



ICT
International Institute
for Counter-Terrorism
With the Support of Keren Daniel

ICT Incident and Activists Database

PERIODIC REVIEW

Summary of Terrorist Incidents and Counter-Terrorist Operations Worldwide May 2014

Highlights

- On May 10, Egyptian authorities charged 200 Ansar Bait al-Maqdas militants with carrying out more than 50 terrorist attacks that targeted police headquarters in Cairo, Mansoura, in the Nile Delta and South Sinai. The cell was also accused of collaborating with Hamas. Authorities said the group had operated in eight clusters, which oversaw eight different cells that handled recruitment, explosives making, arms smuggling from Libya, Sudan and Gaza, documenting attacks, monitoring targets and the implementation and planning of attacks.
- On May 19, Abu Hamza al-Masri was convicted of terrorism charges in New York following a four-week trial. The conviction was the culmination of a 10-year effort by US authorities to bring al-Masri to justice on US soil. Al-Masri was convicted of 11 counts of criminal conduct related to the taking of 16 hostages in Yemen in 1998. He was also found guilty of advocating violent jihad in Afghanistan in 2001 and conspiring to establish a jihad training camp in Oregon between June 2000 and December 2001. Al-Masri will be sentenced on September 9, 2014. If convicted, he faces life in prison.
- On May 23, 39 people were killed and 90 others were injured when five militants drove two sport utility vehicles (SUVs) into a busy marketplace in Urumqi, the capital of China's Xinjiang region. Witnesses said the militants threw 12 grenades at shoppers from the windows of the SUVs. Four of the attackers were killed during the incident and one was arrested the following day. No group claimed responsibility for the incident.
- On May 24, Mehdi Nemmouche, 29, opened fire at short range using a Kalashnikov assault rifle, killing four people, at the Jewish Museum of Belgium in Brussels. He escaped on foot and evaded arrest until he was captured by police in Marseilles, France on May 30. He was in possession of explosives at the time of his arrest.
- On May 25, a suicide truck bombing targeted the al-Fanar restaurant, popular with Syrian troops, in Idlib Province, Syria. The number of casualties was not clear. US officials confirmed that an American identified as Moner Mohammad Abu-Salha, who adopted the nom de guerre, Abu Huraira al-Amriki, had carried out the attack. Authorities said this was the first time an American had been involved in a suicide attack in Syria. Three other suicide bombings

occurred over the course of a day in the same area in Idlib Province. The Al-Nusra Front claimed responsibility for all of the incidents.

- On May 29, Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) announced that during his interrogation, Mahmoud Mohammad Issa Tuama, a senior Hamas operative, revealed that Hamas uses the charity, 'The Islamic Movement in Israel', as a front to advance Hamas activities and goals in Jerusalem, particularly in the financial field.
- On May 30, Spanish police dismantled a jihadist cell and arrested six individuals in Spain's North African territory of Melilla. The Spanish Interior Ministry said that the cell was planning to expand its activities to acquire weapons and manuals for preparing explosives, which would have increased its level of danger, turning it into a serious threat to national security.

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Europe

Belgium and France

On May 24, a gunman opened fire using a Kalashnov rifle at short range at the Jewish Museum of Belgium in Brussels, Belgium.¹ Belgian officials released a 30-second video clip from the museum's security cameras showing a man wearing a dark cap and a blue jacket enter the building. He then took the Kalashnikov rifle out of a bag and shot four people before leaving the museum on foot.² Authorities said he was not assisted by a driver of a getaway car.³ Four people were killed in the shooting. Two of the victims were identified as Israeli tourists Emanuel and Miriam Riva. The other victims worked at the museum; a French woman who was not identified and a Belgian man, named as Alexandre Strens, who was critically wounded in the attack and later died of his wounds (on June 6).⁴ Police launched an international manhunt for the attacker and on May 30, French police arrested Mehdi Nemmouche, 29, a French national during a random search at a bus station in Marseilles. At the time of his arrest, Nemmouche was found to be in possession of an AK-47 rifle and another gun. The AK-47 was reportedly wrapped in a flag bearing the symbol of the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham (ISIS).⁵ Authorities identified Nemmouche as the perpetrator of the attack and said he was known to French intelligence at the time of the attack.⁶ It was reported that, despite acting alone, Nemmouche was inspired by Mohammed Merah, the perpetrator of the March 2012 attacks in Toulouse.⁷

Netherlands

On May 15, a 21-year-old man whose identity was not released to the public was arrested in Scheveningen, a coastal suburb of the Hague. Authorities said the suspect had spent six months

¹ Telegraph, "Brussels shooting: claims Israeli couple were assassinated", May 27, 2014.

² Reuters, "Police hunt Brussels Jewish Museum gunman, France tightens security", May 27, 2014.

