

A person wearing a dark balaclava and a military-style jacket stands with arms crossed. The background is a dark blue world map with several yellow and orange flames scattered across it, suggesting conflict or terrorism. The overall tone is somber and serious.

Jihad Report

April 2019

Main Points

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan announces the launch of a series of military operations under the name "al-Fath" against US forces and their allies with the aim of ending the US occupation of Afghanistan. According to it, the ongoing harm caused by the US to the country's people and its efforts to prevent the establishment of an Islamic system require the Emirate to uphold the commandment of Jihad against it. The Emirate has further clarified that while it is committed to the negotiations and the peace process, it cannot remain indifferent in the face of the military operations and crimes of the US and its allies against the Afghan civilians.

The al-Qaeda leadership expresses solidarity with the Muslim residents of "Eastern Turkistan" in Western China in the face of China's oppression policy against the Muslim minority in China and expresses support for the "Turkistan Islamic Party" and its leader, Sheikh Abd al-Haqq al-Turkistani) in the fight against the Chinese regime. According to it, the issue of Turkistan is considered to be an important issue that must be solved, among other things, by reinforcing the propaganda efforts and funneling financial contributions to a campaign that will promote the problem of the Muslims in China to the consciousness of the Muslim nation.

The al-Qaeda leadership expresses support for the Muslims' popular protests against Arab regimes, especially in Algeria and Sudan, but also in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Morocco. According to it, the overthrowing of the reigning regimes is not enough, and all the mechanisms of the regime must be uprooted to prevent the return of the old regime to power. Along with calling on Muslims to take to the streets and intensify the protests, the leadership called for maintaining unity amongst the protesters' ranks and for applying Sharia law. The leadership also advised how to wage an effective protest against incumbent regimes such as through the establishment of defense forces to safeguard the revolution and revolutionaries.

Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of **al-Qaeda**, makes it clear that the jihad war is the only way to fight the oppression and eradicate tyrannical rulers.

The Al-Qaeda leadership is launching a new magazine called "Ummah Wahidah" (One Nation). The central idea emphasized throughout is the importance of maintaining unity of the ranks, the importance of fostering the propaganda efforts and the ranks of jihad in the fight against the foreign forces in the Islamic countries and the local regimes that assist them. Sheikh **Ayman al-Zawahiri**, the organization leader, emphasized in the opening remarks of the new journal that jihad is legitimate because it is intended to protect the holy and Muslim places. The journal's editorial board has also made it clear that the publication is part of the organization's ambition to reinforce the propagand campaign and to foster awareness of the importance of the Muslim nation's assistance to their Muslim brethren and jihad activists who are leading the campaign against the enemy of Islam.

Sheikh **Ali Mahmud Raji**, the official spokesman for the **al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin movement**, an al-Qaeda affiliate in Somalia, said that in recent times the organization has intensified its attacks on sensitive areas of the Somali capital, Mogadishu, due to a desire to thwart the enemy's plans to harm Muslims. In addition, he threatened to harm any structure in which the enemy is found, including hotels, claiming these serve as military bases. He also called on members of the Somali security forces to repent and join the Mujahideen. According to him, the withdrawal of the African Union Force from Somalia indicates the defeat of the enemy and its failure to cope with the Mujahideen's attacks.

Sheikh **Abu 'Ubaydah Yusuf al-'Anabi**, head of the Council of Dignitaries of **al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb**, praises the Algerian people for protesting against the incumbent regime but warned not to fall for the machinations of the government but strive for its overthrowing and for a radical and comprehensive change in the government system when the principles of Islam are the guidelines. He also called on the Algerian military and security forces to be

attentive to the demands of the people and to assist in the popular protest.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula accuses Saudi Arabia of systematically persecuting Saudi Arabia's Muslim citizens. This is against the backdrop of the Saudi regime's intention to execute 37 Saudi civilians on charges of involvement in terrorism and subversion under the regime. The organization threatened to take revenge on the Saudi regime for these and other crimes in due course.

Sheikh **Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi**, leader of the **Islamic State** organization, speaks in a video taken after five years of absence since June 2014. In his speech, he urged his supporters to avenge the members of the organization who were killed in Baghuz, Syria, making it clear that the jihad will "continue until the end of days of the resurrection". Alongside this, he praised the attacks carried out by his supporters in Sri Lanka and the various provinces under the "Blessed Al-Sham District Revenge Campaign". He also acknowledged the pledges of loyalty of his supporters in Burkina Faso, Mali and several groups operating in the Khorasan Province (Afghanistan-Pakistan and parts of Iran).

Islamic State operatives carried out a series of attacks against enemy forces in Syria, Libya, the Sinai Peninsula and other areas, from April 9th to 13th, in response to the loss of Baghuz, the last stronghold of its operatives in Syria. The campaign was named the "Blessed Al-Sham District Revenge Campaign." Thus, the organization reported that during this campaign 92 military operations were carried out leading to the death and wounding of 362 people in more than 180 areas spread over eight districts.

The **Islamic State** organization claims responsibility for a series of terrorist attacks carried out by a terrorist cell that has sworn allegiance to the organization, against a number of churches and hotels during Easter in Sri Lanka. The attack was praised by supporters of the organization, including **Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi**, the organization leader.

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New Publications

Ideology

- From the publications of the **al-Sahhab Institute**, which serves as the official communications institution of the **al-Qaeda** leadership:
 - Proclamation entitled "Loyalty and Assistance to Our Brothers in Muslim Turkistan". In the proclamation, the organization's leadership expressed solidarity with the residents of the Xinyang region of China, known by Islamists as "Eastern Turkistan" and with the "Turkistan Islamic Party" led by Sheikh **Abd al-Haqq al-Turkistani**, in the face of the oppressive policies of the Chinese regime against the Muslim minority in China. Al-Qaeda's leadership emphasized that the issue of Turkistan continues to be on its mind and that it will continue to help resolve this issue. Furthermore, it called on the Muslims in Eastern Turkistan to adhere to Islam despite the Chinese repression and implored Muslims around the world to help this issue through donation and an advocacy array that brings the problem of the Muslims in China to the awareness of the Islamic nation.¹
 - A speech by Sheikh **Ayman al-Zawahiri** called "The Oppression", which is the first part of a new video series. In his speech, he emphasized the importance of the struggle and resistance to oppression and tyrannical rulers through jihad.²



A banner for al-Zawahiri speech

- A proclamation dated April 12th entitled "Support and Guidance for Our People in Algeria, Sudan, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Morocco". At the start of the

¹ April 4th 2019, <https://www.al-aafaq.net/vb/showthread.php?t=770>

² April 18th 2019, <https://pastethis.to/79GKiSI8Ntg>; <https://alsahabmedia.net/?p=1977>

proclamation, the organization's leadership praised the protesters in Algeria and Sudan and "the Muslim peoples going to rage demonstrations in Islamic countries [...] against the tyrannical rulers and who seek to stand against the collaborators with the Crusaders [...]". The organization urged protesters to maintain unity of the ranks, to act to apply the Sharia and to continue the struggle and jihad until the fall of the entire regime "starting with the leadership of the collaborating army, the criminal security mechanisms". The organization warned that without the displacement of the latter, the regime would return to power and this time to conduct a more severe suppression policy against the protesters as has happened in Egypt.

Later in the proclamation, the organization sought to strengthen the hands of the people of Sudan and called on them to continue the rebellion against the incumbent regime and to show vigilance towards Saudi Arabia's and the United Arab Emirates' involvement in Sudan's internal affairs. Afterwards, the organization's leadership turned to the young people in Egypt to go out to the squares again and resume the protest against a-Sisi's regime until the overthrow of all his partners in power and to strive for the establishment of an Islamic regime. It also called on Muslims in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya to embark on a widespread protest that would lead to the overthrow of the regime and its partners.

Towards the end of the proclamation, the organization's leadership sought to give some advice to the protesters: be aware that the organization is standing by them, seeking to overthrow the tyrannical regimes and apply Sharia; Keeping calm and standing firm; Caution against the trickery of the security and intelligence apparatus; Caution against attempts by the regime to strengthen its power through the democratic process or through the application of a military regime; Establishing a council whose members will be elected by the people and become the leadership that strives to apply Sharia; Establishing defense forces to protect the revolution

and the revolutionaries, "Without this, your revolution will be reversed and your sacrifice will be in vain".³

- The **al-Bayyan** media institute affiliated with the **Hurass al-Din** organization, an **al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria**, has published an article entitled "Between Neglect and Extremism" by Sheikh **Bilal Khuraysat**, a senior leader in the organization. At the beginning of the article, Khuraysat presented quotations from the Islamic tradition regarding the prohibition of overstating and crossing the boundaries (Hudud) set by Allah, crossing boundaries which is described by the term Ghulu. Khuraysat explained that in principle, the supporters of Ghulu aspire to bring about the implementation of God's orders, but they exaggerate their implementation. In this context, Khuraysat added that there are instances where extremism causes a Muslim to leave the circle of Islam and to be considered non-Muslim because of his extreme outlooks (for example, the extreme belief held by Sufi students who attribute supernatural qualities to their teachers).

