



**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 July 2015**

## Highlights

- In early July, an intensive assault by IS militants targeted Egyptian security forces. The Egyptian military repelled the militants. Authorities said 241 IS linked militants were killed and 30 militants, including four senior militants, were arrested. During the offensive, the military seized weapons and destroyed IS targets and vehicles. However, 17 soldiers were killed and more than 50 others wounded.
- On July 8, a US-Led airstrike reportedly killed Muhsin al-Fadhli the leader of the Khorasan Group, as he travelled in a convoy near Sarmada in Syria.
- On July 10, Mohamed Achamlane, 37, the leader of the Forsane Alizza group (Knights of Pride), was indicted and convicted in a court in Paris, France on terror related crimes. He was sentenced to nine years in prison.
- On July 11, a male suicide bomber dressed in a woman's burqa killed 14 people and injured 74 others in N'Djamena, Chad. No group immediately claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Boko Haram.
- On July 18, Muhammad Suleman, 25, was convicted of distributing and circulating al-Qaeda linked videos and translating documents for the al-Qaeda magazine Inspire. He was also found guilty of adding English subtitles to YouTube videos. He was sentenced at the Old Bailey in London, UK to 33 months in prison.
- On 20 July, a suicide bomber killed 33 people and injured over 100 others in Suruc, Turkey. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed the IS.
- On July 28, explosion on a natural gas pipeline in the Turkish province of Agri caused the gas flow to be shut between Turkey and Iran. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed the PKK.
- On July 31, a Molotov cocktail was thrown into a family home in Duma, killing infant Ali Dawabsha and seriously injuring his parents (both later succumbed to their injuries) and brother, 4. No group claimed responsibility but Israeli authorities blamed Jewish extremists.

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## Europe

### France

On July 10, Mohamed Achamlane, 37, the leader of the Forsane Alizza group (Knights of Pride)<sup>1</sup>, was indicted and convicted in a court in Paris, to terror related crimes. He was sentenced to nine years in prison. He was found guilty of planning terrorist attacks on Jewish sites in France, kidnapping and torturing a French-Jewish Judge, and threatening the nation of France.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, 13 other Forsane Alizza members, whose identities were not made public, were tried and sentenced to prison for a year to six years.<sup>3</sup> The only female defendant in the case was given a suspended 12-month sentence.<sup>4</sup>

On July 13, French authorities arrested four male suspects, including a former marine trainee, aged between 17 and 23. Authorities said the four suspects formed their terror plan and became acquainted with each other through social networking sites. They were charged with plotting terrorist attacks on an unspecified military base in France and were allegedly planning to behead a senior military officer. Authorities were alerted to the plot after noting suspicious online posts, including supporting terrorism in Syria and planning to join IS militants there.<sup>5</sup> The youngest suspect, identified as Ismael K., was reportedly instructed by an IS militant to carry out the attack in France, when he was unable to travel to Syria to fight with the IS.<sup>6</sup> His mother alerted authorities about his behavior after she was concerned about his radicalization. During questioning, he admitted the plot and that they were planning to film the attack and the escape to Syria.<sup>7</sup> Authorities said the suspects were planning to stage the attack in either December 2015 or early January 2016.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that in 2012, Forsane Alizza was officially banned in France after group members had posted jihadist propaganda on their website. A mass counter-terrorist operation led to the arrests of the majority of the group's members.

<sup>2</sup> DW, "Jihadi network leader sentenced in France", July 10, 2015

<sup>3</sup> RFI, "French Islamist group leader jailed for nine years", July 10, 2015

<sup>4</sup> New York Times, "France: Extremist Leader Gets 9 Years for Terrorism," July 10, 2015

<sup>5</sup> Guardian, "Four arrested in France for planning terrorism attacks, confirms minister", July 15, 2015

<sup>6</sup> Telegraph, "Islamic State told foiled terror attack suspect to hit France,' says prosecutor", July 16, 2015

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> AFP, "IS told foiled French attack suspect to 'hit' France", July 17, 2015

## Sweden

On July 23, two male Swedish citizens were arrested in the outskirts of Gothenburg and a third was detained in absentia.<sup>9</sup> Following their arrests, the suspects appeared in court and indicted for involvement in jihad in Syria between April-July 2013. Both suspects denied the charges against them.<sup>10</sup> This was the first case where foreign fighters were arrested in Sweden and were indicted for crimes perpetrated abroad.<sup>11</sup>

## United Kingdom

On July 9, a teenage girl 16, from Manchester, whose identity was not made public, was charged with two terrorism offences, connected to an IS inspired plot in Melbourne, Australia to target Anzac day celebrations.<sup>12</sup> She was arrested in April 2015, at her home in Manchester. On July 22, she appeared in the Westminster magistrates' court charged under the Terrorism Act 2000.<sup>13</sup>

On July 14, authorities carried out armed counter terrorists' raids and arrested a male suspect in Letchworth, Hertfordshire, and then two male suspects in Luton, Bedfordshire. All three men were suspected of plotting an Al-Qaeda linked attack in the UK.<sup>14</sup> Police sources say the suspects were arrested under suspicion of "commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism".<sup>15</sup> The arrests were made as part of an ongoing investigation. No further details about the suspects or case were made public.<sup>16</sup>

On July 18, Muhammad Suleman, 25, was convicted of distributing and circulating al-Qaeda linked videos and translating documents for the al-Qaeda magazine Inspire. He was also found guilty of adding English subtitles to YouTube videos. He was sentenced at the Old Bailey in London to 33

