuses to enlist public opinion to support this truce and the need to reorganize the rebels ranks and enlist new recruits. De facto, the truce serves the Assad regime, increase the Turkish influence in Syria, weakens and divides the rebels. For example, the writer described Hyat Tahrir al-Sham and The National Army as organizations that compete for the trade roads with Turkey and the Russians and criticized them for their willingness to promote negotiations with Assad and the Russians. Per the writer, truce with the enemy will eventually lead to loss of ground to the enemy and increase demoralization. Additionally, this trend may even lead to inter organizations clashes over economic interests in Idlib. At the end of the article the writer emphasizes that the only alliance that unites the rebel factions in Idlib is their fight with ISIS under the guise that ISIS impedes their war efforts against the enemy. The writer that this claim has no foundation and accused the rebel factions of deserting the fight and preferring to negotiate with the Assad and the Russians.
  - Vol. 199 – the opening article focused on the democratic elections in Tunisia and harshly criticized the Tunisian for partaking in the voting because they assist a dictator to ascend to power and that democracy is against Islam. In light of the above, the writer calls the Tunisians to embark on a jihad against the elite that encourages them to partake in the elections. At the end of the article the writer stressed that the Muslims in Tunisia and other countries have to avoid partaking in the democratic process, brand an infidel anyone who encourages them to vote and install Sharia rule.
  - Vol. 200 – the writer deals with the determination of jihadists to act against their enemies. Per him, the crusaders and their allies are frustrated in the face of such determination especially in light of the blows they have suffered. Per the writer, there are many reasons for such resolve: complete faith in Allah, trusting Allah, belief in jihad as a religious command, drawing inspiration from jihadists victories in other theatres, the will to retaliate for the enemy's crimes against Sunni population and more. In light of the above the writer called the members of the organization to keep up with jihad as jihad will eventually discourage the enemy. Additionally, he called to assist with liberating Muslim prisoners from the enemy's prisons. At the end of the article the writer said that the victory of Allah is guaranteed for the members of the organization.

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<sup>28</sup> September 2019. Telegram.

- Vol. 201 – the opening article dealt with ISIS activities against the Nigerian government. Per the writer, the Nigerian (Christian) regime persecutes Muslims which is manifested in murder, massacre, exile, burning houses etc. per the writer, these atrocities didn't catch the world's attention because Nigeria doesn't have any priority on the US agenda unlike other theatres such as Afghanistan. The writer added that there is no one calling for assistance to the jihadists in northern Nigeria in the fight against the African coalition and the crimes of the latter against the civilian population in the region as well as in Lake Chad are not being reported for fear of strengthening "the khalifate soldiers who stand alone against the polytheists [...]". The writer added that the Christian regimes in Western Africa will eventually pay a dear price and suffer by hands of jihadists for the crimes they perpetrate against the Muslim population in Western Africa "and let no one among the polytheists think that we have forgotten your crimes against Muslims, the crimes of the crusaders, the Shiite and their allies among the infidels who are members of the movements and the soldiers [in the service of] the tyrants, we will never forget them [...]". Later in the article the writer mentions that ISIS in Nigeria enjoys support from Muslims who believe in Allah and in killing Christian soldiers in the Nigerian military. He added that the organization's fighters wish to avenge the crimes against the Muslim population. On a similar note, he called upon ISIS operatives in northern Nigeria to expand their activity to the entire Nigerian territory and the territories of other members of the African coalition until they all convert to Islam, believe in Allah or pay head tax and be humiliated. Towards the end of the article the writer clarified that the Nigerian regime cultivates a false image of coexistence between Muslims and Christians where in fact the Muslims are being persecuted. Therefore, jihad against the enemy must continue.



Al-Naba Vol. 201 cover page

- Vol 200 of **al-Naba** also included an infographic depicting its activity since 2014. For example, since it first saw light it published 31 interviews, 3,500 news reports, 432 articles, 65 shahid stories, 388 infographics, 189 opening articles and 45 investigations<sup>29</sup>.



Al-Naba activity infographic

- Some volumes of the periodical **Ibaa**, owned by **Hyat Tahrir al-Sham** saw light. During **August** 2019 the organization published **5 vols. 65-68** [MICHAEL – DOUBLE CHECK THE LAST SENTENCE]. They contained reports, banners and interviews with operatives on the fighting in Syria and references to the state of affairs in other jihadi theatres<sup>30</sup>.



Ibaa vol 68 cover page

<sup>29</sup> 27.9.19 Telegram

<sup>30</sup> Sep 2019 Telegram.