On the other hand, Khuraysat referred to the reverse of extremism, the concept of neglect (Tafrit) that he also interpreted through quotations by Muslim scholars of different periods. As an example of the idea of the neglect of Islamic values, Khuraysat referred to the pity expressed by various officials over the death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi who praised and promoted secular values. Similar criticism Khuraysat also referred to those who admire or support figures such as Hajj Amin al-Husseini (who aspired for "Palestine to be a democratic state"), the cleric Sadiq al-Ghariani in Libya whom Khuraysat accused of Irja'a, the principle according to which only on the day of judgment Allah will rule on the fate of every Muslim) and in movements such as Hamas which, despite its statements, did not establish an Islamic emirate in the Gaza Strip.

Towards the end, Khuraysat criticized both those who defend Islamists who chose democracy as a tool for implementing the religion, as well as those who accused of

³ April 18th 2019, <https://bayaan.info/>

extremism the people of the "Islamic State" for declaring democratic Islamists as heretics. Khuraysat clarified that despite the controversies over the "Islamic State", caution should be taken as to the categorization of every controversial statement under the extremist category.

Khuraysat concluded by saying that the Mujahideen must also understand that even the "big names" who lit up the sky of sacrifice for the jihad eventually failed in situations of stress and failed to manage crises. Khuraysat added that caution must be employed both against leaders who see those below them "as no more than numbers or zeros" as well as religious scholars who are willing to sacrifice all members of the nation to justify their views and choices.⁴

Publications of the al-Qaeda organization

- The **Kataib Rad' al-Khawarij** media group, which helps in propaganda for **al-Qaeda** specifically in relation to the taunting of the **Islamic State** organization, published a booklet entitled "Examining the Psychological [Factors] for Exaggeration" by **Anas Khattab**, who is close to al-Qaeda circles. In the introduction to the booklet, the author clarifies that the essay is intended to discuss the psychological factors leading Muslims to ascribe to an extreme interpretation of the Islamic religion and to promote violence against anyone whom they deem to be inappropriate. Thus, he called these Muslims by the name "Khawarij"⁵, which include, among others, the operatives of the Islamic State, in the face of the failure to exercise discretion when using the takfir (labeling people as infidels). He said that understanding this phenomenon would help keep Muslim society safe from its manifestations. The booklet was also accompanied by introductory remarks by Sheikh **Abu Qatada al-Filastini**, a senior jihadi cleric, a supporter of al-Qaeda, who

⁴ April 10th 2019, <https://bayaan.info/archives/2253>

⁵ The name of an early seventh-century Islamic cult that sanctified the violence against any Muslim who did not fit its school of thought. Since then, the name Khawarij has become a derogatory name to describe any Muslim group that holds an extreme interpretation of the sources holy to Islam and sanctifies violence.

emphasized that it was an important booklet at a time when the Muslim nation was severely harmed by the Khawarij.⁶

- The **Khayr al-Umma** media group, helps to promote the **al-Qaeda organization**, has published a bulletin called "My Child and Ramadan". In the bulletin, Muslim mothers are asked to encourage their children between the ages of 7-10 to fast during the month of Ramadan and to that end they are given advice on how to do so.⁷

Publications of the Islamic State

- The **al-Furqan** media institute, belonging to the **Islamic State** organization, released on April 29th an 18-minute video of Sheikh **Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi**, the leader of the organization, in a first appearance on camera since June 2014. A large part of al-Baghdadi's words was dedicated to the campaign in Baghuz (the last stronghold of the Islamic State in Syria) and to the organization's fighters and media members who fell during this campaign. In this context, al-Baghdadi called for revenge on the deaths of the Baghuz casualties and clarified that the jihad would "continue to the resurrection". Later on, al-Baghdadi referred to a number of attacks carried out by the organization's fighters around the world, most notably the series of attacks in Sri Lanka. Al-Baghdadi praised the perpetrators of the attacks and the oath of allegiance sworn to him while presenting these attacks as part of the revenge for the Muslims killed in Baghuz. Al-Baghdadi also noted the attacks by the organization's activists around the world as part of the "Blessed Al-Sham District Revenge Campaign". Al-Baghdadi also praised the attack on al-Zulfi police station in the Saudi province of Riyadh, as well as the steadfast adherence of the Libyan organization's fighters and the oaths of allegations received from Burkina Faso, Mali and a number of groups operating in the Khorasan Province (Afghanistan and Pakistan and parts of Iran).

⁶ April 17th 2019, Telegram.

⁷ April 19th 2019, Telegram.

In the next part of the video, al-Baghdadi addressed recent events in the Middle East including the Israeli elections, the resignation of Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the ousting of the Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. The video was concluded by one of the attendees in the room handing to al-Baghdadi pamphlets bearing the names of the various "Islamic State" districts, including the "Turkey District" (a country which was not considered a district in previous publications of the organization).⁸

- An propaganda campaign called "Blessed al-Sham District Revenge Campaign" (غزوة الثأر) (لولاية الشام المباركة) that included a series of videos and banners posted on social networks. The campaign revolved around a military operation launched by **Islamic State** operatives on April 9th to 13th against enemy forces in Syria, Iraq, Libya, the Sinai Peninsula and other areas, in response to the downfall of the organization in Baghuz, the last stronghold of its operatives in Syria. Among the publications posted surrounding the campaign:
 - An infographic poster (see image) published in issue no. 177 of the "**Al-Naba**" publication, an official journal of the organization, containing data on the four days of attack carried out by operatives in the campaign. It said that in its course, 92 military operations were carried out, resulting in the killing and wounding of 362 people in more than 180 areas spread over eight provinces. Alongside these figures, an excerpt was quoted from a speech given by **Abu Hasan al-Muhajir**, the organization's spokesman, on March 2019: "Avenge the blood of your brothers and sisters and declare [the] opening of a revenge attack that will uproot the people of heresy in al-Sham [....]". The same issue included reports of the organization's revenge attacks in various combat arenas such as Iraq, Egypt and Libya. Thus, for example, it was clarified that the attacks carried out in Syria, and especially against the Kurdish PKK organization, prove that the organization was not eliminated and it is yet early to eulogize it.

⁸ April 29th 2019, Telegram.

- A writer known as **Abu Tayyiba Qassura al-Qurashi** published an article entitled "Removing the Mask from the Face of the Descendants of Balaam"¹⁰, in response to the book "Withdraw from the Pledge of Allegiance to Al-Baghdadi" by **Abu Muhammad al-Hashemi Al-Diri**, a senior Qadi and former member of the **Islamic State's** "Office of Studies and Issue of Fatwas".¹¹ The document essentially includes allegations against Al-Hashemi for spreading lies against al-Baghdadi and cooperating with the RAND Corporation for the publication of his book. By comparing al-Hashemi to the biblical figure of Balaam Ben Baur (also mentioned in the Quran), Abu Tayyiba presented al-Hashemi's book as full of lies and contradictions. Abu Tayyiba also referred to al-Hashemi's friends (Abu Muhammad al-Dawsari, Abu Hafs al-Bahraini, Abu Haitham al-Jazrawi, Abu Muhammad al-Yamani, Abu Muthanna al-Idlibi, Khabab al-Jazrawi, Abu Syhayb al-Najdi and Abu Ghada al-Makki) as he describes them as a band of cowards who fled the Islamic State and even stole its money. In order to undermine their credibility, Abu Tayyiba elaborated on the flaws of al-Hashemi and his friends, arguing that they were unreliable and stressed that al-Hashemi relied heavily on the testimonies of people who had already been killed and thus there was no way to verify them.



A significant portion of the document is devoted to reviewing parts of al-Baghdadi's biography that emphasize his being a descendant of the Prophet, his virtues and his actions. Abu Tayyiba added that even if there were mistakes made by the security forces of the Islamic State, these cannot be attributed to Al-Baghdadi and he cannot be blamed for them.

To refute Al-Hashemi's remarks, Abu Tayyiba relies on his own testimonies and experiences of life in the Caliphate, and accuses Al-Hashemi of taking Islamic sources out of context to prove his claims.

¹⁰ April 17th 2019, Telegram.

