

## **Global Jihad: Summary of Information from Arabic Media Sources**

### **The Second Half of April 2011**

This report summarizes the most prominent articles on the subject of global Jihad published in the media in the Arabic language in the second half of April 2011.

Following are the main issues raised in this report:

- A wave of attacks in Iraq against security forces, combined with the continuation of showcase attacks. An attack using two car bombs in a secure road at the entrance to the Green Zone in Baghdad.
- The Jordanian Salafist movement confronts the regime in Zarka'a, in order to drag the Palestinian refugees there into a confrontation. Experts attempt to ease fears by stating that the movement's strength in Jordan is limited.
- Activists from various Salafist organizations in the Gaza Strip killed an Italian hostage within hours after his kidnapping. Confrontations ensued between the Hamas government and Salafist organizations.
- Fears in the Maghreb from Libyan weapons finding their way into Al-Qaeda's hands.
- The Al-Qaeda organization established a new base in Mali to perpetrate high profile attacks in neighboring Mauritania.
- A new video by Al-Zawahiri was published, in which he called upon the Arab Armies to join the rebels in Libya in order to prevent NATO's intervention.

**Afghanistan – Pakistan**Al-Qaeda Leadership / Al-Qaeda – General

- On April 16<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Al-Qaeda's new leader, criticized the Arab regimes for not supporting the Libyan rebels against Qaddafi's regime in a newly published video. He called upon the Arab Armies to intervene in the Libyan conflict in order to overthrow Qaddafi's dictatorship before the Western aid to Libya becomes an invasion of Tripoli. He stated that "the blood of hundreds of Shahids killed by Qaddafi's regime will not have been spilled in vain". In the tape, Al-Zawahiri added: "I applaud the downfall of the former Egyptian President; Hosni Mubarak and Egypt's future will be based on the implementation of Islamic law and the destruction of Israel". Al-Zawahiri also called upon the Sahara Desert tribes to help their brethren in Libya with money, medications, food and arms. Al-Zawahiri stated that if the Americans and NATO enter Libya, the Libyans' brothers in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and other Muslims countries must fight Qaddafi's mercenaries as well as "the NATO Crusaders".<sup>1</sup>
- On April 25<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that Al-Qaeda issued a new publication for women, Al-Shamikha, which deals with issues relating to the women fighting for Jihad. The publication includes articles on fashion and beauty as well as incitement to fighting and violence and advice on how women can encourage their husbands to leave on Shahada. The publication is printed by the Al-Fajar media center, one of Al-Qaeda's largest media institutions.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>2</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

- On April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Jazeera network, quoting the Washington Times, reported that after Facebook's website closed their pages and YouTube down scaled their video segments, Al-Qaeda activists began to use Twitter. The article mentioned an account, under the name of Imara Web, which offers links to the Taliban's official website in Pashto. Since its initiation in December 2010, it twitted 670 times. The article mentions additional accounts such as Nukhbat Al-Jihad Al-Islami which offers links to Al-Qaeda materials in Arabic and that of its branches in Yemen, Iraq and North Africa. The article explained that US law prohibits the provision of services to terrorist organizations, but it is not always possible to connect the account of a person on a social network and the website of a terrorist organization.<sup>3</sup>
- On April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper published an article written by Radwan Al-Sayyid, a Lebanese writer who specializes in Islamic politics, titled: "The Arab Movements for Change and the Islamic Movements". Al-Sayyid explained that although Western anxiety over the rise of Islamic entities in light of the revolutions in the Arab world stem from the Al-Qaeda phenomenon and the terrorist attacks it has perpetrated throughout the world since the 1990s, the struggle between the regimes in the Arab countries and the political Islamic movements actually began long before that. He claimed that Islamic political organizations did not wish to clash with the regimes but rather to force the regimes to recognize them and to be partners in the political process. However, the Arab states presented a different scenario to the West, according to which if the governments of these Arab states collapse, the alternative would be a political Islamic regime led by these organizations and chaos and hostility towards the West and Israel will ensue.

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<sup>3</sup> Al-Jazeera, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/>

Al-Sayyid defended the movements in the Arab states and claimed that the leader of the Tunisian Revival Party, Rashid Al-Gannushi, who was exiled to the UK, returned to Tunisia following the revolution and since then acted peacefully.

