

The International Institute for Counter-Terrorism

Monthly Summary of Events

July 2017

Israel

During the month of July, terrorist attacks and attempted attacks continued against security forces and civilians throughout the West Bank and Jerusalem. In two significant attacks, the first on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and the second in the community of Halamish, five civilians and police officers were killed. In the shooting attack that took place near Lions' Gate on the Temple Mount on Friday, July 14, 2017, two police officers were killed and another person was injured. Towards 7:00am, three terrorists opened fire on the two police officers in the area of Lions' Gate. The three terrorists, residents of the city Umm al-Fahm, carried out the first attack inside the Temple Mount area and then began to flee in the direction of the mosques in order to seek refuge there. Other police forces who were present at the location started in pursuit of the terrorists. During the exchange of fire, the three terrorists were killed. The two Border Police officers, Sgt. Major Haiel Stawi, a resident of M'rar, and Sgt. Major Kamil Shnaan, a resident of Horpish, died from their injuries. A Carl-Gustav submachine gun, a pistol and knives were found on the terrorists' bodies. The police investigation raises suspicions that the weapons were smuggled into the area a few days before the incident, apparently with the assistance of a Waqf member.

As a result of the attack, the Israel Police closed the Temple Mount compound to Muslim worshippers for the first time since 1969 and began searching for additional weapons throughout the compound, including in the Waqf offices. In addition, the Mufti of Jerusalem was arrested for questioning but released a few hours later. In addition, it was decided to erect metal detectors at the entrances to the

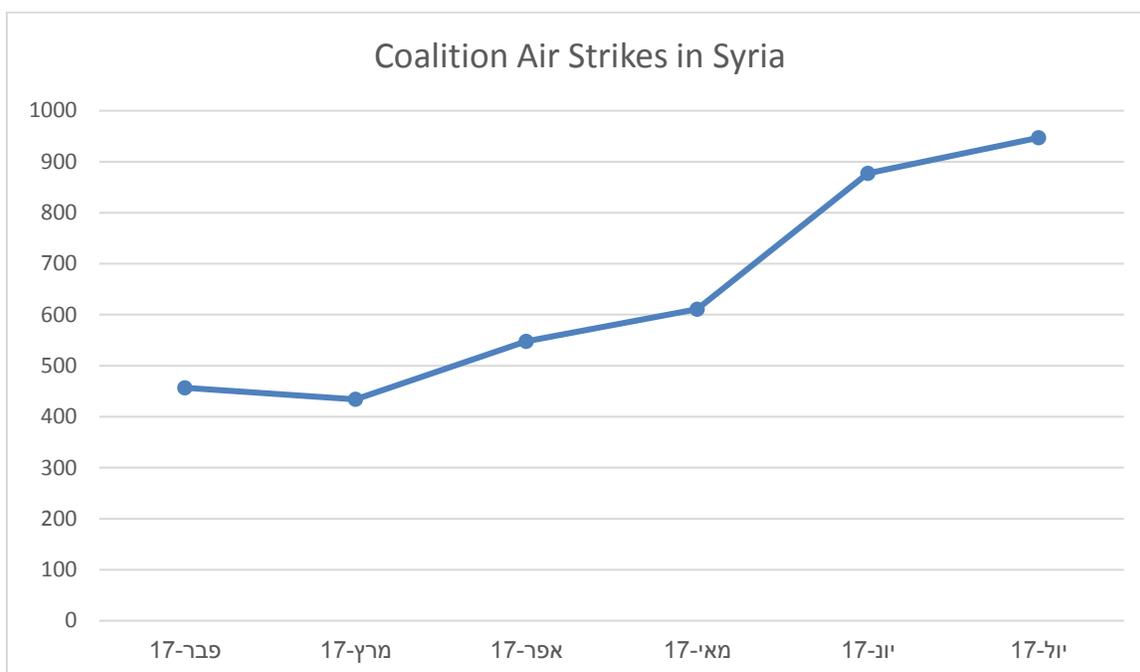
Temple Mount in order to prevent weapons from being smuggled into the compound in the future. Meanwhile, mourning tents were set up at the terrorists' homes in Umm al-Fahm but they were dispersed. The installation of the new security arrangements at the entrance to the Temple Mount caused an escalation and triggered numerous riots in Jerusalem and the West Bank that included, among other things, stone throwing, Molotov cocktails and fireworks. The riots led to the deaths of five Palestinians during attempts to maintain order and most of the security measures near the Temple Mount were removed in order to calm the situation, which brought Muslim worshippers back to the site.