- **Shabab al-Khilafa**, published by an umbrella of media outlets assisting with **ISIS** propaganda announced the termination of future publications of the magazine. No reason was given for that announcement. They added that any account or group bearing their name does not represent them and any reader must proceed with caution. "The youth of the Caliphate magazine has announced the there will no longer be any more issues. Therefore, there are no official accounts or groups for the magazine and any accounts bearing its name do not represent the magazine or the foundations that supervise it, please take caution"<sup>31</sup>.



Banner announcing the termination of all future publications of Shabab al-Khilafa

## Reports from the Field

### Afghanistan-Pakistan

#### [The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan](#)

<sup>31</sup> 8.9.19 Telegram

- The **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Afghani Taliban)** posted the following:
  - A response to Pres. Trump's tweet regarding the negotiations with the Taliban. Per the Taliban, the negotiations concluded on a positive note and preparations for an announcement and execution of an agreement are underway. Further, a September 23<sup>rd</sup> date (later than the date when the above agreement was supposed to have been executed) has been set for an internal Afghani discussion. Yet, Pres. Trump tweeted that he was suspending the negotiations following a single Taliban attack on US forces. Per the Taliban delaying the negotiations will harm the US and its reputation and prove to the world that it is not interested in a peaceful solution. At the end of the response the Taliban called the US to return to the negotiations table and added that jihad will continue until the end of the occupation and that the Afghan people can determine their own fate<sup>32</sup>.
  - Addressing the renewed Red Cross activity in Afghanistan. The announcement said that in a meeting held on Doha, Qatar, between Taliban representatives and Red Cross representatives an agreement has been arrived at per which the Red Cross will renew its activity and provide humanitarian assistance to people in regions controlled by the Taliban. In light of the above the Red Cross called the Taliban to open up the roads for safe passage and guarantee the Red Cross representatives' safety<sup>33</sup>.
  - Addressing the renewal of WHO's activity in Afghanistan. Per the announcement, WHO's activity halted in April 2019 following a suspect activity, especially regarding the eradication of Polio. Now, it was agreed that WHO will renew its activity under the following conditions: (i) WHO will guarantee that its team members will perform humanitarian activity and treat patients in Taliban controlled regions; (ii) WHO will recruit and dispatch only person who have been vetted by the Taliban; and (iii) the Polio vaccination campaign take place only in clinics and not in homes and mosques<sup>34</sup>.
  - An announcement calling Afghani citizens to boycott the elections. The Taliban called them to refrain from voting and ordered the mujahidin to disrupt the election process by hitting the security forces securing the elections, hitting offices and centers who cooperate with the elections. They added that the mujahidin will close all the roads on election day, and it would be advisable to all citizens, especially those in the cities to stay at home<sup>35</sup> so as not to get hurt by the above.
  - Addressing the failure of the Afghani elections. Per the announcement the elections failed because the citizens complied with the Taliban's request to boycott the elections. Per the Taliban, the failure also attests to the people's will to end the occupation and install an Islamic government in Afghanistan. Further, the Taliban called all those who collaborate with the government to face reality and get rid of their subjugation to foreign forces. At the end of the announcement the organization praised the boycotting citizens again<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> 8.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>33</sup> 15.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>34</sup> 25.9.19 Telegram.

## ISIS in Pakistan

- **ISIS in Pakistan** claimed responsibility for assassinating a Pakistani intelligence officer in Baluchistan, using a handgun<sup>37</sup>.

## The Arabian Peninsula

### Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

- **Ansar al-Sharia**, affiliated with **AQAP**, claimed responsibility for planting two IEDs targeting Houthi forces in Al-Bayda district<sup>38</sup>.

## ISIS

- **Al-Battar** media outlet assisting with **ISIS** propaganda, posted an interview that has been published on vol. 197 of **al-Naba**, with the **Emir of al-Bayda** district in the Yemen province. In that interview the Emir accused al-Qaeda of cooperating with the Yemenite regime to fight ISIS. He also addressed ISIS' build up in Qifa and Radaa and the battles he conducts in the region against the Houthi and al-Qaeda<sup>39</sup>.



The banner for the Emir of Bayda interview

## Humat al-Tawhid

- The organization claimed responsibility for the assassination on King Salman's bodyguard. Per the organization, the assassination was carried out after conducting surveillance<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> 26.9.19 Telegram

<sup>36</sup> 28.9.19 Telegram

<sup>37</sup> Sep 2019. <https://pastethis.to/sY16f3UIG9OBFTv>

<sup>38</sup> 26.9.19. <https://bayaan.info/archives/3619>

<sup>39</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

<sup>40</sup> 29.9.19 Telegram.