¹¹ Michael Barak, ""The False Caliphate": Leadership Crisis in ISIS", ICT, July 2019. [https://www.ict.org.il/Article/2417/A leadership crisis in ISIS](https://www.ict.org.il/Article/2417/A%20leadership%20crisis%20in%20ISIS)

Among other things, Abu Tayyiba's allegations against Al-Hashemi included the following points:

- a. Rejecting al-Hashemi's criticism that the Islamic State's jihad is tainted, making it clear that imperfect jihad is better than ceasing war against heretics.
- b. Rejecting allegations according to which al-Baghdadi and his entourage appropriated the profits and the spoils of the attacks.
- c. Accusing al-Hashemi of attempting to forge the seal of the Islamic State's research bodies to publish false publications on their behalf.
- d. Accusing al-Hashemi of encouraging fighters in the Caliphate to betray the Caliph and murder him and that this indicates that al-Hashemi is "working on behalf of the crusaders".
- e. Rejecting allegations on the lack of 'real Shura' in the Islamic State (in this context, Abu Tayyiba stated that it is unclear what al-Hashemi's intention is in this expression, and mockingly added that if al-Hashemi were in the Shura Council, he would allow "smoking, theft and escape").
- f. Alleging that al-Hashemi not only wants to bring about al-Baghdadi's downfall, but also to cause conflict and strife among the Mujahideen, which will cause them to split into various groups

Abu Tayyiba concluded the document by calling for Mujahideen and supporters not to lend their ears to a man who fled jihad's soil and lived amongst polytheists. He also rejected the claims in Al-Hashemi's book that the "Islamic State" is based on tribal and discriminatory loyalties between the local fighters (Ansar, Iraqis in particular) and the foreign fighters (al-Muhajirin). The last page of the document was devoted to a prayer for al-Baghdadi's wellbeing and the wellbeing of the Mujahideen.

- A series of banners names the "Convoy of Martyrs" in memory of several members of the **Islamic State** affiliates. Thus, for example, a banner was published in memory of the

martyr **Abu Bilal al-Ansari**, a former member of the East Asia affiliate of the organization.¹²



Banner in memory of the martyr Abu Bilal al-Ansari – Former member of the East Asia affiliate of the organization

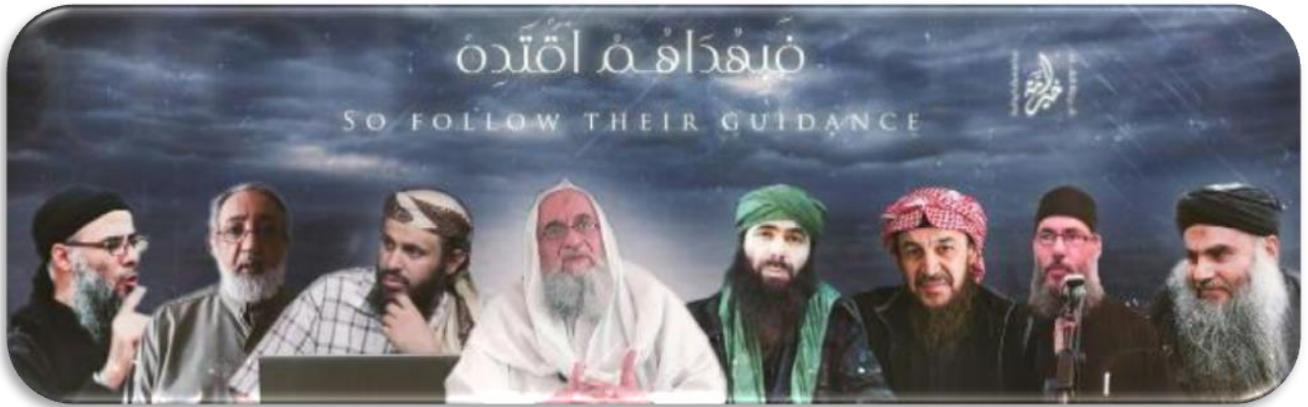
- In April, a media group called "**Tabsuma**", assisting in the propaganda of the **Islamic State** organization, released a compilation of fatwa transcripts published through Radio Bayan, one of the organization's official propaganda channels. Thus, for example, a ruling was published prohibiting the shaking of the hand of a heretic for fear of defilement.¹³



- The Telegram Channel of the **Islamic State** has released a "Wanted Ad" calling on the organization's supporters to help design and transcribe propaganda materials related to the organization.¹⁴

¹² April 2019, Telegram.
¹³ April 15th 2019, Telegram.
¹⁴ April 9th 2019, Telegram.

Opinion leaders in the jihadi discourse



Pictured are prominent ideologues affiliated with al-Qaeda with the caption "follow their guidance". The poster was posted on social networks by the Khayr al-Umma media group, assisting in al-Qaeda's propaganda

This section deals with the opinions of some religious scholars, military commanders, and publicists affiliated with jihadi Salafi terrorist organizations seeking to shape jihadi discourse and influence thought and action in the field. The opinions and their publications receive extensive viewings among global jihad activists, hence their importance.

- From the publications of Sheikh **Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi**, a senior Salafi jihadi cleric in Jordan who is close to al-Qaeda circles:¹⁵
 - Following the fire at the Notre Dame Church in Paris, Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi posted an answer to a question on demonstrating solidarity with Christians after a disaster that occurred to them, such as the burning of churches. Al-Maqdisi replied that a true Muslim must not regret the burning of churches such as Notre Dame which served as a stronghold of



¹⁵ April 17th 2019, Telegram.

idolatry and cross-worship and were the basis for attacks against Islam. On the contrary, al-Maqdisi emphasized that expressing joy at the burning of such 'polytheistic temples' and angering Allah's enemies is an act to be welcomed. Al-Maqdisi also noted that France is a country that has been fighting against Islam and the Muslims, restricting the use of hijab and offending the Prophet's honor through insulting publications against him (reference to the Prophet Muhammad's cartoon publication in the Charlie Hebdo newspaper).

- From the publications of Sheikh **Abu Qatada al-Filastini**, a senior Salafi jihadi cleric in Jordan who is close to al-Qaeda circles:¹⁶



- Correspondence regarding the burning of Notre Dame Church in France. At the beginning, Abu Qatada tells the history of the Third Crusade, claiming that this campaign came under the patronage of Patriarch Heraclius of the Notre Dame Church after Saladin defeated the Muslims in Jerusalem. Abu Qatada concluded the correspondence saying that a fire at Notre Dame Church could be seen as a good omen (for Islam and Muslims).
- Addressing the speech of Sheikh **Abu Abida Yusuf al-Anabi**, one of the leaders of the AQIM organization. In the post, Abu Qatada praised Al-Anabi's remarks in a speech, and in particular the importance that was attributed to Istashad (martyrdom). Abu Qatada added that Al-Anabi's words were characterized with determination and courage, without fear of expressing the desire to die as a shahid.
- Correspondence titled 'Message to the People', in which Abu-Qatada came out against the view that during reform, institutions such as the military, the judiciary and the security forces should be left standing, and only political leadership should be removed, assuming it is the only one corrupted. Abu Qatada clarified that this notion is based on the fear that a revolutionary change will lead to unknown doom and gloom. Abu Qatada emphasized that when the West established these

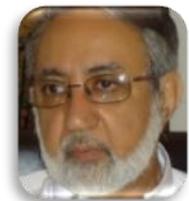
¹⁶ April 2019, Telegram.

countries, it relied on the military institution and therefore it is the most corrupt institution.

- Correspondence condemning the "apostates" who support General Khalifa Haftar in Libya and the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.
- Correspondence in which Abu Qatada addressed the Muslim nation, announcing that the 'tyrannical regimes' were close to falling and that 'the screams and expressions of joy of the enemies were nothing but their death throes'. As part of the correspondence, Abu Qatada encouraged the Muslim nation and promised that victory would come, even if thus far it has not. Alongside these statements, Abu Qatada urged all Muslims to support the Mujahideen financially and to thank them for their sacrifice and their steadfastness. The correspondence was concluded with a call to unite the ranks and avoid a schism which is weakening the Muslim nation.
- A nearly 700-page collection that contains all of the Sheikh's articles and messages over the years. The Sheikh's Telegram channel clarified that it was previously published on various platforms (in particular by the al-Tahaya Media Institute), including by the Sheikh's students or in his conversations on social networks. A look at the contents of the voluminous book shows a variety of topics covered by Abu Qatada's lectures and messages, such as: Addressing the Mujahideen in Syria, a message to Ansar Al-Sharia in Tunisia, questions on the Takfir, cooperation with Hamas, the future of the Western countries, and various Islamic laws and practices and more.

- From the publications of **Tarik Abd al-Haleem**, who is affiliated with the **al-Qaeda** organization:¹⁷

- Publishing a warning to the people of Algeria so they will not repeat the mistakes made in Egypt, which led to the revolution eventually leading to al-Sisi's rule.



¹⁷ April, 2019. Facebook.com.