³ Jerusalem post, "Analysis: Hezbollah or al-Qaida behind Brussels terror attack?", May 28, 2014.

⁴ BBC, "Brussels Jewish Museum killings: Fourth victim dies", June 4, 2014.

⁵ BBC, "Brussels Jewish Museum killings: Suspect 'admitted attack'", June 1, 2014.

⁶ Long War Journal, "Analysis: Blowback from the Syrian jihad has begun", June 4, 2014.

⁷ Jpost, " Analysis: Suspect in Brussels shooting proves 'lone wolf' attackers are never really alone ", June 2, 2014 For further details on the Toulouse attack see ICT database reports March 2012 <http://www.ict.org.il/Article/266/Summary%20of%20Terrorist%20Incidents%20and%20CT%20Operations%20March%202012>.

fighting with Al-Qaeda linked militants in Syria in 2013. The suspect was charged with plotting to commit an armed robbery “to finance jihad.” As part of an undercover operation upon his return, he told police that he could obtain weapons and acquired a shotgun, a Magnum revolver and a small handgun. Police arrested him as he was allegedly on his way to carry out the robbery at a yacht marina in Scheveningen. He was remanded and faced charges of planning a terrorist attack.⁸

Norway

On May 27, Norwegian police arrested three people charged with supporting or participating in a terrorist organization, namely the ISIS in Syria. Authorities claimed the suspects were recruited as foreign fighters. Two of the men were born in the former Yugoslavia, while the third is from Somalia. Authorities said did not specify a charge for the third person but said that all three were accused of providing either financial or material aid to the ISIS.⁹

Spain

On May 30, Spanish police dismantled a jihadist cell operating in the country and arrested six people in Spain’s North African territory of Melilla. According to Spain’s Interior Ministry, the cell was recruiting and sending jihadists to “terrorist organizations” based in Mali and Libya. Authorities said the cell's suspected leader, Benaissa Laghmouchi Beghdadi, 42, had recently returned to Spain from Syria and Mali before his arrest. The other five suspects arrested were identified as Mustafa Al Lal Mohamed, 42; Kamal Mohamed Dris, 32; Rachid Abdel Nahet Hamed, 37; Mohamed Benali, 26; and Mustafa Zizaoui Mohand, 26.¹⁰ The Spanish Interior Ministry said that the cell was planning to expand its activities to acquire weapons and manuals for preparing explosives, which would have increased its level of danger, turning it into a serious threat to national security.¹¹

United Kingdom

On May 20, Mashudur Choudhury, 31 was convicted at Kingston Crown Court of engaging in conduct

⁸ Al-Arabiya, “Dutch Syria fighter arrested planning ‘jihad heist’”, May 21, 2014.

⁹ Reuters, “Norway arrests three for aiding al Qaeda offshoot in Syria, joining as fighters”, May 27, 2014.

¹⁰ CNN, “Spain arrests 6 suspected of recruiting for terror groups”, May 30, 2014.

¹¹ UPI, “Six suspected terrorism recruiters arrested in Spain”, May 31, 2014.

in preparation of terrorist acts linked to Syria under Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006.¹² He was arrested at Gatwick Airport upon his return to the UK and faced sentencing in June 2014,¹³ after police were tipped off by the Muslim community in Portsmouth.¹⁴ Authorities said that he was the first person from the UK to be convicted of attending terrorist training camps in Syria.¹⁵

On May 30, the New IRA terrorist group allegedly tried to bomb the Everglades Hotel in Derry because it recently hosted a police recruitment fair.¹⁶ Authorities said masked man threw a grenade into the reception area of the hotel. The hotel was evacuated after the device was reported at 23:15. Bomb experts carried out a controlled explosion. There were no casualties but the hotel reception sustained extensive damage.¹⁷

Africa

Kenya

On May 3, three people were killed and several others were wounded in two explosions in Mombasa.¹⁸ Initially, a grenade was reportedly thrown into a bus that had just arrived from Nairobi. The other explosion targeted a bar near a hotel in the Nyali beach area. There were no reported casualties in the Nyali incident.¹⁹ No groups have claimed responsibility for the attacks. However, authorities blamed Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen.²⁰

On May 16, two improvised explosive devices detonated in the Gikomba market, Nairobi, killing 10 people and injuring 76 others.²¹ Authorities said the first explosion struck a minibus taxi. It was near a market best known for selling second-hand clothes from wooden stalls with corrugated iron roofs. The second explosion targeted a shop within the market.²² Authorities said two suspects were

¹² AFP, "Briton convicted of Syria terror offence", May 21, 2014.

¹³ BBC, "Mashudur Choudhury: Serial liar and jihadist", May 20, 2014.

¹⁴ Guardian, "First British conviction for Syria-related terror offence", May 16, 2014.