Al-Sayyid pointed out that in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood movement was late in joining the protests which were initiated by the youth. He believes that the demands of the Brotherhood, which separated into a number of factions following the revolution, are similar to those of the mainstream protest regarding the removal of the previous regime's old guard, the fight against corruption and establishing a civic political democratic regime and as far as their ties to Hamas and Iran are concerned, this does not go against the general Egyptian public opinion.

Al-Sayyid added that the Muslim Brotherhood broke up after the revolution into various factions, including the Conservative, the Salafist and the Liberal factions, with the Salafists now operating independently, particularly the Salafist Da'awa organizations, which comprise the majority of the Salafist movement in Egypt. He also contended that the radical Salafists will not gain much support in the Egyptian elections.

With regard to the Salafist movement in Jordan, Al-Sayyid explained that the Muslim Brotherhood has been active for decades in the political scene and was only in confrontation with the regime during the reign of King Abdullah II, owing to their opposition to the peace agreement with Israel, their alliance with Hamas and their removal from the political arena through the election regulations. Al-Sayyid claimed that the movement is small and divided into three factions: The Jihadists, the Takfiris and the Scholarly Salafists, the latter being apolitical. Some Salafists merged with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Al-Sayyid also estimated that the Islamic movements do not carry much weight in the Syrian uprising, due to the lack of freedom of action and their repression by the regime. Al-Sayyid deduced that with the exception of Jordan, where the Muslim Brotherhood initiated actions against the government, the Islamic movements in other states entered the fray only after the uprising was initiated by the youth, who support a civic society, modernization and that the magnitude of the protest stemmed from the severity of the conflict between these movements and the regimes.

In his opinion, it is impossible to determine whether the Muslim Brotherhood's call for a civic society is tactical maneuver or whether they have genuinely adopted the ideal. In any case, the Islamic movement's influence is limited and they will not play a central role in the future regimes of these countries. Also, it is unclear whether the Salafist movements will participate in parliamentary elections, but it is well known that many Salafists took part in the referendum on the amendments to the Egyptian constitution, as they believed that it was important for the protection of the Islamic identity of the state and the society.<sup>4</sup>

#### Afghanistan

- On April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported a number of suicide attacks against security forces in Afghanistan. In one attack, the commander of the Kandahar District Police was killed when a suicide bomber dressed in military uniform entered police headquarters and detonated his explosives vest.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Al-Hayat, January 30<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>5</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awast, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

- On April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that on the previous day the Saudi Ministry of Interior announced it was trying to find evidence as to the identity of an Al-Qaeda member, who was reportedly killed in Afghanistan by ISAF forces. The man reportedly killed is Saleh Naif Eid Al-Makhlafi whom Saudi authorities accused of joining Al-Qaeda and who was on the list of its 85 most wanted. Al-Makhlafi has three aliases: Abu Hafs, Abu Hafs Al-Najdi and Abd Al-Ghani. According to ISAF, he was responsible for coordinating many attacks in Afghanistan and is 35<sup>th</sup> on the list of Saudi Arabia's most wanted. ISAF suspects that he established Al-Qaeda training camps and organized attacks against Afghan tribal leaders. ISAF believes that he was killed two weeks ago in an aerial attack near the Pakistani border. According to their estimates, there are approximately 100 Al-Qaeda members still active in Afghanistan and that during the past month more than 25 leaders and fighters were killed.<sup>6</sup>
- Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that eight ISAF soldiers were killed when an Afghan pilot opened fire on them in a base near Kabul Airport. Taliban spokesman, Dhabih Allah Mujahid, stated that the pilot was a member of the Taliban's "undercover cells" and that he used Afghan Army uniform to infiltrate the airbase, aided by a soldier stationed there. He added that nine ISAF soldiers and five Afghan soldiers were killed in the attack.<sup>7</sup>
- On April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that the spokesperson for the British Ministry of Defense declared that this year would be a difficult year in Afghanistan and that they expected a rise in terrorist attacks. In his reply to a question raised by Al-Sharq Al-Awsat he said that the recent attacks pointed to a change in Taliban tactics and that during

<sup>6</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awast, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>7</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 28<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

recent months they hinted that their *modus operandi* will change this year.