## Iraq

### ISIS

- ISIS in Iraq** claimed responsibility for a number of attacks against the Shiite militias in various regions in Iraq. For example, they reported an attack on the **Saraya al-Salam** militia north of Samara in Salah al-Din province. Similarly, they claimed responsibility for attacking the forces who patrol the oil installations in **Kharkov** province<sup>41</sup>.



A clip depicting an ambush set by ISIS to Saraya al-Salam fighters in Salah al-Din province in Iraq

## Al-Sham [The Levant]

### Syria

#### Hayat Tahrir al-Sham

<sup>41</sup> Sep 2019. <https://pastethis.to/sY16f3UIG9OBFTv>

- Selected **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham** (umbrella organization of Salafi jihadist organizations in Syria) postings:
  - A clarification regarding a shooting towards a doctor named Uthman al-Hassan in the liberated area in Northern Syria. Per the clarification a patrol fired at the doctor based on erroneous information that his car transported kidnapped persons for ransom. The organization admitted its mistake, apologized and claimed it was doing its utmost to protect medical teams and prevent kidnappings<sup>42</sup>.
  - An announcement re the formation of a “superior monitoring committee” to monitor persons and organizations wishing to harm the organization. That, considering the growing criticism faced by the organization and its leadership. Further, the announcement added that the committee was formed because there are elements wishing to destroy the organization’s plan to protect the liberated regions in northern Syria and led some 500 fighters in the last round of fighting for that purpose. Additionally, the organization admitted that it made mistakes by avoiding the above elements and that the monitoring committee will be fully transparent, and its members will include all authority figures in the liberated regions<sup>43</sup>.
  - A clip by **Sheikh Abu al-Walid al-Kuwayti**, a preacher in the organization, on the importance of carrying out jihad against the enemies.

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<sup>42</sup> 4.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>43</sup> 13.9.19 Telegram

- **Sheikh Abu al-Abd Ashdaa**, a former senior member of the organization, posted on September 10<sup>th</sup>, a clip titled “For the Ship Not to Sink”, where he criticized **Abu Muhammad al-Julani**, the organization’s leader for corruption and military and political mistakes. He claimed that the organization received \$100 million since its inception by a yet to be named backer and it managed to raise a few millions of dollars as well as over 1,100 vehicles and weapons from **Nur al-Din al-Zanaki**, a jihadi faction in Syria. Per him, the organization’s policies led to the retirement of hundreds of fighters. Further, the fighters didn’t receive any monthly compensation, and many decided to leave its ranks. At the same time, admin and HQ personnel received an average of \$250/month. Per him, the organization’s revenue sources today come from taxing roadways, charity, smuggling, cigarette trading and other economic activities. He added that the military preparations of the organization pale in comparison to those of the Assad military therefore the organization’s leadership is responsible to recent defeat in northern Hama and southern Idlib, inter alia, due to failing to provide food, money and other logistics to the fighters which hurt their morale. Per Abu al-Abd, the organization also suffers from internal disputes that threaten its continued existence. Per him the organization is infested with spies and has turned into a “private emirate controlled by friends, cronies and leaders’ sons in law”. In response to the above, the organization has removed Abu al-Abd from its ranks on September 12<sup>th</sup> and arrested **Ahmad Rahhal**, the journalist that distributed the above clip on social media. Further, the organization accused Abu al-Abd of distorting reality and widening the rift within the organization as well as attempting to distance and clear himself from any liability associated with a defeat, he suffered by the hands of the Assad military. Further, others in the organization have accused him of inappropriate personally motivated behaviour and said that even if there are differences then these should remain concealed so as to prevent demoralization among the fighting ranks and file as well as providing such information to reach the enemy<sup>44</sup>.
- It should be noted, the above was a first of its kind criticism by a senior ranking member against Hayat Tahrir al-Sham leadership. It echoed on the backdrop of Idlib’s residents demonstrations against the organization for its actions against other jihadi factions that per the organization hurt the efforts to prepare for an imminent invasion of enemy forces into Idlib and on the backdrop of Sheikh Abd al-Mohseini, a senior Salafi sheikh in Idlib that called the members to replace al-Julani with an honest and virtuous leader.

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<sup>44</sup> September 2019, Telegram.