¹⁵ BBC, "Syria conflict: First Briton convicted of terrorist offences", May 20, 2014.

¹⁶ Guardian, "New IRA allegedly responsible for Derry hotel bomb attack", May 30, 2014.

¹⁷ BBC, "Londonderry explosion: 'Firebomb' explodes in Everglades Hotel", May 30, 2014.

¹⁸ Reuters, "Mombasa attacks kill at least three people", May 4, 2014.

¹⁹ BBC, "Twin explosions rock Kenyan city of Mombasa", May 3, 2014.

²⁰ AFP, "Three dead, several injured in twin bomb attacks in Mombasa, Kenya", May 4, 2014.

²¹ Reuters, "Back-to-back blasts kill at least 10 in Kenyan capital", May 16, 2014.

²² DW, "New terror attacks hit Kenya as tourists leave", May 16, 2014.

arrested.²³ No group has claimed responsibility, but the authorities blamed Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen.²⁴

Nigeria

On May 1, a car bomb exploded in New Nyanya, a suburb of Abuja, killing 19 people and injuring 80 others.²⁵ Authorities said the explosion targeted a police checkpoint near a bus station. Once the car arrived at the checkpoint, a man got out of the car and began running away as the car detonated. Six vehicles were damaged in the attack. Authorities also said two unexploded IEDs were found at the scene. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Boko Haram.²⁶

On May 20, two car bombs exploded at a bus terminal and market in Jos, killing 118 people and wounding 45 others.²⁷ Authorities said the explosions targeted the Terminus market and took place 20 to 30 minutes apart, setting fire to the entire venue.²⁸ The second explosion targeted the rescue workers who had rushed to the scene. Authorities said that Boko Haram were mimicking techniques used by militants in Iraq by using the back-to-back blast tactic, whose aim is to maximize civilian casualties. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Boko Haram.²⁹

Somalia

On May 12, a suicide car bomber detonated his explosives outside a café in Baidoa, killing at least 11 people, including three soldiers, and injuring 20 others.³⁰ Authorities said the bomber targeted the former governor of Bay region who was in a local bank opposite the cafeteria at the time. His cars, along with other cars that were also parked there, were destroyed. Some of his bodyguards were seriously injured but he was unharmed.³¹ No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Al-

²³ BBC, "Kenya's Nairobi hit by twin bomb blasts in Gikomba market", May 16, 2014.

²⁴ NYTimes, "Explosions Kill 10 in Kenya as Western Embassies Warn of Threats", May 16, 2014.

²⁵ AP, "Death toll rises from car bomb in Nigerian capital Abuja", May 2, 2014.

²⁶ BBC, "Abuja blast: Car bomb attack rocks Nigerian capital", May 2, 2014.

²⁷ AP, "2 bomb blasts in Nigeria kill at least 118", May 20, 2014.

²⁸ CNN, "Blasts at market kill 118 in central Nigeria, official says", May 20, 2014.

²⁹ Reuters, "118 killed in twin bomb blasts in central Nigerian city of Jos", May 20, 2014.

³⁰ Garowe, "Somalia: Ten killed in Baidoa suicide bombing", May 12, 2014.

³¹ Reuters, "Car bomb kills at least 12 people in Somalia", May 12, 2014.

Shabab al- Mujahideen militants.³²

Sudan

On May 17, Aminu Sadiq Ogwuche was arrested in Khartoum and charged with perpetrating and serving as the instigator of recent Boko Haram attacks.³³ Ogwuche was arrested by Interpol on an international warrant in connection with the April 2014 Abuja bombing in the suburb of Nyanya,³⁴ and the May 1 attacks in Abuja (see above).³⁵ He was also accused of involvement in other suspected Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria in recent months and was questioned about the whereabouts of the missing schoolgirls who were kidnapped Chibok in Borno State, Nigeria in April 2014. Ogwuche served in the intelligence unit of the Nigerian Army between 2001 and 2006. Five other suspects were also arrested. They were identified as: Ahmad Abubakar, 43; Muhammed Ishaq, 30; Yau Saidu, 28; Anas Isah, 22; and Adamu Yusuf, a cleric, 43. The suspects claimed that they bombed the Nyanya Motor Park in retaliation for the killing of a Boko Haram member at the park a week before the incident.³⁶

Tunisia

On May 21, eight militants who had infiltrated Tunisia from Libya were arrested and charged with plotting to assassinate security officials and mount attacks against government institutions.³⁷ The ministry added that the detainees had received weapons and explosives training in Libya.³⁸ Tunisian Interior Ministry spokesman, Mohamed Ali Aroui, said that the suspects were arrested this week based on intelligence that a terrorist group had crossed into Tunisia from Libya. However, no further details were released about the arrests or identity of the militants.³⁹

³² AP, "Suicide car bomb attack kills 11 in Somalia", May 12, 2014.