The US Ambassador to Afghanistan told Reuters that it was to be expected that the Taliban would accelerate its operations, which include suicide attacks and assassinations, within the framework of changing its tactics and focusing on terrorist attacks. He stated that three attacks in only four days point to a change in strategy.<sup>8</sup> However, Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting foreign news agencies on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, mentioned that the US Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, declared that this year could be the decisive turning point in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, as long as the American forces succeed in holding on to sites which they liberated during the war against the Taliban.<sup>9</sup>

- On April 26<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that the Taliban claimed responsibility for the mass escape of hundreds of prisoners from the Kandahar Prison. According to the Taliban's declaration "[t]he Mujahedeen started to dig a 320 meter long tunnel to the prison from the south, which took five months". According to the report, 488 prisoners succeeded in escaping, 13 were ordinary criminals and the rest were Mujahedeen. The Afghan Ministry of Justice stated that it was quite possible that the guards assisted the escape. Wahid Mahdi, a commentator on Taliban matters in Kabul, stated that the guards who collaborated with the escape had financial motives and were bribed or they may have acted on political motives. He added that the escape occurred following the transferring of matters of security in Afghanistan over to the Afghan Forces, within the framework of NATO's withdrawal. Although Kandahar is not one of the regions which will be

<sup>8</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>9</sup> Al-Hayat, April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

handed over to Afghan Military Forces, the mass escape raises questions as to the readiness of the Afghan Forces to accept security responsibility.<sup>10</sup>

### Pakistan

- On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that American UAV attacks were continuing and that 25 people were killed recently in such an attack against a complex in Waziristan. According the article, the complex served as the headquarters of the armed Taliban in the region and according to other reports, the dead included five children and three women.<sup>11</sup>
- On April 24<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that the Pakistani Chief of Staff stated that Pakistan succeeded in breaking the armed groups tied to Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Pakistan's Tribal Region. He said that the Pakistani army was well aware of the internal and external threats the country faces and that the Pakistani Army's officers and enlisted men sacrificed a great deal and had many successes in the war on terrorism. According to the article, the Chief of Staff made this statement following claims of Pakistan's inefficiency in the war on terrorism and that Pakistani intelligence agents were tied to Taliban radicals.<sup>12 13</sup> As a result of this statement, the Taliban carried out a series of attacks against the Pakistani Armed Forces.
- On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting foreign news agencies, reported that 16 people, including two women and four children were killed when four armed men riding motorcycles attacked a city bus in the region of

<sup>10</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>11</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>12</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 24<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>13</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 24<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>



Baluchistan, Pakistan. The Taliban carry out many attacks in the area, but there is also a separatist movement there which perpetrates attacks.<sup>14</sup>

- On April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that four people were killed in an attack in Karachi against two buses transporting Pakistani Naval Forces. The two buses were attacked at different sites simultaneously by remote control. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack and pledged they would perpetrate additional attacks. The article quoted the organization's spokesperson, Ihsan Allah Ihsan, who told Reuters that "the armed forces would be attacked in the future because they are killing their citizens in Waziristan and in other places, in order to please the Americans".<sup>15</sup>
- On April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper quoted foreign press agencies and reported that five people, including four Pakistani Navy soldiers, were killed in an attack on a bus transporting Pakistani Naval Forces. This occurred several days after the coordinated attacks on two buses of the armed forces. The movement's spokesperson, Ihsan Allah Ihsan, stated that his movement will attack armed forces throughout the country and that his "movement is still strong in the Pakistani cities".<sup>16</sup>

### Iraq

- Reports in the Arab press show that Al-Qaeda is making every effort to carry out show-case attacks against security targets in Baghdad. Al-Hayat reported on the April 19<sup>th</sup> 2011, that five people were killed and 15 were wounded in a double suicide attack carried out by two car bombs at the entrance to the Baghdad Green Zone. The spokesman of the operations room in Baghdad stated that "the purpose of the attack was to hit management and employees

<sup>14</sup> Al-Hayat, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>15</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>16</sup> Al-Hayat, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

entering the Green Zone and if they had intended to hit an Army convoy, then the attack would have occurred elsewhere”.