- Criticizing **Abu Muhammad al-Julani**, who is misleading his people and his Sheikh, **Abu Qatada al-Filastini**, and plans to create a democracy such as the one in Turkey.
- A reference to the fact that there are two models for the new global conquest of the Muslim countries. The first model is a model of full military rule, as implemented by a-Sisi in Egypt, and the second model is a peaceful pursuit of a completely secular government as is done in Tunisia. He added that while Syria, Algeria and Libya would eventually end up like Egypt under military rule, Sudan would probably end up like Tunisia.
- An editorial article describing what happened to the al-Nusra Front and subsequently to **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham** that led it from victory to a decline. In the article, al-Haleem criticized al-Julani who led al-Nusra Front to this situation after he chose to disengage from al-Qaeda, because all he cared about was control and realizing his selfish goals and he was uncaring with respect to the Syrian revolution. According to him, al-Julani's character eventually led him to even cooperate with the Turks so that he could control Idlib.
- Another editorial article criticizing **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham**, which he claims, like other movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, will not be able to implement its stated goal – to establish Islamic rule and liberate the state from Western control. According to him, the problem with Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham is that the organization handed over the reins to the Turks, despite the slogans it spreads about the establishment of Islamic rule and the implementation of Sharia. He added that Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham had long strayed from the principles on which it was founded and therefore it is fated to fail like other movements that had done so in the past.
- An article on the fact that there is a way to change and consolidate Islamic rule, but the change will not come through **Hamas** or **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham** leaders, nor through Sheikhs such as **Abu Qatada al-Filastini**. According to him, today's

spiritual leader of Hamas and the Algerian movement and the liberated region of northern Syria is Abu Qatada al-Filastini and he does not express what he truly believes in because he is afraid of being removed. He added that the leaders of Hamas and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham could not really bring about the much-awaited change and described them as people who are going backwards but facing forward. He added that the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt failed because when Mohamed Morsi came to power, he could not really establish an Islamic government as he promised. He said a similar fate is expected in Algeria and in Sudan.

- From the publications of **Sheikh Abdullah bin Muhammad al- al-Muhaysini**, a senior Salafi jihadi cleric in Syria:¹⁸



- A banner in praise of the joining of 10,000 surfers to al-Muhaysini's new Telegram account after it was closed by Telegram management.
- A religious ruling stating that care should be taken when labeling Muslims as "Khawarij". According to al-Mahsini, anyone who labels Muslims as Khawarij is considered Khawarij himself.
- A religious ruling permitting the conversion of currencies into foreign currency without the fear that this is interest prohibited in Islam. According to al-Mahsini, there is no wrong in buying Turkish currency in Turkey and converting it to Syrian currency or to dollars in Syria.
- A video condemning Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi, Egypt's President, for the assistance the Egyptian army provides to General Haftar in Libya against jihad activists in the region. al-Muhaysini noted that Syria is also under attack by some countries and warned no to be tempted by any sort of political arrangements and to continue with jihad.¹⁹
- Correspondence on the failure of the revolutions in Arab countries. According al-

¹⁸ April 2019, Telegram.

¹⁹ April 5th 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuCc0-3UOWE>.

Muhaysini, in the beginning of 2019, the region returned to popular protests against local regimes including Algeria and Sudan. Unfortunately, however, they did not succeed because of the "deep state", i.e. the presence of government officials in key positions and strategic places in the country. At the same time, al-Mahsini emphasized that Idlib in northern Syria and Tripoli in Libya are considered two areas characterized by a successful, even if partial, popular revolution against the local regime.

- A collection of twenty short correspondences from different periods about the revolution in Syria.
- A fundraising campaign through WhatsApp and Telegram to buy break of fast meals for the Ramadan for Islamic law students at the al-Bayayn Institute and the Quran at the Zayd bin Thabith Institute.



A banner with a call to the public to donate money to provide meals for students

- From the publications of Sheikh **Abd al-Razak al-Mahdi**, affiliated with the **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham** organization:²⁰

- Correspondence in condemnation of the UAE regime's policies and accusations of a series of acts against Islam and the Muslims. These accusations include: suppressing Muslim scholars in various



²⁰ April 2019, Telegram.

ways, such as preventing them from engaging in Da'awa, their imprisonment and torture; Dissemination of adultery, charging interest, drinking wine and setting up nightclubs. He claims that 35,000 prostitutes operate in Dubai alone; Suppression of Arab Spring revolutions and Muslim Brotherhood governments in the same way as done by the a-Sisi regime in Egypt and the Haftar regime in Libya; Providing financial assistance to the United States in 2010 when it entered an economic crisis; Providing \$10,000 billion in financial aid to Arizona in the United States in 2008 to restore infrastructure damaged by a cyclone instead of providing aid to Muslims in Myanmar or the Muslim peoples of Africa and Bangladesh; Supporting the Assad family and Dahlan; Funding in the amount of 7 billion dollars for France's campaign against jihadist activists in Mali; Receiving Zionist delegations; Economic cooperation with Iran and with Persian businessmen; Ignoring the Iranian occupation of the three islands in the Persian Gulf and more.

In another correspondence, he claimed that the royal family in the UAE was not Sunni but an Ismaili Shi'a, concealing its true identity from the Sunni majority population. To back up his claim, he cited several "academic" studies written by Arab scholars.

- A religious ruling that allows Muslims to vote for Islamic parties participating in the presidential and mayoral elections if their position is close to that of the Islamist rebels. Thus, he ruled that it is permissible to vote for the Justice and Development Party, Erdogan's party, to help it fight the secular popular party in Turkey and the Kurdish and communist secular parties.

In another correspondence, al-Mahdi made it clear that democratic elections are contrary to Islam and cannot replace Sharia law in areas where Sharia governs, as in the liberated areas of Idlib. However, he clarified that in places where Sharia law is not state law, elections can then be held to help Islamic parties rise to power and assist in their war against secular forces.

- Raising three possible options on how to wage a campaign against the enemy while

examining its positive and negative aspects:

- a. Launching an extensive campaign in Aleppo or the coastal area; The positive aspect, the liberation of extensive and important areas in Aleppo or the coastal area and causing heavy losses in lives to the enemy. The negative aspect, the Russians will take revenge, will attack all the populated cities and towns such as Idlib, and al-Nu'man Cave, and will bomb the hospitals, bakeries and markets. In addition, the field commanders did not prepare shelters for the protection of civilian life or refugee camps that could accommodate hundreds of thousands, "hence [choosing] this option is not easy".
- b. The increase of assaults against the enemy through the front lines. According to al-Mahdi, this option is possible and positive and has no negative aspects. "These actions must be increased. All factions and all groups must participate".
- c. Quality intensive operations in the depth of enemy territory, especially in Damascus and Latakia. Al-Mahdi claims that this is also a possible and positive option without a negative aspect. He argues that such actions would result in heavy losses to the regime, would portray it as a weak regime and humiliate it in the eyes of the international community.
 - o Praising the Dara residents for their determination to continue their actions against the Syrian regime of Iranian Shiite militias. For example, he noted the use of car bombs and assassinations. According to al-Mahdi, this is a welcome trend that must continue until the regime is overthrown.
 - o Calling on the rebel commanders to examine the establishment of a special unit that will be responsible for reinforcing armed and high-quality operations against Syrian regime forces in Damascus, Aleppo and other cities. According to him, in the Damascus area there is currently a rebel group called the "Abu Amara Brigades", but it focuses on assassinations of Syrian military personnel and not on such

actions, so as to bring about the collapse of the Syrian regime. Furthermore, this is a small number of assassinations. Hence, the establishment of a new unit will help shed the regime's blood. He added that it is better to focus efforts on attacking prisons to free the rebels incarcerated in Syrian prisons.

In another correspondence, he called on the rebels to prevent the transfer of oil shipments to the Syrian regime. He noted that "we are at war with the regime militarily, politically, ideologically and economically. Our enemy is in a state of siege at this time, its economic situation is in regression and the currency is in a state of collapse".

- Accusing the Chinese regime for persecuting the Uighur Muslim minority in China's Xinyang region. According to al-Mahdi, the Chinese regime is conducting a policy that aims to erase the identity of Muslims in the country, by demolishing mosques, preventing the observance of Muslim holidays and more. In another correspondence, he accused the Myanmar regime of the mass murder of the Muslim minority in the country.
- Condemning terror attacks perpetrated by an ISIS-affiliated terrorist group against the local population. Al-Mahdi claims the Sri Lankan Muslim population has been exposed in the past to persecution by the Buddhist majority, but their situation is better than the situation of the Muslims in India, "furthermore, Muslims [in Sri Lanka] also enjoy freedom of religion, even if partial, in their mosques and sharia and Da'awa institutes". Al-Mahdi added that the Islamic religion is not based on vengeance but rather on foundations of the Islamic sharia. He emphasized that ISIS's actions are wrong because its terrorist actions have no good consequences for the Muslim minority in Sri Lanka. For example, he pointed out that terrorist attacks fueled the feelings of antagonism and hostility of the Buddhist majority against the country's Muslim minority and against Islam. So that each attack must be examined individually and the negative and positive consequences must be weighed.