³³ British-born Boko Haram 'ringleader' was 'radicalised at UK university', Ma 12, 2014.

³⁴ See April 2014 ICT database report for further details of the incident.

³⁵ See April 2014 report for me details of the attack.

³⁶ AllAfrica, "Sudan: Nyanya Bombing Mastermind, Aminu Ogwuche, Arrested in Sudan", May 15, 2014.

³⁷ Jamestown Foundation, "Tunisian Jihadists Establishing New Networks with Libyan Islamists", May 30, 2014.

³⁸ Reuters, "Tunisia arrests Islamists from Libya, says were planning attacks", May 21, 2014.

³⁹ AP, "Tunisia arrests 8 suspected of terrorist plot", May 22, 2014.

Middle East

Egypt

On May 2, a near-simultaneous suicide bombing killed three people and wounded eight others in the Sinai Peninsula.⁴⁰ Authorities said two suicide bombers attacked shortly after dawn in the town of el-Tor in the southern part of the peninsula. In the first attack, the bomber targeted an army checkpoint, killing two people, including one soldier, and wounding five others. In the second, the suicide bomber detonated in front of a bus. Four passengers were wounded in that explosion. Following these incidents, an explosion near a court building in Cairo killed one person and wounded three others. Authorities said a traffic police post near the court was the target of this incident. No group claimed responsibility for either attack.⁴¹

On May 10, Egyptian authorities charged 200 suspected militants with carrying out more than 50 terrorist attacks, killing 40 policemen and 15 civilians, and collaborating with Hamas. Authorities claimed all the militants were members of Ansar Bait al-Maqdas. 98 of the defendants were tried in absentia. According to authorities, the significant attacks carried out by the cell included a failed assassination attempt against the Interior Minister in September 2013, and a December 2013 attack against the security headquarters in the Nile Delta city of Mansoura that killed 16 people, almost all policemen. Authorities said the group had operated in eight clusters, which oversaw eight different cells that handled recruitment, explosives making, arms smuggling from Libya, Sudan and Gaza, documenting attacks, monitoring targets and implementation and planning of attacks.⁴² The group's leading figures were identified as Tawfiq Freij and AQAP militant Mohammed Badawi. Authorities said they were involved in training Ansar Bait al-Maqdas recruits in Gaza with Hamas. Freij was killed in March 2014 when he accidentally set off a bomb that he was transporting in a car.⁴³

Iraq

On May 13, 28 people were killed and 82 others were injured in a series of bombings in mainly Shi'ite

⁴⁰ Reuters, "Egyptian militants claim attacks near tourist sites in Sinai", May 4, 2014.

⁴¹ AP, "Militants claim responsibility for twin Sinai attacks", May 4, 2014.

⁴² AP, "Egypt to try 200 suspected of terrorist attacks", May 10, 2014.

⁴³ AFP, "Egypt to Try 200 Alleged Jihadists for 'Terrorism' ", May 10, 2014.

areas of Baghdad. In Sadr City neighborhood, a car bomb exploded in the morning hours, killing four people and wounding six others. Another car bomb elsewhere in Sadr City exploded near a cluster of homes, killing two people and wounding seven others. A car bomb then exploded in a commercial street in Baghdad's eastern district of Jamila, killing three people and wounding 10 others. Police said a fourth car bomb exploded near a traffic police office in eastern Baghdad, killing four people and injuring seven others. Authorities also said that one car bomb exploded at a square in downtown Baghdad, killing two people and wounding eight others, and another one exploded on a commercial street in Baghdad's Shi'ite eastern district of Ur, killing five people and wounding 11 others. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a car bomb exploded near an outdoor market in the eastern Shi'ite suburb of Maamil, killing three people and wounding 14 others.⁴⁴ Finally, several hours later, a car bomb exploded near a market in Baghdad's southern Dora district, killing five people and wounding 12 others.⁴⁵ In a separate incident, a car bomb detonated at a parking lot outside a main hospital in the city of Balad, some 80 km north of Baghdad, killing five people and injuring 15 others.⁴⁶

On May 22, 24 Shi'ite pilgrims were killed in three separate bomb attacks in Baghdad. The bombs exploded while Shi'ite pilgrims walked towards the shrine of Moussa al-Kadhim in Baghdad. Tens of thousands of Shi'ite pilgrims were visiting the shrine to mark the anniversary of the seventh Shi'ite imam's death in 799. The first attack of the day was a car bombing in the Urr District. At least ten people were killed in the explosion. The second and the third explosions took place in the Mansour and Bab al-Sharji neighborhoods, respectively, and were carried out by suicide bombers. A total of 14 people were killed in those two explosions. No group has claimed responsibility for the bombings but authorities blamed Al-Qaeda linked militants.⁴⁷

On May 27, 19 people were killed and 24 others were injured when a suicide bomber detonated his explosive belt inside the Abu al-Timan Shi'a mosque in Baghdad as worshipers were performing ablutions ahead of mid-day prayers.⁴⁸ No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but

⁴⁴ IANS, "21 killed in Iraq car bomb attacks", May 13, 2014.