In the terrorist attack that took place in the community of Halamish in the West Bank on July 21, 2017, three civilians were killed after the terrorist, who infiltrated the community unhindered, broke into their house and stabbed them during the Sabbath meal. The terrorist was injured and arrested. Several soldiers and civilians were injured in additional attacks during the month, most of which took the form of rammings and stabbings.

During the month, the rocket fire from the Syrian civil war continued to trickle into the territory of the State of Israel in the Golan Heights area, and the IDF attacked the sources of the fire in response. In addition, a rocket was fired from the Gaza Strip into the territory of the State of Israel but it fell on the Gaza side of the perimeter fence. Meanwhile, and as part of agreements with the Egyptian government, Hamas began to establish new security measures designed to prevent smuggling along the border between the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula.

Syria

During the month of July, coalition war planes continued to attack Islamic State and Tahrir al-Sham targets throughout the country, with emphasis on Raqqah, Palmyra, Hasakah, Shaddadi, Deir Ezzor and Abu Kamal. In total, coalition planes carried out 947 strikes throughout the country, 70 attacks more than in the month of June. Meanwhile, US-backed forces breached parts of the ancient wall surrounding the city of Raqqah.



The data is based on official US Department of Defense publications

During the month, a ceasefire went into effect in southwest Syria that was achieved following a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin at the G-20 Summit in Hamburg, Germany. It should be noted that, despite the ceasefire, the Syrian Air Force attacked rebel targets several times in eastern Ghouta, outside of Damascus, in addition to Syrian Air Force attacks on the Syria-Lebanon border near the Lebanese town of Aرسال.

In contrast, approximately ten people were killed in a car bombing in the capital of Damascus while two explosive-ridden vehicles that were stopped at checkpoints at the entrance to the city exploded. In addition, four people were killed in a car bomb explosion at a checkpoint belonging to Kurdish security forces in the north.

Lebanon

During the month of July, prevention activities increased against Sunni jihadist organizations in northeast Syria in the framework of which several Lebanese army soldiers were injured in a suicide bombing during a raid on Syrian refugee camps near the town of Aرسال in the north. Later, alongside Syrian Air Force attacks on the eastern border of Lebanon, Hezbollah and the Syrian army attacked Islamic State and

Tahrir al-Sham targets north of Arsal. The operation, which unfolded over several days, included artillery and rocket fire, in addition to Special Forces operations. According to reports, both sides suffered losses during the battles. It should be noted that the Lebanese army stationed in the area did not take an active role in the battles aside from artillery fire directed at jihad elements that were moving in the sector. After several days of battle, a ceasefire was declared between Hezbollah and Tahrir al-Sham in the framework of which both sides agreed to a prisoner exchange and the withdrawal of close to 9,000 of the organization's fighters and their families back to Syrian territory. It should be noted that the Lebanese political system raised criticism over the fact that Hezbollah is the one fighting and not the Lebanese army.



The battle area and the presence of global jihad elements near the town of Arsal

Egypt

During the month of July, fighting continued between Egyptian security forces and the IS in the northern Sinai Peninsula. In the face of ongoing security operations by security forces, IS fighters managed to carry out significant attacks against them. At least 23 soldiers were killed and dozens more injured in a combined attack against an army post south of Egyptian Rafah, in the framework of which a car bomb exploded as it stormed the entrance to the post while IS fighters raided the posted itself. In other attacks that took place in the area of Al-Arish, most of which took the form of roadside bombings and at least one in the form of a car bombing, close to 20 soldiers, police officers and civilians were killed. In response to the attacks, close to 100 IS fighters were killed in several air strikes carried out by the Egyptian Air Force in the area.