Abu Abd al-Ashdaa

### Huras al-Din

- **Huras al-Din**, the **al-Qaeda** extension in Syria, posted the following:
  - A eulogy for members of the jihadi organization, **Ansar al-Tawhid**, that were killed during an air strike by the enemy in Idlib alongside condemnation for the attack<sup>45</sup>.
  - A sermon by **sheikh Abu Usama al-Shawkani**, a preacher in the organization, condemning Russia and Turkey. He accused both countries for trying to bring an end to jihad and the revolution in Syria and cautioned all jihadi factions not to collaborate with the Turks as the latter only wish to use them to promote their regional agenda<sup>46</sup>.
  - A banner addressing the security threat to the residents of Idlib by the Assad regime and its allies as well as ISIS. Due to the above threat the jihadists in Idlib set CCTV to monitor suspicious enemy activity for the security of the residents. Additionally, they claimed that Idlib is full of spies and asked the residents to report such activity<sup>47</sup>.
  - Several clips with clerics' sermons and various subjects such as the importance of the belief in Allah; reward and punishment at the end of days; the importance of carrying out jihad against enemies<sup>48</sup>.

### Ansar al-Din Front

<sup>45</sup> 1.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>46</sup> 8.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>47</sup> 17.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>48</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

- **Al-Basair** media outlet, owned by **Ansar al-Din Front**, a Salafi jihadist organization in Syria posted the following:
  - A banner commemorating members of **Ansar al-Tawhid** killed in an enemy air strike in Idlib alongside condemnation for the strike<sup>49</sup>.
  - A clip depicting operatives beefing up frontline fortifications in Idlib<sup>50</sup>.

### Ansar al-Tawhid

- **Ansar al-Tawhid** posted a banner commemorating its members killed in an air strike in Idlib and praising the martyrs' death and the fulfilment of jihad against the infidels<sup>51</sup>.

### The Palestinian Immigrants in al-Sham

- This is a new militant group, with Palestinian origins. The group posted its first banner under the title "From the Palestinian Mujahidin in al-Sham" where it clarified that its members decided to emigrate to Syria to help their Muslim brothers but stressed that "our eyes are towards Jerusalem for we will return to her with the nation's armies as conquerors. The al-Aqsa and Palestine issues are our issue and all the Muslims' issue [...]". Later in the banner the group clarified that ISIS is an independent entity and doesn't represent the major global jihadi movement. It also warned the Palestinians and especially **Hamas** of ISIS' way that is characterized by breaking the unity of the ranks and spreading disputes among Muslims. The group also called journalists, new agencies and media outlets to responsibly and accurately report events connected to jihadists and separately report ISIS activity and other organizations' activity as there is a big difference among these groups. Per the organization there is a wide and bloody rift between it and ISIS. At the end of the banner the group called on Palestinians who are members of jihadi organizations to keep assisting their Muslim brethren, spread the words of Allah and strive to end and avoid internal conflicts<sup>52</sup>.

### ISIS in Syria

- **ISIS in Syria** postings:
  - Claiming responsibility for assassinating a PKK member because he allegedly was a spy sent to gather intelligence on ISIS members.
  - Claiming responsibility for an ambush set to a joint Russian Syrian force in al-Badiyya in Syria. The announcement said that eleven soldiers were killed<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> 2.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>50</sup> 16.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>51</sup> 1.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>52</sup> 26.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>53</sup> 26.9.19 Telegram.

## The Gaza Strip-Sinai Peninsula

### ISIS in the Sinai Peninsula

- A clip titled “Commitment and Holding Steady”. The clip focused on a terror attack perpetrated by three operatives against Egyptian security forces in the Sheikh Zuweid region near El Arish. The attack resulted in eleven dead Egyptian soldiers. The three operatives, Palestinians, emigrated from Gaza to the Siani to join ISIS and blew themselves up during said attack. Prior to the attack the three threatened the Egyptians that ISIS is determined to continue its attacks on the “infidel” Egyptian security forces due to their oppression of Muslims and collaboration with the Jews. The end of the clip featured executions of residents suspected of spying for the Egyptian government and threats to eliminate any collaborator with the Egyptian government<sup>54</sup>.



Photos of the three operatives who perpetrated the Sheikh Zuweid attack

<sup>54</sup> 8.9.19. <https://archive.org/download/lmnv720/LMNV720.mp4>; <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x7krwvy>

- Vol. 199 of al-Naba, published by ISIS, featured an infographic detailing the organization’s activity in the Sinai against Egyptian forces between September 2018 – September 2019. It said that ISIS managed to injure and kill 463 people, among them 27 spies and other organizations’ members, destroy 153 military vehicles and execute 157 IED attacks<sup>55</sup>.