⁴⁵ AFP, "Baghdad bombs against Shiites kill 25", May 13, 2014.

⁴⁶ AP, "Car bomb blasts kill 34 as Iraqis await vote count", May 13, 2014.

⁴⁷ RT, "At Least 24 Shiite Pilgrims Killed In Baghdad Bombings: Reports", May 22 2014.

⁴⁸ AFP, "Suicide bomber kills 13 at Baghdad mosque", May 27, 2014.

authorities blamed the ISIS.⁴⁹

Israel and the West Bank

On May 1, Israeli police discovered a female corpse with stab wounds to her upper body, abandoned in a parking lot on the outskirts of the Ramat Gavriel industrial area in Migdal Haemek. The body was sent to the Abu Kabir Forensic Institute for an autopsy. The victim was later identified as Shelly Dadon, 20, from Afula. Fifteen minutes after the body was found, Dadon's relatives filed a missing person report with the Afula Police station. They said that Dadon had left home in the morning and was on her way to a job interview in the industrial area, and had not been heard from since. A gag order was placed on the case.⁵⁰ Initially there was some confusion in the media over this case as whether or not it was politically motivated or not, but later the Shin Bet confirmed it was terror-related and they arrested the perpetrator.⁵¹

On May 29, Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) announced that Mahmoud Mohammad Issa Tuama, a senior Hamas operative who was arrested at the Allenby Bridge in April 2014, revealed during his interrogation the extent of the cooperation between Hamas and the charity the 'Islamic Movement

⁴⁹ Xinhua, "35 people killed in bomb attacks across Iraq", May 27, 2014.

⁵⁰ Haaretz, "Woman found stabbed to death in suspected terror attack", May 1, 2014.

⁵¹ Jpost, "Israeli-Arab taxi driver indicted for Shelly Dadon murder; motives unclear", July 9, 2014.

In mid-June, a gag order on the murder investigation was partially lifted, revealing that six Israeli-Arab suspects were arrested in connection with the case and later released. The six detainees denied their involvement in the killing after being arrested on May 4. One of the minors was released on May 15; two days later the remaining suspects were freed. While the interrogations yielded no developments, the investigation then found a separate lead, but information about it remained under a court order. Israeli authorities then announced on July 8, that Yousef Hassin Khalifah, 36, a taxi driver from the Galilee village of I'billin, was arrested and charged with Dadon's murder, in what they said was a nationally motivated attack. During questioning, he confessed to attack. Halifa, admitted he drove Dadon on May 1 to the Migdal Haemek industrial center, where she was headed to a job interview, and later stabbed her to death. According to Halifa, after disposing of the body in a parking lot, he threw out Dadon's cellphone and the weapon and cleaned the bloodstains from his car. After escaping the scene of the crime, Hussein disposed of her wallet near Beit Zarzir. For more details see: Times of Israel, "Suspect held in killing of 20-year-old Shelley Dadon", July 8, 2014.

Jerusalem Post, "Israeli-Arab taxi driver indicted for Shelly Dadon murder; motives unclear", July 22, 2014.

in Israel', particularly in the financial field. He told the Shin Bet that eight representatives of the international Muslim Brotherhood sit on Hamas's Shura Council, which sets the group's policy and manages its activities. Tuama claimed that both Turkey and Qatar harbor members of Hamas's leadership, including many of the prisoners released in the Gilad Schalit deal. Tuama, who served in a key financial position in Hamas's leadership, said that until recently Iran had been the main source of Hamas funding. However, Iran stopped its funding in 2013, causing a financial crisis in the organization. He also claimed that Hamas operates a number of companies that generate funds, mostly in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, many of them in the real estate field.⁵² According to the Shin Bet, Mahmoud Tuama also said that Hamas uses the 'Islamic Movement' to transfer money to projects in Jerusalem, such as paying for Arab youths to remain constantly on the Temple Mount in the guise of religious students in order to prevent Jewish pilgrimage to the holy site. Hamas pays the youths a permanent salary of NIS 4,000-5,000 each month. Mahmoud Tuama added that Hamas keeps its ties with the Islamic Movement secret in order to prevent the movement from entanglements with Israeli authorities. Tuama revealed that Sheikh Raed Salah, head of the Islamic Movement's northern branch, is in secret contact with the leadership of Hamas. During his interrogation he also revealed connections between Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.⁵³