Alongside the fighting in the northern Sinai Peninsula, several incidents took place in other parts of the country. In southern Giza, several police officers were killed in two shooting attacks at a police checkpoint, and two German tourists and one Czech tourist were killed in a stabbing attack in the southern Sinai Peninsula. In contrast, over 20 militants were killed in gun battles with police forces in several incidents in Ismailia Province while several Hasam fighters were killed in gun battles with security forces in the southern Egyptian desert. In addition, several IS fighters were killed in gun battles with security forces in Asyut Province in southern Egypt.

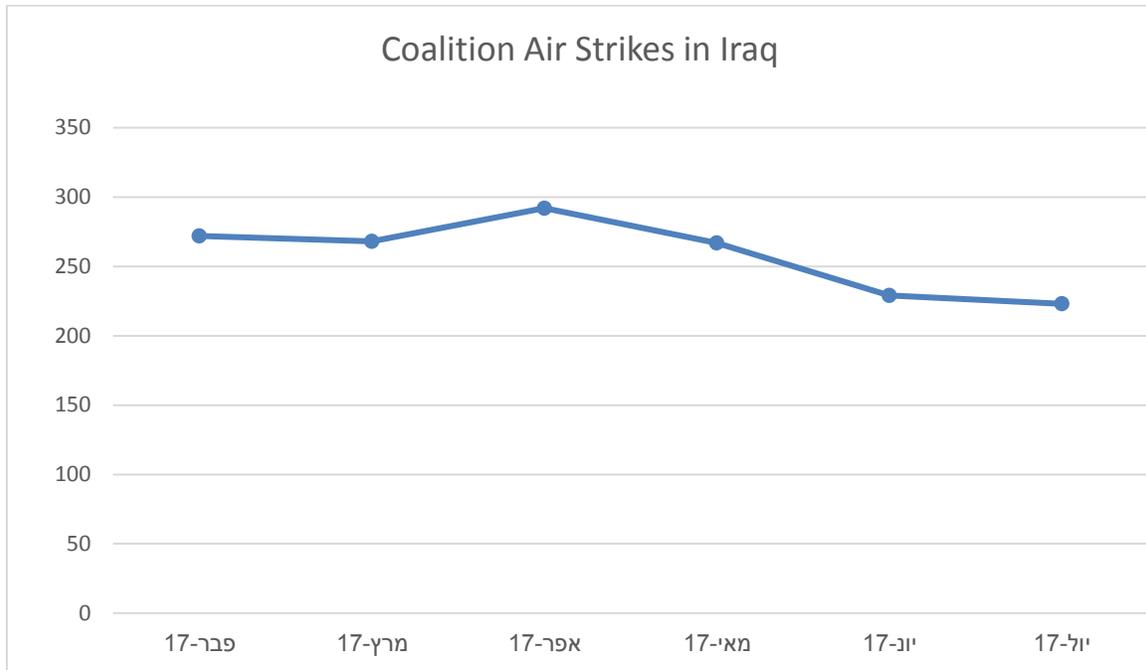
During the month, the Egyptian Air Force destroyed a convoy of vehicles during an attempt to smuggle weapons on the Egypt-Libya border.

Jordan

During the month of July, a security guard at the Israeli Embassy in Amman was injured in a stabbing attack in one of the Embassy apartments. In the framework of the struggle between the security guard and the terrorist, the latter was shot to death as was the owner of the apartment who died of his wounds. As a result of the incident, a closure was imposed on the Embassy and most of its staff, including the security guard, returned to Israel. According to some of the reports, the return of the Embassy's staff to Israel enabled the removal of the new security measures that were installed on the Temple Mount after the Israeli government agreed to the move.

Iraq

During the month of July, the liberation of Mosul from the IS was completed. Nevertheless, coalition war planes continued to attacks IS targets throughout the country, with emphasis on Mosul, Fallujah, Kirkuk, Qiyara, Qaim, Hīt, Tikrit, Baghdad, Al-Hujeir, Baiji, Kisik, Tal Afar and Rawa. In total, coalition planes carried out 223 attacks throughout the country, six attacks less than in the month of June.