Army in Jerusalem", a Salafi jihadi organization in the Gaza Strip with ties to al-Qaeda:²³

- Re-publishing an old article that was first published towards the end of 2018, with a critical reference to the "Century Deal", the American peace plan to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. According to al-Maqdisi, the plan aims to achieve an overt normalization between Israel and the Arab regimes; To pressure the Palestinian factions to accept the plan; Arrest the clerics and preachers and put them behind bars; Deter opposition parties through threat of imprisonment and detention; Force the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank to accept any political solution by reinforcing the closure; Have the Middle East people be occupied in civil wars through revolutions, and more. According to him, those formulating the plan are trying to make progress by providing economic incentives to residents of the region, such as through a promise to build a power plant in northern Sinai in areas evacuated from residents; The establishment of an airport in northern Sinai as an alternative to an airport in Gaza; Establishment of a maritime port in northern Gaza to meet the needs of its residents, and more. Toward the end of his remarks, he called on the Muslim nation and especially the Palestinians to thwart this plot.
- Comparison between the Jews and the "Freemasons". According to al-Maqdisi, there is a great similarity between the two, expressed in subversion and attempts to sow division and rift between the Muslims.

²³April 2019, Telegram.



A photo uploaded to Sheikh Abu Hafez al-Maqdisi's Telegram account leading a prayer service on the day of the march to the northern Gaza-Israel border fence

Instruction and guidance materials

- The "**Ibn Taymiyyah Center**" media institute, which helps in the propaganda of the **Islamic State** organization, has released a video titled "Guidance for the Heroes Lions". The video provides instruction on how to assemble explosives such as acetone peroxide bombs and roadside explosive charges.²⁴



The video's banner

Strategy

- A media group called **al-Rebat**, which helps in the propaganda of the **Islamic State** organization, called on the organization's supporters to use biological weapons to attack the enemies of Islam. Thus, it released a banner titled "Biological Terror: As long as they

²⁴ April 2nd 2019, <https://ghuraba.pw/?video=9860>.

kill innocent with these weapons, we will use them against them to intimidate them so they know that their crimes will not go unpunished".²⁵



Banner calling for the use of biological weapons against the enemies of Islam

- An article titled "The permit to harm the cursed heretic who uses a Muslim as a human shield" by a media group called **Ansar al-Tawhid**, which helps in the propaganda of the **Islamic State** organization. At the beginning of the article, the writer discusses the ways in which the enemy exploits the Muslim as a human shield, such as the use of Muslim residential neighborhoods, public buildings such as schools, mosques, markets, Muslim prisoners and more. Subsequently, the author reviewed the opinions of prominent Muslim scholars on the matter throughout the Muslim history, such as the 13th century Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah. According to him, it is evident that it is permissible to harm the infidels who use Muslims as a human shield in war if needed. Afterwards, the writer noted that if there is no need, there is controversy among Muslim scholars if it is permitted. Later in this article the author justifies the Islamic State organization's activity against the infidels in the cities where the Sunni population lives, for several reasons:
 - a. The war between Muslims and infidels today is considered a defensive jihad and so it is imperative for the Muslim to fight the enemy until he leaves Muslim lands and hence it is permissible to kill infidels who exploit the Muslim population as a human shield.
 - b. Harming infidels means weakening his power, thwarting his plans against Muslims and engaging in deadly and sudden attacks.

²⁵ April 12th 2019, Telegram.

- c. Third, the fighters of the heretics today from among the Crusaders, Jews and heretic Muslims have set their seats in the city centers and in population centers so as to fight from there the religion of Islam and the Muslims, therefore harming them will cause them more harm than not harming them, which will only worsen their struggle against Islam and the Muslims.
- d. Refraining from harming heretics who use Muslims as human shields will lead to the cancellation of religious duty and it is an individual command on every Muslim, that is, a religious duty, to remove the enemy from Muslim lands.²⁶



Banner of the article "The permit to harm the cursed heretic who uses a Muslim as a human shield"

Magazines

- Issue 158 of the **al-Somood** journal of the **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan** was published. Among other things, the journal articles dealt with the following topics: an article on the Taliban's opposition of the occupation's policy of harming civilians, an article on the transition between the current Afghan administration and the justice of the Islamic Emirate, a memoir about the heroes of the organization fighting in the Farah Province and an article on the success of the Islamic Emirate in the military and political arena.²⁷

²⁶ April 12th 2019, <https://telegra.ph/12-04-جواز-استهداف-الكافر-اللعين-المتترس-بالمسلمين-12-04>

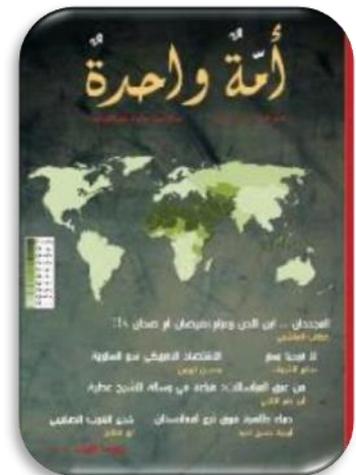
²⁷ April 19th 2019, <http://file4up.net/uploads2/158.pdf>



Cover page of issue 158 of the Al-Somood journal

- The **al-Sahab** media institute, belonging to the **al-Qaeda organization's leadership**, has published a new magazine called "**Umma Wahida**" (One Nation). At the beginning of the issue there were opening remarks by Sheikh **Ayman al-Zawahiri**, the leader of the organization, who emphasized the importance of fulfilling the commandment of Jihad as a tool for spreading God's words and belief in the uniqueness of God. According to him, jihad is legitimate as it aims to protect the holy places and the Muslim from oppression. He clarifies that jihad operatives are considered a pioneer corps in charge of protecting Muslims and the holy places of Islam, but warned that caution should be exercised not to harm innocent Muslims. He also emphasized that as part of the fighting in the "alien heretic enemy on Muslim lands" one should be wary of the destruction of the jihad movement that could occur due to internal fighting. According to him, Sheikh Osama bin Laden symbolized this spirit, that is, a spirit of unity between the Mujahideen and the unity of the Muslim nation and hence one must follow his path.

The issue also included the editor's remarks, who emphasized that the new journal expresses cultural and intellectual activism that is intended to maintain unity of the ranks



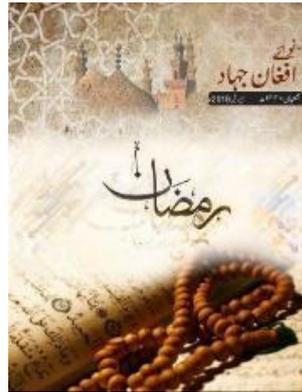
and strengthen awareness that jihad is the way to promote the spread of belief in God and to apply Sharia. He added that urgency is required today and that time is pressing to rid the Muslim nation of the Zionist Crusader hegemony, and to focus on fighting against the US and its allies who are fighting against Islam and the Muslims, desecrating the holy places of Muslims and looting their country's natural resources. He clarified that the organization's leadership strives to develop the Islamic propaganda activity and the jihad campaign to help remove the Zionist-Crusader foreign occupation and be free from the rule of the local regimes operating in the service of the Crusaders. He added that there is also an intention to foster the consciousness that every Muslim must personally assist his Muslim brothers, "Therefore we call on the Muslims to [assist] jihad through their money, giving charitable donations to their brethren who fulfill the commandments of jihad and call [to worship God] and by joining the immigration and jihad convoy".

Among the articles included in the current issue: Criticism of Muslim religious clerics who take part in bringing together the Christian World as with the Vatican and Coptic Christians in Egypt, including the Egyptian Al-Azhar Institute and the religious scholars of the Saudi religious establishment; The legacy of Sheikh **Abdullah Azzam**, the spiritual father of global jihad and Sheikh **Osama bin Laden**, founder and former leader of the al-Qaeda organization; Criticizing the warming of relations between the Arab countries and the State of Israel; The growing weakening of the US economy; The US policy of the persecution of Muslim clerics identifying with al-Qaeda; An article in praise of attacks perpetrated by young Palestinian in Israel against Israeli Jews, such as the shooting attack carried out by a Palestinian terrorist in Ariel in March of this year.²⁸

- A new April issue of the **Nawa-i-Afghan** magazine, published on behalf of **al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent**, was published.²⁹

²⁸ April 5th 2019, Telegram.

²⁹ April 15th 2019, Telegram.



Cover page of the Nawa-i-Afghan magazine

- Issue no. 16 of the **Baytuki** journal, a women's affairs periodical affiliated with **al-Qaeda**, was published. The issue focuses on the family unit and the relationship between the wife and her husband and their children. Thus, for example, the issue included an article on quarrels in the marital relationship, and an article about the fate of a woman leaving her husband without permission.³⁰



Cover page of the Baytuki journal

- Throughout the month, Issues 176 - 179 of the **al-Naba** magazine were published.³¹ The articles in the magazine dealt with, among other things, the following topics: An overview of operational activities in various arenas (such as Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, Niger, Cameroon, Mali, the Kifa region in Yemen, Nangarhar District in Afghanistan, fights

³⁰ April 1st 2019, Telegram.