- A senior employee of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior stated that three men were killed and ten were wounded when two car bombs exploded simultaneously at entrance 12 to the Green Zone. This entrance is located on the road leading from the airport to the Green Zone and is under tight security control, owing to the fact that official buildings and the American Embassy are located there and a special permit from the security forces is required to travel on this road. The article also reported that a hit list containing names of fifteen officers of various ranks was found in the Diyala Zone, which was distributed by activists of the Islamic State of Iraq, affiliated with Al-Qaeda.<sup>17</sup> On April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat reported a wave of attacks which recently occurred in Baghdad against senior officials of the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense and the Treasury. The attacks were carried out with silenced pistols and attached charges and, as a result of these attacks, security forces tightened security in the Capital. This wave of attacks occurred a few days after the Iraqi Prime Minister, Nuri Al-Maliki, declared that Iraq was one of the most stable countries in the region.

The article also mentioned that there are reports of 20 car bombs which entered the city in order to perpetrate attacks against convoys of senior officials. A senior official at the Ministry of Interior told Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, that “the last wave of attacks which hit Baghdad is not tied to the entrance of car bombs.” He added that “most of the recent attacks occurred following the failure of the government negotiations with some of the armed groups, including Assayib Ahl Al-Haqq”. He added that the armed groups, which are

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<sup>17</sup> Al-Hayat, April 19<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

apparently affiliated with Al-Qaeda, are planning to enter Baghdad from the Diyala Region.<sup>18</sup>

- On April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat, quoting foreign news agencies, reported that five people were killed in a car bomb attack against the convoy of a senior police officer in Kirkuk, including a police officer.<sup>19</sup>

### The Al-Sham Region

#### Lebanon

- On April 26<sup>th</sup> 2011, the Lebanese Al-Safir newspaper reported that an armed confrontation developed at the Ein Al-Hilwah refugee camp between Fatah forces and the Jund Al-Sham and Fatah Al-Islam organizations. Scores of fighters were involved in the confrontation in which RPGs, mortars and assault rifles were employed. The confrontation began with a personal quarrel between a member of Jund Al-Sham and a member of Fatah and quickly escalated into an all-out conflict involving everyone bearing arms in the refugee camp. The fighting ceased after a few hours with no casualties.<sup>20</sup>

#### Jordan

- On April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported fighting in the city of Zarka'a between security personnel, aided by ordinary citizens and members of the Jihadist Salafist movement who tried to take over the city square, which led to riots in which 92 people were wounded and 70 members of the Jihadist Salafist movement were arrested. The newspaper also reported that the leader of the traditional Salafist movement, Sheikh Ali Al-Halabi,

<sup>18</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>; Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 24<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>19</sup> Al-Hayat, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>20</sup> Al-Safir, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.assafir.com/>

distanced himself from these events and stated that the Salafist Da'awa rejects violence. The paper quoted Dr. Muhammad Abu Ramman, a Jordanian expert on Islamic movements, who explained that although the Salafist movement recently succeeded in breaking through the media barriers, it does not pose a threat as it has no widespread social support. He added that the movement's response would not be severe as most of its members are under security surveillance.<sup>21</sup>

- Al-Jazeera network's website reported on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011 that those arrested following the riots in Zarka'a include Abu Muhammad Al-Tahawi, the movement's leader, Dr. Saed Al-Hunaiti and Jarrah Al-Rahahlah. During his visit to wounded security personnel, the Jordanian Prime Minister stated that "[the members of the Salafist movement] are not from amongst the righteous Salafists, but are from an errant group of Salafist takfiris who strayed from the Jordanian tradition."

The article reported that in an editorial, the Editor-in-Chief of the Al-Arab Al-Yaum newspaper demanded that those who enabled members of the movement to go into the streets and ignored the fact that they were carrying clubs and swords should be punished and that the government was too lenient with these thugs. He also raised the possibility that the events in Zarka'a were part of government elements' brinkmanship tactics meant to deflect attention from the popular movement and to sully its image. Hassan Abu Haniyah, a researcher of Islamic movements, is quoted in the article as saying that this is a new chapter in the confrontation between Jordan and the Jihadist Salafist movement. He added that the Jihadist Salafist movement split, one side supporting Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi's path of armed struggle and