ISIS activity Sep 2018 – Sep 2019 infographic

<sup>55</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

- **Bunat al-Amjad** media outlet, assisting with ISIS propaganda:
  - An article condemning Hamas' leadership and the Egyptian president al-Sisi for their attempts to maintain good relationship with Israel, each for its own reasons, and for their persecution of Muslims within a framework of an alliance between them<sup>56</sup>.
  - An article condemning al-Qaeda identified Salafists in Gaza claiming that they had strayed from the righteous path and followed al-Qaeda's way which perverts Islam and jihad, for their willingness to accept Hamas' rule instead of fighting it and for justifying the Hamas policies such as marches on the border fence<sup>57</sup>.
  - Banners praising ISIS members in the Sinai for their adherence to the lord, jihad and determination to fight the enemy<sup>58</sup>.



Social media banner praising ISIS in the Sinai members

### [The Salafi Nation Army in Jerusalem \(SNAJ\)](#)

<sup>56</sup> 21.9.19 Telegram.

<sup>57</sup> 23.9.10 Telegram.

<sup>58</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

- **Thabat** news agency, affiliated with **SNAJ**, a Salafi jihadist faction in Gaza which supports **al-Qaeda**, postings:

- An interview with an anonymous senior member of SNAJ. In the interview the member reviewed the history of the organization, its attitude towards other organizations and its current state. He added that first **Jaysh al-Uma** was founded in 2005 after its operatives acted clandestinely in separate teams. He added that many operatives died as shahids and disclosure of their names might surprise many as their membership in organization was not known to many. He did mention senior leader who died as shahids such as **Jamal Abu Smahadna**, killed by Israel in 2006 and **Jihad al-Amarin**, killed by Israel in 2012. Per him, the organization merged in 2012 with **Itilaf al-Shabab al-Salafi – Fialstin** and the merged organization was named **SNAJ**. The merger brought about a new logo and it also went an organizational restructure. Its goals are: installing sharia, forming an Islamic state, liberating al-Aqsa, liberating Palestine as a preparation for forming an Islamic khalifate in line with the prophecy “by killing the Jews who conquer Muslim lands and whomever fights against us alongside them; preaching to others [...]”. He also reviewed the situation in Gaza. Per him, Gaza is under siege right now but not just an economic, political and military one (by Israel and its allies such as the PA and Egypt) but also a intellectual and cultural one which manifests itself by the attempts to impose international laws on the resistance, “the resistance turned into a tool in countries’ agendas [...]”. Per him, the meaning of the defensive jihad has been distorted and to date it is defined as a response to Jewish aggression or as skirmishes conducted by set of rules according to which an Egyptian mediator is involved to achieve political goals or transfer of funds to Gaza [i.e. the Qatari assistance to the leadership of Hamas]. He stressed that the right way to remove the siege and deter the Jews is only by returning to Sharia and true jihad while creating a distance between those and the political and national systems. In addition, he addressed the dissemination of SNAJ’s ideology in Gaza: per him, to date only a small number of Muslims on Gaza share the right Islamic belief and they are in a weakened position because of people who pursue the follies of this world and act against the effort to disseminate god’s words, shut people up and distort the divine truth. Further in the interview the member was asked about the organization’s preparations for a war with Israel and said that sadly, the organization is barred from acting because Hamas confiscated their weapons and curbed their activity. That said, he mentioned that the organization has made attempts to increase the number of posts monitoring the Israeli side. He also addressed the nature of the relationship SNAJ has with Hamas and said that one needs to distinguish between Hamas as a movement and the government. “the Hamas government considers us a group that its activity is banned politically, militarily and theologically. It doesn’t spare efforts to persecute us even at the harshest of times” per him, after operation Protective Edge in 2014, Hamas security apparatus arrested many **Jaysh al-Uma** operatives and questioned them for fighting Israel. The leader of that organization, **Abu Hafz al-Maqdisi**, was also questioned and more than once, inter alia for press conference he had held on the Muslim Brotherhood demonstrations in Rabiaa and al-Nadha squares in Egypt and for his criticism of the al-Sisi regime. The interviewee said that his organization has held talks with Hamas to clear the air but