³¹ April 2019, Telegram.

against the PKK in Syria) and the story of a Yemeni fighter killed in combat with AQAP. Also included in these issues are infographic posters entitled "Harvest of the Soldiers" detailing the number of actions taken by Islamic State fighters each and every week, the number of those killed and wounded (divided by goals, such as: religious apostates, Alawi and Shiites, crusaders, etc.). The modus operandi of the attacks (the destruction of vehicles, the destruction of military bases, the ignition of houses and agricultural areas and more) and the arenas in which the attacks were carried out.

Issue 176 of the Al-Naba magazine published an opinion article on the subject of the revolution in Syria. The article claims that the revolution in Syria is not an "orphan" as many believe, but that it has many "fathers". The article criticized various patrons, such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia, who intervened in the revolution in Syria and took under their protection various factions that would advance their personal interests. This created a situation – the writer explained – in which the various factions turned their guns against each other rather than directing most of the fighting efforts against the Alawi. The writer emphasized that this situation was true for other jihad arenas, such as Palestine, Khorasan and Iraq, and stressed that this would continue as long as the revolutionaries were under the patronage of various patrons rather than carrying out jihad under the protection of Allah alone.³²

Issue 178 of the al-Naba magazine published an infographic poster entitled "The Religious Scholars of the Tyrants". The poster – which included quotes and citations from Islamic sources – outlined the characteristics attributed to those religious scholars, including hiding the Word of God (regarding the obligation to carry out jihad against the tyrants), selling the religion to the tyrants (for the sake of money and pursuit of prestige), standing in the way of those seeking truth, loyalty to polytheists and demonstration of hostility towards Muslims who believe in one God.³³

Issue 179 of the al-Naba magazine published coverage of the attack of the 'Caliphate Soldiers' on a building of the Afghan Ministry of Communications in Kabul. The coverage

³² April 2019, <https://pastethis.to/YHKTN>

³³ April 2019, <https://pastethis.to/HGJDN>

noted that after several hours of gunfire, about 30 people were killed from amongst the Ministry of Communications employees and its guests. It was also emphasized that the Ministry of Communications supports the "Afghan tyrannical government" and provides the Crusaders with information about the Mujahideen.³⁴

The cover article of issue no. 179 of the al-Naba magazine was devoted to the terrorist attacks against the churches in Sri Lanka under the heading 'The Islamic State has fulfilled its threat'. The article listed the attacked sites and the methods of attack as well as the picture of the perpetrators. At the end of the issue, an infographic poster was published covering the main sites attacked (in the cities of Colombo, Negombo and Batticaloa), along with a quote from the speech by the organization's spokesman, Abu al-Hassan al-Muhajir, on the obligation to strike the Crusaders who invaded and robbed Muslim lands.³⁵



The picture of the perpetrators of the attacks against the churches in Sri Lanka as published in the al-Naba Magazine

- Issue no. 7 of the "**Shabab al-Khilafa**" periodical, published by a number of advocacy groups assisting in the propaganda of the **Islamic State** organization, including "Muassasat al-Dar", "al-'Abd al-Faqir", "al-Battar", "Muassasat al-Saqri", and Muassasat Sarh al-Khilafa", came out. The issue includes a review of propaganda materials in Arabic, English, and Spanish published by informal media groups to help in the

³⁴ April 2019, <https://pastethis.to/GSNE6>

³⁵ April 2019, <https://pastethis.to/GSNE6>

propaganda of the Islamic State organization.³⁶



The cover page of Shabab al-Khilafa

- Publication of issued of the **Ibaa** periodical of **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham**. In the course of April, the organization published 4 issues – nos. 43-46. The issues include reports, posters and interviews with the organization's operatives about the fighting in Syria, as well as references to what is happening in other jihad arenas.³⁷



Cover page of the Ibaa periodical

Reports from the field

³⁶ April 9th 2019, Telegram.

³⁷ April 2019, Telegram.

Afghanistan – Pakistan

The Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan

- From the publications of the **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (the Taliban Organization)**:
 - An announcement referring to the launch of jihadi operations under the name "al-Fath". The announcement emphasized the importance of fighting the Americans and their allies to end the American occupation, so that Afghanistan would not become a colonial state. The announcement added that in light of the US military and political intervention in Afghanistan and due to the attacks on civilians and the preventing of the implementation of an Islamic system, the Islamic Emirate is under a jihadi obligation to launch operations under the name "al-Fath". The continuation of the announcement details guidelines for the Mujahideen during the al-Fath operations: Coordination of operations across Afghanistan, adhering to jihad rules and obeying commanders and being vigilant against betrayal and theft. The announcement also said that thanks to the Mujahideen's military expertise, new tactics, public support, impact within enemy lines and advanced weapons, the Mujahideen will be able to oust the invaders from the towns and other centers under the al-Fath operations, establish an Islamic System and protect the people of Afghanistan. At the end of the announcement, the organization called on Afghan residents serving in the security forces (in the military and police) to join the ranks of the Mujahideen so that they would not be harmed by them during the jihad operations.³⁸
 - Response to the reference made by the US to the Taliban's spring attacks. According to the announcement, the commander of the American forces in Afghanistan, Scott Miller, and the US Special Representative in Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, claimed that the Taliban's announcement on the beginning of the spring attacks to remove the American occupation is reckless and irresponsible. The

³⁸ April 11th 2019, Telegram.

statement said that in previous rounds of talks between the Taliban and the US, the organization suggested refraining from attacking civilians, but the US ignored the proposal and continued to harm civilians both through nocturnal bombings and through support of the Kabul regime's attacks. Therefore, according to the organization, the US actions are reckless acts that constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. At the end of the message, the organization stressed that it was committed to negotiations and to the peace process but could not remain indifferent in the face of the operations and crimes of the US military and its allies against Afghan civilians.³⁹

- A clarification statement regarding the Afghan internal conference scheduled to take place on April 20-21 in Doha, the capital of Qatar. The statement said that the organizers of the conference assured the organization that no representative of the Kabul regime would participate in the conference and if anyone affiliated with the Kabul regime attended the conference, he would be expressing his personal views and not representing the Kabul regime. The organization added that the regime in Kabul presented a list of 250 people who are scheduled to attend the conference but in practice only a few from the list will be chosen to attend the conference.⁴⁰
- A clarification statement regarding the cancellation of the Afghan internal conference in Doha. The statement said that the Islamic Emirate agreed to hold another Afghan internal conference, similar to the one held in Moscow on February 6th 2019, and even agreed to increase the number of participants in the conference, although it was agreed that the participants would express only their personal opinions, the Kabul regime made efforts to depict the conference as a negotiations meeting between it and the Islamic Emirate. The organization added that the fact that the regime in Kabul sought to send delegates on its behalf and even published a list of participants without the agreement of the conference hosts, created a commotion. The organization reiterated that a meeting with the Kabul

³⁹ April 13th 2019, Telegram.

⁴⁰ April 17th 2019, Telegram.

government's delegation was irrelevant before the withdrawal of foreign forces in Afghanistan. The statement further noted that the number of participants on the part of the Kabul government were large and disproportionate to the number of participants on behalf of the Islamic Emirate. The organization added that the Islamic Emirate's negotiating team is working tirelessly to reach a peaceful resolution, and that the Kabul administration is sabotaging these efforts. At the end of the announcement, the organization thanked the hosts in Qatar for their efforts to hold the conference and promised that the organization's legitimate fight would continue until peace was achieved and an Islamic system of government was established in Afghanistan.⁴¹

- An announcement of a meeting between the UNAMA Chairman and the Deputy Leader of the Islamic Emirate for Political Affairs, **Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar**, in Doha, the Qatar capital. According to the announcement, the meeting revolved around the peace process, the civilian casualties and humanitarian aid in areas of the Islamic Emirate. The announcement added that Baradar encouraged the UNAMA Chairman to adhere to these principles impartially, while the UNAMA Chairman expressed his appreciation towards the organization for the decline in civilian casualties and promised to continue to promote the matters discussed and keep in touch with the Islamic Emirate's political office.⁴²
- Notice on the anniversary of the "Saur Revolution" ("April Revolution") that led to the communist takeover of Afghanistan and the end of communist rule exactly 14 years later. The announcement highlighted the jihadi struggle waged by Taliban Afghanistan against the communist regime that ruled Afghanistan for 14 years, which eventually led to the fall of the communist rule in Afghanistan and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in general. Later on, the organization sent a message to the US that their ideology could not survive in Afghanistan and

⁴¹ April 19th 2019, Telegram.