<sup>21</sup> Al-Hayat, April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

the other, led by Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, became a Da'awa movement. The latter is the movement involved in recent confrontations. He added that in the recent confrontation, the Jihadist Salafists lost the media campaign as they were perceived as fighting the public. The Jordanian strategy is to conduct an armed confrontation with the movement rather than an ideological one, as the cost of an armed confrontation is lower since the movement numbers only a few thousand members which are under constant security surveillance. However, he added, the armed confrontation "will not result in the end of the Jihadist Salafist phenomenon, which is nurtured by a lack of reforms and closing doors to non-militant political forces." Haniyah too believes that the Jordanian government exploits the Salafist movement to dangle the danger of Al-Qaeda, as in Libya and Yemen.<sup>22</sup>

- Following recent events in Zarka'a, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper published an article on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011, under the heading "Jordan and the Salafist Problem". According to the article, the Salafist movement in Jordan has recently reared its head, went beyond its Da'awa activities and started operating in the "Jihadist Theater". According to the article, they demonstrated in Zarka'a in order to drag the regime and the Palestinian refugees living in the camps into a confrontation, but the latter were warned by the government not to be drawn in and the refugees were even active in the fight against the movement's activists.

The article also quoted Muhammad Abu-Raman who stated that there might be reprisal attacks but added that the movement's activists are under surveillance and do not enjoy wide public support. He also said that the movement's vision with regard to implementing Sharia Law is similar to that

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<sup>22</sup> Al-Jazeera, April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net/>

of the Taliban in Afghanistan regarding personal freedom, employment and modern socialism. Hassan Abu Haniyah is quoted as saying that it is not in the regime's interest to provoke the movement, as "there are Jihadist Salafist sleeper cells which will quite possibly act more violently". He added that the confrontations and arrests provide the Salafist movement with an excuse to become more extreme.<sup>23</sup>

#### Palestine

- On April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported that five activists, affiliated with three Salafist organizations: Al-Tawhid Wal-Jihad, Jaysh Al-Islam and Jaljalat, were involved in the assassination of the Italian Vittorio Arrigoni who was abducted in Gaza. Hamas' Ministry of Interior announced that they succeeded in arresting two of the suspects who are now being interrogated. A senior Hamas official stated that the kidnapers did not wish to negotiate for the hostage and killed him only a few hours after the kidnapping. He added that the Al-Jihad Wal-Tawhid organization disassociated itself from the kidnapping.<sup>24</sup>
- Following Arrigoni's assassination, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat published an article on the Salafist organizations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The article quoted a Salafist leader, Mahmoud Talib, who in a previous interview stated that the Salafists are loyal to Al-Qaeda's leader, Osama Bin Laden, as pledging to exact revenge on Hamas for spilling Salafists' blood. With regard to the Hamas regime and the Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip, Talib said: "We believe that the Islamic organizations, who participate in the elections and the Legislative Councils, are the organizations which strayed

<sup>23</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>24</sup> Al-Hayat, April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

from the religion”, he then added that “We believe that secularism, all its nuances and political parties, is a brazen betrayal of the religion”. He urged Palestinians to rebel against those who do not govern according to Islamic religious law, as they are infidels which reject the religion and the armed rebellion against them is a personal duty of every Muslim. He also railed against democracy “which perpetuates the people's divinity and its rule”, which leads to a regime which is not Allah's and this is heresy.

The article stated that the Salafist movements in Palestine are divided into two: The Da'awa movement operating in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the Jihadist movement which operates only in the Gaza Strip. The Salafist movements arrived at Palestine in the mid 1980s with the students which returned from universities in the Gulf and participated in Da'awa. However, they were unpopular until they became a Jihadist movement and until Al-Qaeda declared war on the infidels in the early 2000's. When the Palestinian Authority clashed with Hamas, the Salafist movements became a Jihadist movement, taking advantage of the conflict.

The Salafist movements started to carry out attacks against Israel, internet cafes, women's hairdressers and Christian institutions in the Gaza Strip and Hamas began confronting them. The article stated that although the Salafists denied any connection to Arrigoni's assassination, in the declaration in which they denied it they accused Hamas who, according to the declaration, “admire the Christians, the Shi'ites and the Atheists”, while hounding anyone who was found to have ties to Salafist Jihadist activities. They accused Hamas of “killing the essence of Jihad, while protecting their government, which had replaced Islamic religious law with the most abominable laws”. They threatened Hamas that if it continued with its arrogant policies it would “bear

the consequences of its condescension and its actions against the servants of Allah".<sup>25</sup>