the views within Hamas differed. Some wanted to clear the air, and some wanted to put obstacles in the way of reconciliation. For example, they approached Hamas' military arm, Izz al-Din al-Qasam Brigades, to have their weapons returned but all requests made to Mohammad Deff, Izz al-Din al-Qasam leader, were not responded to. At the end of his reply he called upon Hamas to let the organization operate freely, in as much as it allows secular and leftist groups to operate. Another issue addressed by the interviewee was education, indoctrination and training camps. Per him, al-Maqdisi already mentioned that a jihadi group stands on three legs: education, finance and personnel. Per the interviewee SNAJ has nine committees entrusted with these fields, such as: (i) Sharia committee – under its jurisdiction is dispensing judgments based on Sharia law, preaching the right Islam to the people, monitoring the organization to make sure it conducts itself according to Sharia, indoctrinating members to follow Sharia; (ii) Political committee – in charge of charting the organization's policies; (ii) Military committee – in charge of arming, planning, preparing and executing military operations. Per the interviewee the organization has a few clandestine training camps in Gaza intended to prepare and train jihadists and provide them with knowledge, survival skills, field operations etc.; (iv) Security committee, social committee, propaganda committee and more. Regarding the organization's achievements, the mere operation of the organization as a cohesive unit is a major feat, definitely in light of the rifts, disputes and arguments in the jihadi movement in Gaza, the arrests made by Hamas and assassinations carried out by the Israeli Mossad. Per him, the organization operates in a complex reality where there are multiple actors who wish to hurt it. For example, some of the operatives are on the Saudi, Jordanian, some Gulf states, PA and Israel's wanted lists. Yet the organization is still able to disseminate its ideology in Gaza and block the Shiite influence through distribution of pamphlets and giving lectures to cast a negative light on the Shiite theology; in the social field the interviewee, listed achievements connected to distribution of meat on Id al-Fitr and distributing publications to the families of the prisoners and the shahids; on the security front the organization exposed Israeli collaborators as well as with the security apparatus of an Arab country who have gathered intelligence on jihadists to deliver it to Israel; on the military front, despite the meagre equipment in its possession the organization launched hundreds of rockets into Israel, dozens of sniper fire incidents, hit military vehicles via mortar fire, IEDs and ambushes and partake in the last three wars against Israel. On that note, he said that the propaganda arm of the organization is somewhat weak and that its video equipment has been confiscated by Hamas. Regarding ISIS, the organization's position on ISIS is in line with that of the Salafi clerics such as Sheikhs Mohammad al-Maqdisi, Abu Qatada al-Filastini, Hani al-Sabai, Tarik Abd el-Haleem, i.e. condemning ISIS for its policies and not recognizing its khalifate, declared by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Regarding al-Qaeda, the interviewee stressed that his organization doesn't have any organizational ties to any organization outside Palestine, al-Qaeda included. That said, his organization supports any Muslim who adheres to al-Walaa and al-Baraa, i.e. renouncement of on Non-Muslims and

commitment to aid any Muslim in trouble. He stressed that the organization will assist such Muslims in any way, especially those in the Syrian theatre. He added that his organization held rallies in Gaza to show solidarity with the Syrians, provided advice on fighting in Syria as well as tutorials to assemble smoke bombs and locally produced Katyusha rockets. Per him, a few members even emigrated to Syria to partake in the fighting, al-Maqdisi included. An additional issue raised in the interview was that of the Hamas-Iran collaboration. The interviewee condemned that collaboration and said that it hurts the jihad in Syria. He equated the Iranian assistance to Hams to that Iran provides the Houthi in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Alawi regime in Syria. He accused the Iranians of slaughtering Palestinian refugees as of the 1980s such as those killed in Sabra and Shatila by the Shiite Amal, the refugees in the Yarmouk refugee camp in Syria and more<sup>59</sup>.

- A few weekly reports under the title “The Harvest of Activities on Islamic Lands” regarding the number of attacks carried out by jihadists in various theatres such as Burkina Faso, Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria and Somalia, including the number of enemy casualties<sup>60</sup>.



## حوار مع مسؤول في جيش الأُمَّة

الجمعة 28 محرم 1441 هـ الموافق 26 أيلول 2019

Cover page for the SNAJ senior member interview

<sup>59</sup> 27.9.19.

<sup>60</sup> 6.9.19, 13.9.19, 29.9.19

- A Salafi writer named **Majd al-Din al-Andalusi**, close with jihadists in Gaza posted on his Telegram account an article on the difficulties facing the Salafists in Gaza. At the beginning of the article he mentioned that since the emergence of jihadi groups in Gaza effort and attempts to unite have been made but they all failed. The bulk of the article was dedicated to the reasons for division within the jihadists in Gaza and their lack of unity: (i) Absence of religious authority entrusted with dispute resolution; (ii) unwillingness to separate from leadership – every emir/leader wants to keep his power and prove that he is the one with the authority; (iii) Absence of a true Suhra council because the various leaders aren't interested in its existence for fear it will rule against them; (iv) narcissism – the jihadi leaders think they above their peers and the only ones that can manage the fight without mistakes; (v) lack of work plans – the jihadists improvise and do not operate in an orderly fashion; (vi) unwillingness to equitably divide resources among the various jihadi groups within the framework of an umbrella organization; (vii) some jihadi groups offer extreme interpretation to Islam. Per the writer, the only true union between jihadi groups occurred in 2013 **(MICHAEL TWO PAGES AGO IN THE INTERVIEW THEY SAID THE MERGER WAS IN 2012)** when Jaysh al-Uma united with the Boys of the Salafi Coalition<sup>61</sup>.
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## Africa

### Mali

#### [Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen](#)

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<sup>61</sup> 5.9.19 Telegram.