The data is based on official US Department of Defense publications

Alongside the liberation of Mosul and the retreat of IS fighters, there was a decrease in the number of significant terrorist attacks that struck the country. Nevertheless, over ten civilians were killed in a suicide bombing at a refugee camp in the city of Ramadi, and dozens were killed and injured in a triple suicide bombing at the Shi'ite militia headquarters in Al-Karmah, approximately 60 kilometers west of the capital of Baghdad.

Meanwhile, the Turkish Air Force continued to attack Kurdish rebel targets in the north of the country.

Libya

During the month of July, several UN workers were kidnapped and held for several hours by militants who opened fire on their convoy between the city of Sorman and the capital of Tripoli. In addition,

dozens of civilians were killed and injured by rocket fire on the shores of the capital. Meanwhile, in southern Libya militants opened fire on the convoy of the Education Minister who was visiting the area.

Iran

During the month of July, the Iranian Border Guards launched several rockets towards the district of Punjab in Balochistan Province, Pakistan. In addition, the Iranian Ministry of Defense reported having launched a rocket into space that it claimed was carrying a satellite. Meanwhile, new sanctions were approved in the United States against the Iranian Revolutionary Guards.

Saudi Arabia

During the month of July, incidents continued to take place in Shi'ite Qatif Province, including a roadside bomb that killed one police officer and injured several others when it exploded near their vehicle. In addition, Houthi rebels continued their attempts to penetrate the Kingdom via Yemen.

During the month, for the first time in 11 years, the Shi'ite-Iraqi preacher, Muqtada al-Sadr, arrived in Saudi Arabia in the framework of an official visit to try and mediate between Iran and the Saudi Kingdom.

Yemen

During the month of July, Yemeni army forces, backed by the Sunni coalition, continued to act against Houthi rebel forces throughout the country, with emphasis on Taiz Province. As part of the battle, Houthi forces operated naval mines near the port of Hodeidah in order to prevent coalition forces from using it. In addition, and as part of the effort to prevent the reinforcement and supply of coalition forces, Houthi rebels destroyed a Saudi battleship that engaged in electronic warfare operations opposite the port of Hodeidah using a sea-shore missile parallel to the explosion of a Water-Born IED near a United Emirates' supply ship in the port of Mokha. In contrast, Yemeni army forces made progress in their battle against Houthi rebels in Jawf and Sa'dah Provinces.

During the month, the US continued to act against AQAP using remotely piloted aircraft attacks in Abyan Province. In contrast, several Yemeni army soldiers were killed in an attack by AQAP fighters at a checkpoint in Shabwah Province. In another attack in the province, at least eight soldiers were killed in a car bomb explosion at the entrance to a military camp.

The Persian Gulf States

During the month of July, the crisis continued between the Qatar Emirate and the Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Emirates and Bahrain. After the Qatari ruler sent a response to the June letter of demands sent by the countries, in which he rejected their demands, Egypt called for Qatar to be removed from the coalition fighting terrorism. Despite the crisis in relations against the backdrop of Qatar's support for terrorism, the Emirates and the US signed new agreements on battling terrorism funding.

During the month, the Iranian Ambassador in Kuwait and 14 other Iranian diplomats were expelled and returned to their country against the backdrop of suspicions that they were running a spy and terror network in the country.

North and West Africa

During the month of July, it was reported that political bureau of Hamas had submitted an official request to the Algerian government to host the organization in the country.

Somalia

During the month of July, Somali security forces, aided by foreign forces, continued to act against Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen. In this framework, the US Air Force attacked Al-Shabab targets in southern Somalia, and several militants were killed in a raid by US and Somali Special Forces on a village that was under the organization's control in the south of the country. In another incident, at least 18 militants were killed in a raid by Somali security forces on an Al-Shabab training camp in the autonomous region of Puntland. In contrast, several Somali soldiers were killed in a roadside bomb explosion in southwest Somalia.

Kenya

During the month of July, the Somalian Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen carried out a series of terrorist attacks in the southeast of the country, with emphasis on the coastal town of Lamu. In one of the attacks, Al-Shabab fighters beheaded nine men and raided a supply camp in the area. Meanwhile, three civilians

were kidnapped as well as a Kenyan government official who was injured during a military operation to free him.