Lebanon

On May 25, Lebanese security forces arrested Omar Bakri Muhammad in Aley, in the mountains southeast of Beirut. He had been on the run in Lebanon since April 2014, when Lebanese security forces raided his home in Tripoli.⁵⁴ Lebanese authorities viewed him with increasing concern after he expressed support for the ISIS and called for it to activate cells in Lebanon. Lebanese authorities said that Muhammad denied ties to Al-Qaeda, but he admitted calling for the group's flag to be flown over Lebanon's presidential palace.⁵⁵

⁵² Ynet, "Captured Hamas member sheds light on Hamas ties to Islamic Movement", May 29, 2014.

⁵³ Jpost, "Islamic Movement in Israel serving as front for Hamas activities at Temple Mount", May 29, 2014.

⁵⁴ Independent, "Banned radical cleric Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohamed arrested in Lebanon over 'links to terrorism'", May 26, 2014.

⁵⁵ New York Times, "Lebanon Arrests Radical Cleric Who Backed Militants", May 26, 2014.

Saudi Arabia

On May 6, authorities in Saudi Arabia arrested 62 militants, including 35 Saudi nationals previously detained on terrorist-related charges, accused of being part of a cell linked to the ISIS and AQAP. Authorities also said an additional 44 cell member's evaded arrest.⁵⁶ The Saudi cell was reportedly planning to assassinate leaders and attack government targets in Saudi Arabia. The suspects were also allegedly involved in smuggling people and weapons across the southern Saudi border.⁵⁷ Saudi officials say their monitoring of "suspicious activities on social media networks" led to the arrests. Saudi security forces also dismantled a factory used to make explosives and electronic detonators and seized about 1 million Saudi riyals.⁵⁸

Syria

On May 2, a double car bombing in two villages in Hama Province killed 18 people, including 11 children, and injured 50 others in the towns of Jibreen and Humayri. The bombing caused extensive damage to a number of houses in the town.⁵⁹ No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Al-Qaeda linked militants.⁶⁰

On May 15, 43 people were killed and 80 others were wounded by a car bomb in a bus station on the Syrian side of the Bab al-Salam border crossing with Turkey.⁶¹ No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed the ISIS.⁶²

On May 25, four Al-Nusra Front militants carried out suicide car bombings into four regime forces' checkpoints in Idlib.⁶³ It is unclear how many people died in the incident. In the most significant of the four attacks, it was reported that the bomb contained 16 tons of explosives and targeted the al-Fanar restaurant in Idlib, a restaurant popular with Syrian troops.⁶⁴ On May 27, Al-Nusra Front

⁵⁶ Guardian, "Saudi Arabia breaks up 'al-Qaida-linked terror cell'", May 6, 2014.

⁵⁷ Bloomberg, "Saudi Militant Arrests Raises Fears About Syrian, Yemen Blow", May 7, 2014.

⁵⁸ VOA, "Saudi Authorities Uncover Militant Group", May 6, 2014.

⁵⁹ New York Times, "Car Bomb in Central Syria Kill at Least 19", May 2, 2014.

⁶⁰ VOA, "Syria: Twin Car Bombings Kill 18 in Hama", May 2, 2014.

⁶¹ CNN, "Car bomb kills at least 29 in Syria", May 15, 2014.

⁶² AFP "Car bomb blast kills 43 near Syria-Turkey border", May 15, 2014.

⁶³ AFP, "Al Qaeda in Syria targets army with four suicide bombing", May 25, 2014.

⁶⁴ Al-Jazeera, "US confirms Syria suicide bomber was American", May 25, 2014.

militants first claimed that an American had carried out the restaurant attack. A cleric allied with the group announced al-Amriki's death on Twitter and posted a photo of the American cuddling a kitten. It should be noted that the bomber's nom de guerre may help explain this jarring image.⁶⁵ Al-Amriki means "the American" in Arabic, and Abu Hurayra literally means "father of the kitten" -- the name of a cat-loving companion of the Prophet Muhammad.⁶⁶ On May 29, US authorities confirmed his identity as an American man named Moner Mohammad Abu-Salha (aka Abu Hurayra al-Amriki) was the first American to carry out a suicide bombing attack in Syria.⁶⁷

Yemen

On May 11, a suicide car bomber detonated an explosives-laden car at a military police base in Mukalla. The attack killed 12 soldiers and a civilian later succumbed to wounds sustained in the explosion. The bombing came just hours after three gunmen were killed when they attacked a checkpoint close to the presidential palace in the capital of Sanaa. The two attacks appeared to be a reprisal for an army offensive against AQAP in the contiguous provinces of Shabwa and Abyan in the south, and Baida in the center, which has been underway since April 29.⁶⁸ Police said the bomber drove up to the police station and started an argument to draw more officers to the scene before detonating his device. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed AQAP militants.⁶⁹