- **Al-Zallaqa** media outlet owned by **Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin**, an umbrella organization for Salafi jihadists in Mali, including **al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)** postings:
  - A banner condemning African regimes that cooperate with France. The organization frowns upon such cooperation because it is meant only to promote French interests in the region and harness the local regimes to fight jihadists. The organization specifically warned the government of Burkina Faso to refrain from such cooperation and instead focus on eradicating hunger and taking care of its people. Per it, the above trend has led it to carry out an attack against a Burkina Faso military post in the Tongomayel region, close to the city of Djibo on August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Further, the organization said that the soldiers fled their post and its fighters looted their weapons, ammunition and vehicles and destroyed the post. It clarifies that this was just one of many operations that the organization will carry out against the government as long as it will do France's bidding. At the end, the organization called upon the Sahel states (G5) to examine their relationship with France and see that these have only encumbered them and the need to take care of their citizens instead<sup>62</sup>.
  - A banner containing a eulogy for several members killed by IED placed on a roadside in Mali. The organization admitted its responsibility to their deaths as it placed the IED in the first place (planning to hit French troops). The organization wished to send its condolences to the families and clarified it was ready to submit to a Shari court to settle any disputes with said families<sup>63</sup>.
  - Claiming responsibility for two attacks on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019 against two posts of the Burkina Faso military in Nassoumbou and Baraboule. Regarding the Nassoumbou operation the organization managed to take control of the post and blow it up. Additionally, both operations led to the death of enemy soldiers and the capture of four soldiers. The organization clarified that these attacks as well as those that preceded them and those to succeed them are message for the state leaders that met in Ouagadougou within the summit of the western African states (ECOWAS)<sup>64</sup>, to re-examine their cooperation with France in the lost war with the mujahidin. At the end of the banner the organization threatened that it was determined to keep its armed activity "until the last crusading soldier leaves our land and until our Muslim people will enjoy freedom and honor and until Sharia is installed"<sup>65</sup>.

## Somalia

### [Al-Shabab-Al-Mujahideen](#)

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<sup>62</sup> 5.9.19

<sup>63</sup> 11.9.19

<sup>64</sup> Economic Community of West African States, an economic-political union for 15 states in western Africa.

<sup>65</sup> 16.9.19

- During September 2019, **Shahada** news agency, which is identified with **al-Shabab al-Mujahidin**, the Somali **al-Qaeda** extension posted the following:
  - An audio clip by the organization's leader, **Sheikh Abu Ubaydah**, that addressed the mujahidin's achievements in Somalia, the status of the conflict in east Africa and sent recommendation to the soldiers and the Somali people. Per him, the mujahidin increase their attacks on a daily basis and the infidels, and the government are being defeated and on the verge of collapse. He added that all the assistance the government gets from foreign governments does not help her against the Mujahidin, Further, the government is puppet government of the Ethiopian Christians. He also praised the mujahidin for their actions and said that they would continue their jihad until an Islamic Somalia will be formed. Further, he praised the security stability and peace that reign in the regions controlled by the organization. Abu Ubaydah further said that the intent of the foreign infidels that have invaded Somalia is to rob the oil and other natural resources and put in place a weak government that will implement these interests and allow foreign soldiers to protect them. As to the organization's goals he said that these include forming an Islamic government, implementing sharia, forming an Islamic Califate the way the prophet saw it, forming a unified Islamic community, continuing jihad and expelling Christians from Muslim lands, preserving the Muslim resources and use them only for Muslim needs so that they can shake the infidels rule. At the end of his speech he called the Somalis to support the mujahidin and disseminate sharia. As to the Ethiopia-Somali dispute regarding the oil fields in the Indian Ocean he claimed that the mujahidin would object to any International Court decision that will wrest the Somali control in the Indian Ocean<sup>66</sup>.
  - Claiming responsibility for an attack conducted by the organization on a US Air Force base in Ballidoogle in the Lower Shebelle region that per the announcement caused more than 121 dead among the American soldiers and more than 12 Israeli soldiers. Further, per the announcement, the attack caused damage to at least 5 aircraft. Further, the organization claimed that the attack was carried out as a revenge for the US bombings of innocent Muslims as well as send a message to the American president and public that their aggressive policy in Somalia leads to a deadly outcome. At the end of the announcement the organization took responsibility for an attack on EU convoy in Mogadishu that led to at least two dead<sup>67</sup>.
  - A banner announcing a ten days extension to the Sheikhs of the tribes that were still cooperating with the government to repent and support the organization. The announcement said that thus far 635 sheikhs have repented and joined the organization<sup>68</sup>.
  - An announcement regarding a ceremony to honor sheikh that renounced the government and joined the organization. The ceremony took place in Hiran province and saw 95 sheikhs in attendance<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4670>