### Egypt

- On April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that the Egyptian Military Council ratified the death sentence of three leaders of the Jema'ah Islamiya movements: Rifa'i Taha, Muhammad Al-Zawahiri (Ayman Al-Zawahiri's brother) and Uthman Al-Samman. This is in contradiction to the atmosphere of reconciliation which prevailed in the country after Mubarak's downfall. According to commentators, the ratification of the sentence was necessary, as it was handed down *in absentia*.<sup>26</sup>

### The Arabian Peninsula

#### Yemen

- On April 18<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper quoted AP and reported that Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which is active in Yemen, has familiarized itself with American UAV attacks and its commanders and activists managed to hide for over a month. The organization uses messengers to communicate, stopped using mobile phones and e-mails are sent using sophisticated encryption programs. The unstable situation in Yemen is playing into the organization's hands, which quickly adapts itself to the changes, learns from its mistakes and anticipates the American intelligence agencies' next moves.<sup>27</sup>
- On April 28<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported that Al-Qaeda activists are moving freely throughout Yemen and some of them, whose names appear on the list of wanted men, are no longer afraid to be seen in public without

<sup>25</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 17<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>26</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>27</sup> Al-Hayat, April 18<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>



bodyguards. Sa'id Bin Ubaid, a researcher specializing in Al-Qaeda, told Al-Hayat that the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate is Al-Qaeda's primary and most important goal and that the anarchy now prevailing in Yemen and the army's involvement with the revolution movement facilitates Al-Qaeda's agenda. Bin Ubaid added that Al-Qaeda is a pragmatic organization and in the event of it taking over entire regions in Yemen, it is quite possible that it will cooperate with other political entities. The paper also quoted Princeton University Prof. Bernard Haykel, who said that the chances are that Iran was using Al-Qaeda in Yemen, in order to pressure the Gulf States.<sup>28</sup>

#### Saudi Arabia

- The Al-Jazeera website reported on April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011 that Saudi Arabia and Malaysia signed an agreement to cooperate in the fight against international terrorism, financing terrorism, drug smuggling and money laundering. The article stated that Malaysia is not yet a target for attacks but there is concern that its weak defense policies will provide fertile ground for radical organizations.<sup>29</sup>

#### **The Maghreb**

##### The Maghreb – General

- On April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that the military commanders from Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger met a day before in Mali's capital, within the framework of the Organization of the Chiefs of Staff of the Sahel Armies, to discuss the war on Al-Qaeda in the Sahel. During the meeting, they discussed the ramifications of the security situation in Libya

<sup>28</sup> Al-Hayat, April 28<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>29</sup> Al-Jazeera, April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net/>

and the fact that Al-Qaeda was taking advantage of the movement of weapons within Libya for its own purposes. Algeria initiated the extraordinary meeting of the Chiefs of Staff as it believes that it will be the main victim should Al-Qaeda purloin Libyan armaments. Mali's Foreign Minister stated that his country received financial aid from Algeria, in the amount of 10 million USD, to develop Mali's Northern Regions which are close to the border with Algeria and controlled by Al-Qaeda.<sup>30</sup>

- On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper quoted AFP and reported that Mali's security forces stated that Al-Qaeda transferred its activists to the Wagadu Region near the border with Mauritania, where it established a base to facilitate attacks in Mauritania. The region is heavily forested and the organization's activists can move freely.<sup>31</sup> On the same matter, the Al-Jazeera website interviewed Muhammad Mahmoud Abu Al-Maali, an expert on Islamic organizations, who stated that it was quite possible that Al-Qaeda was planning to perpetrate a major attack against Mauritania, in light of the two failed attacks it executed recently in that country. He stated that the internal situation of the organization is now better than in the past and that it had developed its military capabilities and was determined to carry out a large scale attack in the heart of Mauritania, as vengeance over Mauritania dispatching troops against Al-Qaeda strongholds in the Sahara desert.<sup>32</sup>

#### Morocco

- Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2011 that a Moroccan court sentenced Yahiya Mahmud Darwish Al-Hindi, a Palestinian charged with heading a terrorist cell, to 7 years imprisonment. Members of the cell were

<sup>30</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>31</sup> Al-Hayat, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>32</sup> Al-Hayat, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

accused of planning to perpetrate terrorist attacks in order to harm the public's morale by intimidation and violence and for illegal assemblage and forgery.<sup>33</sup>