⁴² April 25th 2019, Telegram.

eventually they would also be forced to leave the country.⁴³

The Arabian Peninsula

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- From the publications of **al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula**:
 - Proclamation condemning the Saudi royal family, accusing it of pursuing a policy of persecuting Saudi citizens, innocent Muslims. The proclamation was published in light of the Saudi regime's intention to execute 37 Saudi civilians on charges of involvement in terrorism and subversion against the regime. The organization said the regime was responsible for a series of crimes against Muslims such as imprisonment, torture and killing of Muslims, as well as cooperation with the enemies of the Muslims and led by the US. The organization added that it considered the "victims" of the Saudi regime as shahids and threatened to take revenge on the Saudi regime in due course.⁴⁴
 - Proclamation by **Ansar al-Sharia**, affiliated with **al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula**, regarding prisoners from amongst the organization's operatives who are held captive by the **Islamic State organization in the Yemen Province**. The proclamation opened by saying that fights between the two organizations have recently erupted because of the desire of the Ansar al-Sharia organization to release their members from the hands of the latter. This was after they embarked on military activity against the Houthi militias but fell captive to the Islamic State. The organization added that its request to release its members from captivity was met with a refusal by the Islamic State organization, which even denied that it has captured them. Following the proclamation, the organization again called for the Islamic State organization to release its people and promised to release prisoners of the Islamic State. At the end of the proclamation, the organization made it clear

⁴³ April 27th 2019, Telegram.

⁴⁴ April 25th 2019, Telegram.

that the Islamic State organization is responsible for the wellbeing of its captives.⁴⁵

- From the publications of the **Al-Hedaya Media Foundation**, assisting in propaganda for **al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula**:
 - A video entitled "The Conversations of the Returnees". The video focuses on the delegitimization of the Islamic State branch in Yemen through interviews with former members of the aforementioned branch, who defected from its ranks and joined the al-Qaeda organization in Yemen.⁴⁶

The Islamic State in the Yemen Province

- From the publications of the **Islamic State Organization in the Yemen Province**:
 - *The Al Bayda Governorate*: An encouragement video for hijrah (immigration) to the "Islamic State" territories. The video featured a number of operatives who emigrated to the "Islamic State" in Yemen who spoke in praise of the Islamic State and glorified life in its shadow, along with an emphasis on the Islamic ban on living in the "heresy countries" (Dar al-Kufr). It has also been clarified that only the territories of the "Islamic State" are considered as "Islamic lands" (Dar al-Islam) and therefore every Muslim is obliged to emigrate to them. Alongside the messages from the operatives, the video was accompanied by "nashids" (hymns) glorifying the act of hijrah while presenting quotes from the Islamic tradition and other parts of it including footage from attacks on the Houthis in the Qifa region of Yemen and criticism of the sheikhs, mainly from Saudi Arabia, who were depicted as the lackeys of the "tyrannical regimes". At the end of the video, there was a call for local jihad in cases where the caliphate areas could not be reached.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ April 17th 2019, Telegram.

⁴⁶ April 6th 2019, <https://pastethis.to/qiUomHqJoGd> ; <https://www.al-aafaq.net/vb/showthread.php?t=779>.

⁴⁷ <https://justpaste.it/4a67o>



Encouragement from the al-Bayda Governorate in Yemen to emigrate to the Caliphate territories

- The **al-Muwahiddeen Baydha** media group, assisting on propaganda of the **Islamic State organization in Yemen**, has issued a proclamation condemning al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. According to it, the latter purports to depict itself as protecting the dignity of women and children but in practice it operates differently. It was stated that on March 27, several operatives of the al-Qaeda organization broke into a small women's tent, opened fire directly on one of them and killed her, and then even plundered the contents of the tent. According to the organization, the incident proves that al-Qaeda is responsible for crimes against innocent Muslims. This is when it blames the Islamic State of crimes it has never committed like the murder of a girl that has occurred recently.⁴⁸

Iraq

The Islamic State in the Iraq Province

- From the publications of the **Islamic State Organization in the Iraq Province**:
 - *The Diyala Governorate*: A video titled "May Allah grant you victory". The operatives who appeared in the video urged supporters of the organization to continue the attacks and not surrender even after the recent defeats in Syria. The video featured these defeats as no more than a 'divine test' aimed at 'purifying the ranks' from hypocrites (*munafiqun*). The video, which opens with an excerpt from Abu Muhammad al-Adnani's speech, included documentation of a group of fighters

⁴⁸ April 7th 2019, Telegram.

who renewed the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as well as photographs from the organization's attacks, such as an attack on a police headquarters, the use of an explosive device on SWAT forces, the rigging with explosives and detonation of a Shiite prayer site, the burning of vehicles of people accused of collaborating with the Iraqi government and attacks on the homes of PMF (Popular Mobilization Forces) personnel.

Much of the video included recordings of executions of militants who fought for the Islamic State, and in particular from amongst the Tribal Mobilization Forces (TMF).

- In this context, the video included a call for the Sunni tribes to refrain from cooperating with the Iraqi government and providing information on the "Islamic State". Cases were also presented in which the Mukhtar [chief of the tribe or village] served as an intelligence source for the Iraqi authorities and was subsequently eliminated by the organization's fighters. The video was signed with a filmed confession of another Mukhtar who cooperated with Iraqi security forces and was executed via beheading.⁴⁹



The execution of the Mukhtar of a village in the Diyala Governorate accused of cooperating with Iraqi security forces

- A video documenting the organization's operatives in the Salah al-Din District preparing roadside charges (see photo).⁵⁰

⁴⁹ April 14th 2019, <https://cdn.jwplayer.com/players/OpAZgQJX-14odYPB5.html>.

⁵⁰ April 7th 2019, Telegram.



Al-Sham

Syria

Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham

- From the publications of the **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham** organization, an umbrella organization of jihad operatives in the Idlib province in Syria:
 - A message congratulating the residents of Algeria and Sudan on the ousting of al-Bashir from the Sudanese government and on the ousting of Bouteflika from the Algerian government. The organization claimed that ousting them from the regime heralded the second wave of the Arab Spring and signaled a change in the region. Later on, the organization called on Algerian and Sudanese residents to continue the fight against the government to the end and replace it with the Sharia regime. The organization also called on the people of Sudan and Algeria to be wary of the anti-revolutionary forces that may seize power as has happened in Egypt and Tunisia.⁵¹
 - An announcement from the public relations officer of the Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham organization, **Imad al-Din Mujahid**, who refutes the claims of the official spokesperson of the Astana delegation, Iman al-Asami, according to which the Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham leadership met with representatives of the Russian occupation to discuss the bombings on Idlib and the matter of the immigrants. According to Mujahid, these are false allegations intended to aid Russia's

⁵¹ April 12th 2019, Telegram.

propaganda and the Alawi regime.⁵²

- A video on the capturing of a squad belonging to the "Islamic State" in the Aleppo region.⁵³

Hurras al-Din

- From the publications of the **Duwat al-Tawhid** organization, an organization of Islamic preachers affiliated with **Hurras al-Din**, the **al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria**:
 - Videos including Friday sermons given by a religious cleric in the **Duwat al-Tawhid** organization over the course of April. In the sermons, the preacher sought to strengthen the spirit of the members of the organization and emphasized the importance of keeping calm and being patient until the arrival of victory over the enemy.⁵⁴ In addition, the organization published a proclamation relating to its activities, such as giving classes at mosques, giving Friday sermons, conducting forums on Islamic religion, conducting tours at the fighting fronts against the enemy and more. It was stated that the organization's goals are to mobilize Muslim believers into jihad for God, to wage a propaganda war against the enemy, to spread faith in the uniqueness of God, and more.⁵⁵

Hurras al-Din

- From the publications of the Operations Room of "**Hurras al-Din**" (Incite the Believers) shared by several rebel factions in Syria, including **Hurras al-Din, al-Qaeda's branch in Syria**:
 - A number of proclamations claiming responsibility for military operations carried out by the operatives against targets of Syrian military forces. In addition, a video was published containing interviews with several operators of the Operations Room

⁵² April 12th 2019, Telegram.

⁵³ April 16th 2019, Telegram.

⁵⁴ April 6th 2019; April 9th 2019; April 15th 2019, Telegram.