Nigeria

During the month of July, Boko Haram fighters continued to operate in northeast Nigeria and in the neighboring countries on Nigeria's borders. In Borno State, several soldiers were killed in a roadside bomb explosion and dozens of civilians were killed in several suicide attacks in the city of Maiduguri. In Niger, approximately ten people were killed and dozens more were injured in an attack by Boko Haram. As a result of the attacks, Nigerian civilians fled their villages that were under attack. In the face of the organization's attacks, Nigerian security forces continued to act against it, mainly in the form of air strikes against training camps and gathering points in the Sambisa Forest and other targets in northeast Nigeria.

Afghanistan

During the month of July, terrorist attacks continued to take place throughout the country. In Nangarhar Province, several civilians and security forces were killed in a roadside bomb explosion and in Farah Province, several civilians were killed when militants shot at their bus. In addition, close to 20 security forces were killed in several shooting attacks against checkpoints in Kandahar Province and over 60 residents were kidnapped in the province by Taliban fighters. Attacks against police checkpoints also took place throughout Parwan Province. Meanwhile, Taliban fighters captured two central districts in the center of the country, the first in Ghor Province and the second in Faryab Province. In the capital of Kabul, over 20 people were killed and dozens more injured in a VBIED explosion near a bus that was carrying government employees.

During the month, local security forces aided by US army forces continued to act against Taliban and IS fighters throughout the country. Close to 20 IS fighters, including the leader of the organization in Afghanistan and other senior members, were killed in several attacks by US remote manned aircraft in Kunar Province. In addition, five senior IS members were killed in an air strike in Jowzjan Province. Meanwhile, several Taliban fighters were killed in an attack by a US remote piloted aircraft in Nangarhar Province, and at least 40 Taliban fighters were killed during an operation by the Afghan army in Helmand

Province. It should be noted that one US soldier was killed and two others were injured during an operation in Helmand Province.

In addition, clashes renewed between the IS and the Taliban in some of the country's provinces, with the former beheading ten members of the latter in Jowzjan Province.

Pakistan

During the month of July, terrorist attacks continued to take place throughout the country. In Balochistan Province, the local Health Minister survived an assassination attempt when militants fired several rockets at his convoy. In addition, several police officers were killed in a shooting attack in the city of Quetta, the capital of the province. In the city of Lahore, approximately 30 civilians and police officers were killed and dozens more were injured in a VBIED explosion in the public market for which the Taliban in Pakistan claimed responsibility. Meanwhile, a Pakistani soldier and several militants were killed during a gun battle in the tribal area on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Turkey

During the month of July, close to 20 people were injured by a roadside bomb that was planted by members of the Kurdish underground, PKK, in southeast Turkey. In contrast, at least 10 PKK fighters were killed in a Turkish air strike in the east of the country. Meanwhile, several suspected members of the IS were killed in a gun battle with Turkish Special Forces south of Ankara.

Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia

During the month of July, Philippine security forces continued to act against IS fighters in the captured city of Marawi. In addition, two Vietnamese sailors who were kidnapped in June were found beheaded on an island in the south of the country.

During the month, seven Hindu pilgrims were killed and dozens more were injured in a shooting attack on a bus in the Kashmir region. In addition, Al-Qaeda announced the establishment of the organization's new branch in India's Kashmir region.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

STATEMENT NO. 1

FOUNDATION OF NEW MOVEMENT OF JIHAD IN KASHMIR NAMED “ ANSAR GHAZWAT-UL-HIND ”.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
All praises are due to Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon our
Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and upon his family and companions.

After the martyrdom of heroic Mujahid Burhan Wani, the Jihad in
Kashmir has entered a stage of awakening, as the Muslim Nation of
Kashmir has Committed to carry the flag of Jihad to repel the
aggression of tyrant Indian invaders, and through Jihad, and with the
aid of Allah (swt) only, we will liberate our homeland Kashmir.

For this goal, a new movement of Jihad has been founded by the
companions of martyr Burhan Wani (rh) under the leadership of
Mujahid “Zakir Musa” [May Almighty Allah protect him]

The official media of Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind is named Al-Hurr
Al-Hurr means Free/Independent, and here is it's logo.