- On April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported the Moroccan Minister of Interior announced that the attack in the café in Marrakesh, which was perpetrated two days prior, killing 15 people, was executed by an explosive device made from ammonium nitrate, TATP and nails and detonated by remote control. The casualties included French, Canadian and Dutch citizens. The paper quoted the French news agency, which reported that the Moroccan Minister of Interior stated that all the possibilities regarding the perpetrators of the attack remained open. It is possible that it was carried out by Al-Qaeda. The article reported that Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb published a video on YouTube three days prior in which an armed man, self identified as Abu Abd Al-Rahman Al-Maghrebi, spoke of the "Zionist, Crusader and Rafidhi (a derogatory term for Shi'ites) enemies, who are still conducting a wicked and barbaric war against the Islamic religion". He called for the release of the prisoners of terrorist organizations in Morocco.<sup>34</sup> In the same edition, the paper reported that prisoners of the Jihadist Salafist movement in Morocco published an opinion paper in which they distanced themselves from the attack.<sup>35</sup>

#### Libya

- On April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that a LIFG leader, Abd Al-Muni'im Mukhtar, was killed in Libya by Qaddafi's forces last week. The article related his involvement in Jihad in Afghanistan in the early 1990s and

<sup>33</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 28<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>34</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>35</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

his activities in LIFG. In the article, as well as in an interview with Noman Benothman, a former member of LIFG and currently a researcher at the British Quilliam Institute, it was explained that Mukhtar, as with many LIFG members, had no connection to Al-Qaeda and that members of LIFG refused to join Al-Qaeda and focused on resistance to Qaddafi's regime in Libya. However, it suits Qaddafi to liken the organization to Al-Qaeda and its goals.<sup>36</sup>

#### Algeria

- The Algerian Al-Shuruk newspaper reported on April 16<sup>th</sup> 2011, that 14 Algerian soldiers were killed and 10 were wounded during a terrorist attack. According to the report, a group of more than 20 terrorists attacked an army post with rifles and hand grenades, at the entrance to the Azazga Forest, 75 km east of the Capital. According to reports, a group of terrorists erected a roadblock 20 minutes before the attack and blocked the road by holding up 40 civilian motorcars with the intention of delaying the arrival of support forces to the site. After a prolonged confrontation government forces began tracking down the attackers in the forests aided by Algerian air support and dismantled bombs which had been buried there. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 21<sup>st</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>37</sup> Al-Shuruk, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.echoroukonline.com/>

## Africa

### Somalia

- On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported that the Kenyan Police Commander announced that the Somali Al-Shabab Al-Mujahedeen movement threatened to carry out attacks in Kenya on Easter. He stated that the movement intends to perpetrate attacks at commercial centers, churches and entertainment areas in large towns.<sup>38</sup>
- On April 24<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper quoted Reuters and reported that the Kenyan Police arrested three activists of the Somali Al-Shabab Al-Mujahedeen movement in the North-East of the country, who were in possession of substances for manufacturing bombs.<sup>39</sup>
- On April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting AFP, reported that eight people were killed in South-Western Somalia in confrontations between a convoy of forces loyal to the Somali Government and a Rebel Forces ambush. The confrontation lasted over two hours and the Al-Shabab Al-Mujahedeen movement claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>40</sup>

## The West and the Rest of the World

### Europe - General

- On April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting AFP, reported that Germany decided to deport the Jamaican Islamic preacher, Bilal Phillips, who called for the execution of homosexuals. The article also reported that EUROPOL announced that in the past year France arrested 94 people suspected of involvement in Islamic terrorism, the Netherlands arrested 19 and Romania

<sup>38</sup> Al-Hayat, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>39</sup> Al-Hayat, April 24<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>40</sup> Al-Hayat, April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

14. A total of 179 people were arrested in Europe in 2010 for suspicion of involvement in Islamic terrorism.<sup>41</sup>

#### Germany

- On April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that German authorities arrested three Moroccans suspected of attempting to perpetrate terrorist attacks. The three were in possession of large quantities of explosives.<sup>42</sup>