⁵⁵ April 24th 2019, Telegram.

about their activities.⁵⁶

Ansar al-Tawhid

- From the publications of the **Ansar al-Tawhid** organization, a Salafi Jihadi organization in Idlib, Syria, affiliated with **al-Qaeda**:
 - A video focusing on the horrors of the civil war in Syria while pointing a finger at the Syrian regime. One of the organization's activists accused the latter of killing civilian population and threatened revenge against the regime. Later, the organization's military operations against the Syrian and Russian military forces were documented.⁵⁷

The Gaza Strip – Sinai

The Islamic State in the Sinai Peninsula

- From the publications of the **Islamic State in the Sinai Peninsula** organization:
 - A video titled "Promise and Steadfastness". At the beginning of the video, one member of the Sinai organization named **Abu Hajir al-Misri** (see photo) gave a speech before leaving for a suicide bombing attack on an Egyptian policing center in the city of Sheikh Zuweid. In his remarks, he sought to strengthen the hands of Syrian activists following the loss of Baghuz, Syria's last stronghold, and stressed that patience should be exercised and fighting must continue until the promised divine victory. He also swore allegiance again to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the organization, and clarified that he is considered the only legitimate leader of the Muslim nation. Later in the video, Abu Hajir was documented as saying goodbye to his organization members in preparation for his suicide bombing. At the end of the video, his "martyrdom" was



⁵⁶ April 16th 2019; April 23rd 2019; April 26th 2019; April 27th 2019, Telegram.

⁵⁷ April 28th 2019, Telegram.

reported to have killed several from amongst the Egyptian police forces and residents of Sinai were warned to stay away from concentrations of Egyptian security forces as they were targets for the organization's operatives.⁵⁸

- In issue no. 177 of the "**al-Naba**" publication, an official journal of the organization, an article was published about an "Islamic State" fighter in the Sinai Peninsula known as **Abu Hajir al-Misri**. Al-Masri reportedly committed a suicide attack against a security center in Sheikh Zawid in Sinai to avenge the "brothers in Syria" and the Muslims in Egypt who have suffered much from local security forces. The report ended with a warning to the Muslims in Egypt and Sinai to stay away from police and military centers in general, especially in the cities of Sheikh Zawid and Al-Arish.⁵⁹

In issue no. 178 of the "**al-Naba**" publication an article was published on the subject of **Abu Muhammad al-Muhajer**, one of the perpetrators of the attack on the Egyptian police checkpoint in the Ras Sadr area of southern Sinai. The article states that Abu Muhammad came to the Islamic State territory from the Caucasus and that the attack in which he participated was a painful blow to the Egyptian regime as it was carried out in a location considered a tourist area, which could in turn harm the Egyptian economy.⁶⁰



Abu Muhammad al-Muhajer, a member of the Islamic State in the Sinai Peninsula, of Caucasus origin, who carried out an attack against a checkpoint of the Egyptian

⁵⁸ April 19th 2019, <https://youtu.be/mP1l-JVLWGA>.

⁵⁹ <https://pastethis.to/HJDGF>.

⁶⁰ <https://pastethis.to/HGJDN>.

responding to the requests of the people, they chose to ignore them. Al-'Inabi warned of the generals' trickery and their conspiracy to thwart the popular protest and implored protesters to strive for a radical and comprehensive change in the system of government where the principles of Islam serve as the guidelines. Al-'Inabi also called on the Algerian military and security forces to be attentive to the demands of the people, to assist them in the protest and not to cooperate with the ruling elite. Finally, he urged the protesters to continue protesting until the overthrow of the regime and the application of Islamic law.⁶²

- Proclamation with an obituary in memory of Sheikh **Abbas Madani**, a Salafi cleric and prominent leader of the Islamic Salvation Front (FLN) that fought the Algerian regime during the Algerian civil war in the 1990s but that eventually reached an agreement with it. The organization noted that although Madani did not support Jihad and the organization's fighting against the Algerian regime, it considered it appropriate to testify that Madani defended the religion of Islam, the Muslim nation and the Algerian people. At the conclusion of the proclamation, the organization praised Madani's virtues and eulogized him again.⁶³

Mali

Jamaat Nusrat al Islam wal Muslimin

- From the publications of the **al-Zalaka** media institute, belonging to the **Jamaat Nusrat al Islam wal Muslimin** organization, an umbrella organization of jihad activists spread across Mali:
 - Claiming responsibility for the assault on a G5 military base in the Koulikoro Province on April 21st. According to the organization, the attack resulted in the deaths of 16 Mali military personnel, more than 20 wounded and the capturing of two of them. The organization further noted that the attack was in revenge for the "Ogossagou massacre" in which many of the organization's operatives were killed

⁶² April 4th 2019, <https://emaad.net/نعيذكم-بالله-أن-تتراجعوا/> ; <https://vimeo.com/328492177>.

⁶³ April 29th 2019, Telegram.

as a result of an attack carried out by Mali and French military forces. The organization added that the offensive was the first in a series of planned attacks against French forces in Mali and its allies until the last French soldier left Mali and until the application of Sharia therein.⁶⁴

Kongo

- The **Amaq news agency**, belonging to the **Islamic State** organization, claimed responsibility for several attacks carried out by some of its soldiers against the Congo army in north-eastern Congo and near the Congo-Uganda border.⁶⁵

Somalia

The Al-Shabab Al-Mujahidin movement

- Reports by the **Shahada** News Agency, affiliated with the **al-Shabab al-Mujahidin movement**:
 - Reporting on the execution of 4 spies working for the Britain, Djibouti and Somalia intelligence, by al-Shabaab in southern Somalia.⁶⁶
 - Interview with the organization's official spokesman, **Ali Mahmud Raji**, regarding recent developments in Somalia. According to al-Raji, the organization has intensified its attacks on sensitive areas of the Somali capital, Mogadishu, because enemies are concentrating their forces in the region and there are plans to attack Muslims there. He said the attacks focused on "hotels," because they constitute military bases for the infidels. He added, threatening, that the organization would continue to harm any structure where the enemy was hiding. Later in the interview, Raji addressed the protest of the Somali security forces against the government for the withholding of their salary and urged them to repent and join the Mujahideen. Raji also referred to the withdrawal of the African Union Force, especially the

⁶⁴ April 23rd 2019, Telegram.

⁶⁵ April 19th 2019, Telegram.

⁶⁶ April 1st 2019, <http://shahadanews.com/?p=3187>.

Kenyan forces who had recently withdrawn from Somalia, claiming that it showed the defeat of the African Union Forces in Somalia and that they had failed to deal with the Mujahideen attacks. At the end of the interview, Raji called on Muslims to support the Mujahideen, to stay away from centers of heretics and report them to the Mujahideen. He added that Somali residents should avoid tribal conflicts and focus on fighting the heretic enemy.⁶⁷

- Reporting on increased al-Shabaab attacks in the Somali capital, Mogadishu and on it expanding its control over various rural areas of the country. The report detailed the al-Shabaab terrorist attacks against Somali security forces in Mogadishu over the past two weeks. The report also referred to the organization's takeover of villages in the Middle Shabelle District and of a town near the Somali-Kenya border.⁶⁸

South East Asia

Sri Lanka

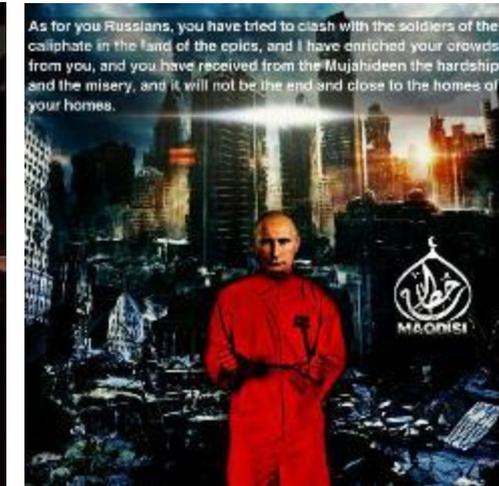
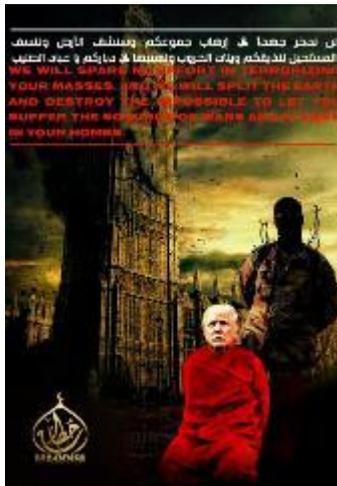
The Islamic State

- The **Amaq news agency**, belonging to the **Islamic State** organization, claimed responsibility for a series of deadly attacks by a terrorist cell in Sri Lanka that swore allegiance to the Islamic State, against a number of churches and hotels during Easter, killing about 253 people and injuring about 500.⁶⁹ Following the attack, there has been a significant increase in the number of publications praising the attacks on the organization's official and informal propaganda channels. Thus, for example, a media group called al-Iraad, supporting the organization, has released a banner detailing the achievements of the terrorist attack in Sri Lanka (inaccurate information) – 1,000 killed and wounded, the number of foreign fatalities and more.

⁶⁷ April 1st 2019, <http://shahadanews.com/?p=3194>.

⁶⁸ April 11th 2019, <http://shahadanews.com/?p=3300>.

⁶⁹ April 22nd 2019, Telegram.



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.

ICT is a non-profit organization located at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, Israel which relies exclusively on private donations and revenue from events, projects and programs.

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.