On May 24, 27 people were killed in an overnight raid by gunmen on a city in southeastern Yemen. Armed with rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and explosives, attackers drove into Seyoun from the surrounding desert on 15 pickup trucks after detonating a car bomb at the entrance to the city in Hadramout Province. The militants targeted at least seven locations, including the main military posts, the local police headquarters, bank branches and the airport. Authorities said 20 militants were killed, as well as five members of the security forces and two soldiers. Authorities said they believed the attack was orchestrated by Jalal Balaidi, a senior member of AQAP in the region.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ RT, "American who joined Syrian rebels becomes first known US suicide bomber", May 29, 2014.

⁶⁶ Wall Street Journal, "Officials Confirm U.S. Citizen Carried Out Syria Suicide Attack", May 30, 2014.

⁶⁷ BBC, "Syria conflict: US citizen carried out suicide attack", May 31, 2014.

⁶⁸ AFP, "Suicide car bomb kills 12 soldiers, civilian in Yemen", May 11, 2014.

⁶⁹ BBC, "Yemen police die in Mukalla suicide blast", May 11, 2014.

⁷⁰ Reuters, "Al Qaeda gunmen storm Yemeni city, at least 27 people killed", May 24, 2014.

On May 29, a gunman riding on the back of a motorcycle assassinated a Yemeni intelligence officer and his son in broad daylight in Mukalla, Hadramawt Province. The colonel was in his car at a market in Taben, a town in the southern Lahij Province, when one of the two attackers opened fire at him with a Kalashnikov. The attackers escaped. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed AQAP.⁷¹

North America

On May 19, Abu Hamza al-Masri was convicted of terrorism charges in New York following a four-week trial. The conviction was the culmination of a 10-year effort by US authorities to bring al-Masri to justice on US soil. He was found guilty of 11 counts of criminal conduct related to the taking of 16 hostages in Yemen in 1998.⁷² He was also found guilty of advocating violent jihad in Afghanistan in 2001 and conspiring to establish a jihad training camp in Oregon between June 2000 and December 2001. He will be sentenced on September 9, 2014.⁷³

On May 30, Mohamed Hersi, a Somali-Canadian, was convicted of two terrorism-related charges. Hersi is the first person to stand trial in Canada for attempting to join a foreign group classified as a terrorist organization.⁷⁴ Hersi landed on police radar after his employer discovered a USB key containing extremist materials in his work uniform. For nearly four months, police investigated him and he befriended an undercover officer, who he met on several occasions at the local mosque. During his meetings with the undercover officer, who pretended that he also wanted to join Al-Shabab Al-Mujahdeen, Hersi began to discuss the writings of jihadist ideologues such as the late AQAP leader Anwar Awlaki.⁷⁵ In March 2011, Hersi was arrested at Pearson International Airport as he attempted to board a plane to Cairo with a one-way ticket. Authorities said he was planning to join Al-Shabab Al-Mujahdeen.⁷⁶ Hersi denied the allegations, saying he was going overseas to study Arabic for several months.

⁷¹ AFP, "Yemen intelligence officer and his son shot dead by gunman on motorbike", May 30, 2014.

⁷² Guardian, "Abu Hamza found guilty of 11 terrorism charges", May 20 2014.

⁷³ Reuters, "London imam Abu Hamza convicted of U.S. terrorism charges", May 19, 2014.

⁷⁴ Globe and Mail, "Toronto man convicted on terrorism charge", May 30, 2014.

⁷⁵ CBC News, "Toronto man convicted of terrorism charges, setting Canadian precedent", May 30, 2014.

⁷⁶ National Post, "Mohamed Hersi found guilty of trying to join Somali terrorist group Al-Shabab", May 30, 2014.

Asia

Afghanistan

On May 1, a suicide car bomber killed 12 people, including at least five security force members, and injured 26 others in Panjshir Province.⁷⁷ The suicide bomber drove his vehicle up to the gate and detonated his charge before security officers could stop him. The explosion claimed the lives of four police officers, an agent for the National Directorate of Security and seven laborers standing near the gate. Those wounded were mainly civilians.⁷⁸ The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.⁷⁹

On May 23, four heavily-armed militants attacked the Indian consulate in Herat. Authorities said that no members of staff were injured in the attack. All of the attackers were killed during a lengthy gun battle with security forces. According to Abdul Sami Qatra, the provincial police chief, the militants opened fire on the consulate from a nearby home with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed the Haqqani network.⁸⁰

