

## Jihadi Online Forums Call for al-Qaeda Involvement in the U.S. Election

As the U.S. presidential elections near, online Jihadi forums have experienced a surge in the number of posts calling for al-Qaeda's involvement and ultimate influence on the election results. In the days leading up to the election, the ICT Jihadi Websites Monitoring group has conducted a survey of some of the most prominent correspondence addressing the matter.

A member of the Al-Hesbah online forum, who refers to himself as "The Secret Soldier" and has been registered since January 2005, wrote that al-Qaeda must influence the results of the U.S. elections:<sup>1</sup>

*"It is inconceivable that such an important world event will take place without the prominent presence of al-Qaeda. There are only three weeks left until the American elections, and the world is waiting for the next president – God's wrath be upon his head – of the United States. No one in their right mind can deny that the next president will be the product of al-Qaeda. Furthermore, al-Qaeda – Allah grant it victory – is the one appointing the new president.*

*There is no escaping the fact that al-Qaeda will take action during these days, whether on a military level (in the form of military operations in the heart of America or against American interests abroad), or on the propaganda-informational level (in the form of a speech by Sheikh Osama bin Laden, or by Dr. Ayman [Al-Zawahiri].*

*As for military action, it is possible – if Allah wishes it – but whether it will take place on the election days, before them or afterwards – that depends on the discretion of the leaders of the war."<sup>2</sup>*

At this point, the Al-Hesbah member quotes a statement made by an al-Qaeda activist in an interview by the Al-Yaqin Media Center several weeks prior. The interview addressed anticipated attacks by al-Qaeda against U.S. and European targets, especially in relation to the U.S. electoral campaign.<sup>3</sup> In response to this statement, the forum user writes:

*"I do not believe this threat was made in vain! When al-Qaeda makes a threat, it executes the threat, and I do not think this interview differs much from the interview held with Sheikh Osama three months before the blessed attacks in the United States!*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=195774>

<sup>2</sup> On October 10, an online user registered to the forum since December 2007 wrote that he predicts the attack will be postponed until after Obama's victory in the elections – an attack that will herald in the end of the United States.

See <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=194929>

<sup>3</sup> The interview and its implications were published separately to a limited distribution list.

*Furthermore, whoever closely follows al-Qaeda knows that whenever an important date is approaching, Al-Qaeda takes action in some way...*

*The most important thing in all of this – according to my humble evaluation – is the very likely possibility that the "Islamic State in Iraq"<sup>4</sup> will take part in this military operation...*

*Another significant point is al-Qaeda's ongoing threats against the west; the most important fact is the threat made against the west by Sheikh Osama, who promised: "The news is what is seen not what is heard".*

*As for the propaganda-informational level, there is no escaping that Sheikh Osama will appear at the time, in order to determine the winner in the elections...<sup>5</sup>*

*Obama is now leading over McCain. Therefore, we will follow the events and see how McCain wins only thanks to a video recording of Sheikh Osama, which will be broadcast over American television channels... the preferred candidate by the Salafist Jihad is the fool's brother, the obedient McCain, because he will lead America into the abyss..."*

On October 26, "Aal Hakim", a member of the Al-Hesbah forum since November 2005, wrote a post titled "Sheikh Osama's televised speech before the American elections!"<sup>6</sup> "Aal Hakim" writes that the United States will elect Obama as its next president due to President Bush's failing policies in both the economic and political spheres – resulting in an unfavourable outcome for al-Qaeda. "Aal Hakim" explains:

*"Obama and the politicians of the Democratic Party have decided that retreating from Iraq and Afghanistan would be their next step, and since the war in Iraq and Afghanistan is the main reason for the state of the American economy, a renewed blossoming of America is expected..."*

*We arrive at one conclusion, and that is that if the Democratic Party's candidate, Obama, gets control of the reins of government of the "Black House" – it will be good for them and a disaster for us.*

*The solution: a televised speech by Sheikh Osama before the American elections!"*

Another forum participant, "Jalal", a registered Al-Hesbah member since December 2007, responded<sup>7</sup> to this post by suggesting that action be taken against the Democratic candidate by, among other means, conducting an "Arabization" of old photographs of Obama and publishing them on American websites and online forums. He suggests posting the photos during the actual elections so that Obama's staff does not have the opportunity to discredit them.

<sup>4</sup> The "Islamic State in Iraq" is the parent (umbrella) organization for a number of Jihadi groups

<sup>5</sup> In this regard it is important to note that several days before the former presidential elections in the U.S. in 2004, Bin Laden published a video addressing the American people. See

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/arabic/middle\\_east\\_news/newsid\\_3966000/3966785.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/arabic/middle_east_news/newsid_3966000/3966785.stm)

<sup>6</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=196623>

<sup>7</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=196623>