#### France

- On April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011, Al-Jazeera network reported that Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb published a new video of the four French hostages and demanded that France withdraw from Afghanistan in return for their release. In September 2010, the organization kidnapped seven people in Niger; five Frenchmen, a Togolese and a Malagasy. The organization released the Togolese, the Malagasy and the wife of one of the Frenchmen in February 2011. France refused to negotiate the release of the hostages after the organization demanded its withdrawal from Afghanistan and 90 million Euros for their release. In January 2011, a failed attempt was made to free the hostages.<sup>43</sup>

#### The Caucasus

- On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported that the Russian security establishment announced the elimination of the Jordanian Khalid Al-Amirat, alias Muhannad, one of the most prominent Arab leaders in the Northern

<sup>41</sup> Al-Hayat, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>42</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>43</sup> Al-Jazeera, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net/>

Caucuses, the day before and that his elimination foiled of a plan to smuggle fighters into the region through Georgia. According to the report, Muhannad fought in Bosnia, Kosovo, the Philippines and Afghanistan. In 2005, he became the most prominent Arab leader in the Caucasus following the death of Abu Hafis Al-Urduni and was the leader of the Arab Mujahedeen Brigade. In 2007, he became the deputy of Emir Dokka Umaro until he fell out of favor last year. Russian authorities held him responsible for ties with Al-Qaeda, as he was in charge of the financial aid which reached the fighters, as well as his direct involvement in almost all suicide attacks carried out in Russia in recent years.<sup>44</sup>

#### The United States

- On April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting AFP, reported that the American Ministry of Defense recommended trying the Saudi Abd Al-Rahim Al-Nashiri, the main defendant in the case pertaining to the attack on the USS Cole in 2000, in a military court in Guantanamo Bay.<sup>45</sup>

#### Indonesia

- Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting foreign news agencies, reported that a bomb was found in Indonesia near a gas pipeline close to a church near Jakarta. Security forces stated that whoever was behind this attempted attack was also responsible for sending explosive packages to senior officials in the counter terrorism forces and the supporters of religious pluralism, as well as a suicide attack in the police complex mosque. The attack, which was supposed

<sup>44</sup> Al-Hayat, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>45</sup> Al-Hayat, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

to be carried out on Easter eve, follows a series of attacks in recent weeks against Christians and members of the Ahmadi community.<sup>46</sup>

### Wikileaks

- The Arab press, quoting foreign media sources, reported the publication of new Wikileaks documents whose source, *inter alia*, was the interrogations of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay. The reports included:
- The person accused of the 2002 attacks in Bali, Indonesia, purchased substances for the preparation of biological weapons.
- In December 2001, in the mountainous region between Kabul and Khost, a meeting was held between Al-Qaeda activists, during which they began to plan additional attacks.
- Four days after the September 11 attacks, Bin Laden visited a guest house in Kandahar and asked the Arab fighters to defend Afghanistan against the "infidel invaders".
- Bin Laden met in Afghanistan with several entities including two Malaysians now imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay. He lectured them on history and religion with Mullah Mansur, a senior fighter in the Taliban and with Jalaludin Haqqani, leader of the Al-Haqqani network, which is still active in Afghanistan. There is also a report on meetings between Al-Qaeda leaders: Bin Laden, Al-Zawahiri and Khaled Sheikh Muhammad, who planned of the September 11 attacks.<sup>47</sup>
- Abu Hamza Al-Masri and Abu Qatada, who live in England, were responsible for recruiting and dispatching activists to Afghanistan and Pakistan, using London mosques. The Guantanamo detainees also revealed that the UK has

<sup>46</sup> Al-Hayat, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>

<sup>47</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>



become, within two decades, a center of terrorism, where scores of British youth and others study radical ideals.<sup>48</sup>

- Al-Qaeda made use of mosques and centers in London, Sana'a, Montreal, Karachi, Lyon, Milan and Cairo to recruit activists.<sup>49</sup>
- Abd Al Rahim Muhammad Abduh Al-Nashiri, the Saudi behind the attack on the USS Cole, was in the habit of using injections causing impotence so that he could devote his life to Jihad and not think about women. He advised other activists to do likewise.<sup>50</sup>
- Al-Qaeda hid a nuclear bomb in Europe in order to use it in the event that Osama Bin Laden was arrested.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>49</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 28<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>50</sup> Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com/>

<sup>51</sup> Al-Hayat, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com/>