China

On May 21, 39 Uigher militants from Xinjiang were jailed after being convicted of terrorism-related offenses, including spreading videos that incite terrorism. The charges also included organizing and leading terrorist groups, inciting ethnic hatred, and the illegal manufacturing of guns.⁸¹ Maimaitiniyazi Aini, 25, a member of the militant group, received a sentence of five years in jail because of comments he made in six chat groups that involved 1,310 people.⁸²

On May 23, 39 people were killed and 90 others were injured⁸³ when five militants driving two sport utility vehicles (SUVs) drove their vehicles into a busy marketplace in Urumqi, the capital of China's Xinjiang region.⁸⁴ Witness said the militants threw 12 grenades at shoppers from the windows of the

⁷⁷ New York Times, "Suicide Attack Kills 12 in Afghanistan's Panjshir Valley", May 1, 2014.

⁷⁸ Reuters, "Suicide Attack Kills 12 in Afghanistan's Panjshir Valley", May 1, 2014.

⁷⁹ BBC, "Taliban in deadly Afghanistan Panjshir suicide bombing", May 1, 2014.

⁸⁰ Times of India, "Indian consulate attacked in Afghanistan's Heart", May 23, 2014.

⁸¹ VOA, "China Jails 39 on Terrorism-related Charges in Xinjiang", May 21, 2014.

⁸² DW, "Chinese courts jail dozens of Uighurs over terror charges", May 21, 2014.

⁸³ Al-Jazeera, "Deadly blast hits China's Xinjiang region", May 22, 2014.

⁸⁴ Washington Post, "Terrorist attack on market in China's restive Xinjiang region kills more than 30", May 23,

SUVs. Four of the attackers were killed during the incident and one was arrested the following day.⁸⁵ On May 27, police in China's restive northwest arrested five suspected Uigher militants and seized 1.6 tons of raw materials that could be used to make bombs.⁸⁶ Police said the suspects intended to bomb crowded locations in Hotan in southwestern Xinjiang. Police said the Hotan group was led by a man named Abliz Dawut who, along with other members, constructed bombs the night after the May 22 attack. Citing police, Xinhua reported that the suspects had allegedly watched videos that "advocated terrorism and religious extremism", and had repeatedly visited Urumqi and other places to search for and buy material for bombs.⁸⁷

Pakistan

On May 8, two people were killed and 15 others were wounded when a bomb attached to a bicycle exploded in Quetta. A police patrol vehicle was passing by the area when the explosion occurred but the bomb missed the police target and all the casualties were civilian passerby.⁸⁸ Authorities said an unidentified person had fitted an IED to a bicycle and parked it between two cars on the Double Road. The device was detonated as the police van passed by. The explosion was heard within a radius of three to four kilometers. No group claimed responsibility for the attack. Authorities said the bomb contained five kilograms of explosive materials.⁸⁹

Thailand

On May 6, a bomb exploded at a police station and a convenience store in Hat Yai city. Nine people were killed and five others were injured. The first bomb exploded in front of a 7-Eleven store near a school in Hat Yai city, wounding two men and three women. The second explosion went off about 15 minutes later in the parking lot at the main Hat Yai police station, injuring four others. No group

2014.

⁸⁵ BBC, "Terrorist attack on market in China's restive Xinjiang region kills more than 30", May 23, 2014.

BBC, "Urumqi attack: China arrests suspect in Xinjiang", May 24, 2014.

BBC, "Urumqi attack kills 31 in China's Xinjiang region", May 23, 2014.

Xinhua, "China identifies suspects of suicide bombing attack in Xinjiang", May 24, 2014.

⁸⁶ AP, "Chinese police detain 5 terrorism suspects, seize 1.6 tonnes of bomb materials", May 27, 2014.

⁸⁷ BBC, "China police arrest Xinjiang 'terror gang'", May 27, 2014.

⁸⁸ PK, "Missed target: 2 dead, 15 injured in Quetta bicycle blast", May 8, 2014.

⁸⁹ International New York Times, "Quetta explosion: Blast kills two", May 9, 2014.

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claimed responsibility for the attack.⁹⁰

On May 24, a series of nine coordinated bombings targeted convenience stores, gas stations and other civilian locations killed three people and wounded 63 others in Pattani Province. The explosions occurred in Thailand's predominantly Muslim south, where an Islamic insurgency has claimed thousands of lives. Authorities said it was unlikely that the explosions were related to the military coup staged in Thailand's capital this past week, though insurgents may have been emboldened by the development.⁹¹ No group claimed responsibility for the incident.⁹²

⁹⁰ AFP, "At least six injured in bomb blasts in Thailand's south", May 6, 2014.

⁹¹ AP, "Bombs in southern Thailand kill 3, wound 63", May 24, 2014.

⁹² Reuters, "Suspected Muslim rebels launch attacks in Thai south, at least one dead", May 24, 2014.

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