<sup>67</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4806> ; <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4815>

<sup>68</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4427>

<sup>69</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4474>

- An interview with the Hassan Mehdi<sup>70</sup>, the former general manager of the presidential palace in Hirshabelle, who has defected (along with other sheikhs) to al-Shabab controlled region after he heeded their call to repent. He described his prior position, how he was appointed to his position and claimed he had resigned because he felt his position was useless. He added that he had initiated the contact with al-Shabab and was encouraged to join the organization, where he was warmly welcomed. At the end of the interview Mehdi called other Somali officials to leave their posts and join the organization.
- Photos from a Zakat ceremony to poor and needy in Mogadishu. The ceremony took place in Benaadir province controlled by the organization. Per the announcement each family received \$500 in cash<sup>71</sup>.
- A report regarding a meeting that was sponsored by the organization to reconcile two warring tribes in the Hiran region and a payment of \$240,000 to the families of the people killed in the fighting<sup>72</sup>.
- A report regarding an uptick of al-Shabab against the Somali security forces and African Union forces in various regions in Somalia (center and south) and in Mogadishu<sup>73</sup>.
- News update detailing armed operations carried out by al-Shabab against enemy forces during July-August 2019<sup>74</sup>.

### The Islamic State in Somalia

- **ISIS in Somalia** postings:
  - A photographed documentation of the training at Dawud al-Somali training camp<sup>75</sup>.



<sup>70</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4435>

<sup>71</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4552>

<sup>72</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4684>

<sup>73</sup> <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4511>; <https://shahadanews.com/?p=4658>

<sup>74</sup> 15.9.2019. Telegram.

<sup>75</sup> September 2019. Telegram.



Photos from Dawud a-Somali Camp

## Nigeria

### The Islamic State in West Africa

- **ISIS in West Africa** postings:
  - A photographed documentation of attacks on the Nigerian army near Lake Chad<sup>76</sup>.



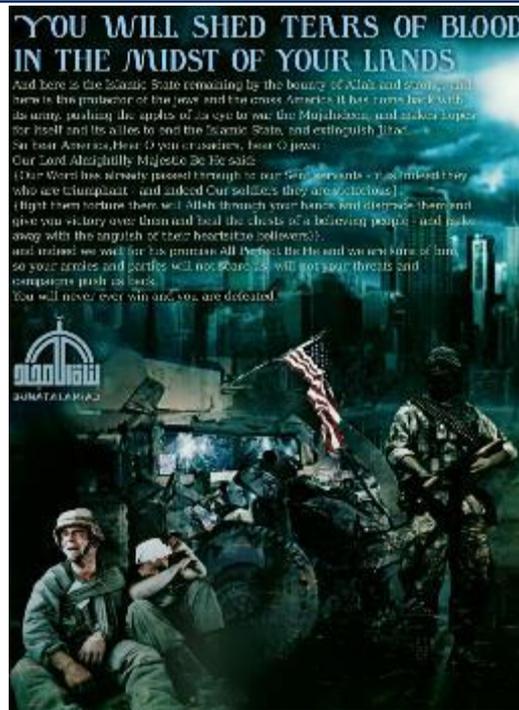
ISIS of West Africa attacks near Lake Chad

## The West

- ISIS supporting Telegram channels continue their threats to hit civilians and state institutions in the west. Additional banners praised the 9/11 attacks<sup>77</sup>.

<sup>76</sup> September 2019 Telegram.

<sup>77</sup> September 2019 Telegram.



Banner threatening hits on American soldiers and America cities



Banners praising the 9/11 attacks

## ABOUT THE ICT

Founded in 1996, the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) is one of the leading academic institutes for counter-terrorism in the world, facilitating international cooperation in the global struggle against terrorism. ICT is an independent think tank providing expertise in terrorism, counter-terrorism, homeland security, threat vulnerability and risk assessment, intelligence analysis and national security and defense policy.

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## ABOUT THE JIHADI MONITORING GROUP

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.