All of our publishing work will be done through this media, and soon an
Important and detailed Statement about Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind will be
released through this media by the will of Allah.

And our final call is all praises are due to Allah,
the Lord of the world.

DATE: JULY 2017

The announcement of Al-Qaeda's new branch in Kashmir

Europe and the United States

During the month of July, one person was killed and seven others were injured in a stabbing attack in Hamburg, Germany. The terrorist, a refugee of Palestinian origin, was stopped by civilians and security forces after he began to stab passerby in a local supermarket.

Australia – A Foiled Attempted Terrorist Attack on a Passenger Plane

Towards the end of the month of July, Australian security forces arrested four individuals suspected of planning to carry out a terrorist attack against a passenger plane. One of the suspects, a relative of the terrorists, was released from detention after the suspicions against him were not verified. An investigation of the incident revealed that on July 15, 2017 three of the suspects, the brothers Khaled and Mahmoud Khayyat and Amer Khayyat, arrived at the check-in counters of “Etihad Airways” from Sydney to Abu Dhabi in the United Emirates. Amer, who was flying alone, had an explosive device planted in his suitcase by his brother without his knowledge. The device, which was made up of standard explosives, was concealed in a meat grinder in an effort to make it difficult to find in the airport screening. In the end, the hand luggage and the bomb were not sent by Amer, seemingly as a result of an argument that broke out between him and the representatives of the company regarding the extra weight of his carry-on, and it was returned by the brothers to Khaled’s house. During the investigation, it was revealed that the explosive material was smuggled into Turkey by a contact person from the IS, and from there it made its way to Khaled in Australia on a cargo flight from Turkey. In a police raid on the brother’s home, authorities seized the explosive device, which was partially dismantled in order to convert it into a chemical explosive device. After the device was not brought aboard the plane, and under the guidance of the organization's operatives in Syria, Khaled began to plan to assemble an explosive device that disperses a chemical in a closed area.

According to Australian media reports, the communication between Khaled and his operatives in Syria was carried out using encrypted messaging software and lasted several months beginning in April 2017. The information that led to the suspects’ arrests and the seizure of the dismantled device was only received by Australian intelligence agencies from American and British intelligence agencies 11 days after the flight date.

An analysis of the planned outline of the air attack revealed familiar methods of operation. First, the use of air cargo to ship bomb or explosive materials. For instance, on October 29, 2010 two bombs that were composed of plastic explosive material weighing 300-400 grams, which were concealed in printers AQAP operatives and sent to the US on various UPS flights, were discovered at the last minute. Before being transported to the company’s sorting center in Germany, the bombs were loaded onto civilian flights from the Middle East. The attack was thwarted thanks to precise information received from an intelligence agent. Second, the concealment of an explosive device in a passenger’s suitcase without his knowledge. Throughout the 1970’s

and 1980's, several attempts were made by terrorist organizations and countries to attack air traffic. Among them were attempts by the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command" against El Al flights, with one of the most prominent attempts having taken place on August 16, 1976 on an El Al flight from Rome to Tel Aviv during which an explosive device was concealed in a phonograph that was given to two innocent tourists who were not aware of its contents. In this incident, the device was activated by a barometric pressure gauge operating system. Since the device was relatively small and the suitcase was placed in a reinforced transport container, no significant damage was caused to the plane and it returned to land in Rome. In another incident, which took place on April 18, 1986 on an El Al flight from London to Tel Aviv, the company's security inspectors located a bomb comprised of Semtex explosives weighing over one kilogram, which was concealed at the bottom of a soft suitcase. The passenger, a young pregnant woman of Irish origin, was unaware of the fact that her fiancée, who was a Syrian Air Force intelligence officer, was the one who hid the bomb in her luggage.

It is important to note that this is one of the few incidents in recent years in which standard explosives were reported to have been smuggled from a war zone to the target country of the attack. In most cases, standard explosives were purchased from local suppliers, but in the absence of such access, improvised materials such as TATP were used. The involvement of standard explosives in the preparation of the attack can attest to the involvement of senior elements in the organization in Syria in planning the attack. It may also attest to the importance given to the country in which the attack was carried out and to the target itself.