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<sup>9</sup> DW, "Sweden arrests two citizens accused of terrorism", July 24, 2015

<sup>10</sup> The Local, "Swedes in court over alleged terror crimes July 24, 2015

<sup>11</sup> Reuters, "Two Swedes arrested on Syria terrorist crime suspicion", July 23, 2015

<sup>12</sup> See May report

<sup>13</sup> Guardian, "Manchester girl charged with terrorism offences", July 7, 2015

<sup>14</sup> IBT, "UK terrorism threat: Police arrest three men on suspicion of plotting Islamist terror attack", July 14, 2015

<sup>15</sup> BBC, "Three in terror-related arrests in Luton and Letchworth", July 14, 2015

<sup>16</sup> Guardian, "Three arrested on suspicion of being involved in Islamist-related terrorism", July 15, 2015

months in prison.<sup>17</sup> He was arrested in December 2014, where authorities discovered 430 documents containing extremist literature in his possession. Police arrested Suleman at Manchester airport as he was about depart to Pakistan.<sup>18</sup>

On July 21, Junead Ahmed Khan, 24, and his uncle, Shazib Ahmed, 22, appeared at the Westminster Magistrates' Court where they were charged with attempting to join the IS in Syria. According to the court indictment, the alleged offenses occurred between 1 August 2014 and 10 May 2015.<sup>19</sup> Junead Ahmed Khan was also indicted with plotting a car bombing and knife attack targeting US military personnel in the UK dating between 10 May 2015 and 14 July 2015.<sup>20</sup> It is believed the target of the alleged plot was RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk. The suspects were charged under the Terrorism Act 2006.<sup>21</sup> Another man, in his 30s, was also detained. He was later released without charge.<sup>22</sup>

## Africa

### Algeria

On July 17, 11 soldiers were killed and two others injured at a checkpoint in a forest in Djebel Louh in Ain Defla province.<sup>23</sup> The attackers escaped and managed to seize the soldier's weapons. AQIM claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>24</sup>

### Chad

On July 5, 13 people were killed by suspected Boko Haram militants who launched overnight attacks targeting civilians in the village of Merom located on the shores of Lake Chad.<sup>25</sup> The following

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<sup>17</sup> AP, "Terrorism sympathizer jailed for 33 months", July 17, 2015

<sup>18</sup> BBC, "Extremist video translator Muhammad Suleman jailed", July 17, 2015

<sup>19</sup> BBC, "Man 'planned to kill US serviceman and tried to join IS'", July 21, 2015

<sup>20</sup> IBT, "UK terror suspect Junead Khan arrested for plotting to kill US military personnel based in Britain", July 21, 2015

<sup>21</sup> Sky News, "Man Charged With US Military Terrorist Plot", July 21, 2015

<sup>22</sup> BBC *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> VOA, "Algeria: 9 Soldiers Killed in Attack Claimed by al-Qaida", July 19, 2015

<sup>24</sup> AFP, "Qaeda claims killing of at least nine Algerian soldiers", July 19, 2015

<sup>25</sup> Al-Jazeera, "Boko Haram slit throats of 26 civilians' in Chad", July 8, 2015

evening, on July 6, 13 additional people were killed and many others were injured in the nearby village of Tiskra. In both attacks, the militants slit the throats of the residents and burned their homes.<sup>26</sup> The attackers escaped as village guards opened fire on them. No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but similar incidents have been attributed to Boko Haram.<sup>27</sup>

On July 11, a male suicide bomber killed 15 people and injured 80 others,<sup>28</sup> when he detonated an explosive belt in the main market in N'Djamena.<sup>29</sup> According to witnesses, the man was stopped by police when he attempted to enter the market wearing a burqa, which was recently banned in Chad due to fears of the full garb facilitating suicide bombers.<sup>30</sup> No group immediately claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Boko Haram.<sup>31</sup>

## Cameroon

On July 12, a soldier and 10 civilians were killed and 17 civilians were injured by two female suicide bombers who detonated in Fotokol, a town located on the border with Nigeria.<sup>32</sup> The first suicide bomber targeted soldiers breaking the Ramadan fast in a military bar. Witnesses said the attacker was disguised as a woman in a burqa.<sup>33</sup> The second explosion followed shortly after as soldiers approached the scene of the attack. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Boko Haram.<sup>34</sup>

On July 22, a teenage female suicide bomber targeted civilians in the central Maroua market and then shortly after, a second female suicide bomber detonated in the surrounding neighborhood. Authorities said the perpetrators were female and aged 13 and 15 respectively.<sup>35</sup> Witnesses said the two girls were seen in the market before they detonated their explosive belts, pretending to beg for

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<sup>26</sup> Reuters, "Suspected Boko Haram militants kill 26 people in Chad attacks", July 26, 2015

<sup>27</sup> The Daily Star, "Suspected Boko Haram militants kill 26 people in attacks in Chad", July 8, 2015

<sup>28</sup> Reuters, "Suicide bomber in burqa kills 15 people in Chad capital", July 11, 2015

<sup>29</sup> VOA, "Multiple Attacks Leave 26 Dead in Chad, Nigeria", July 11, 2015

<sup>30</sup> Guardian, "Chad suicide bomber kills 15 people in market and injures 80", July 11, 2015

<sup>31</sup> Reuters, "Suicide bomber in burqa kills 15 people in Chad capital", July 11, 2015

<sup>32</sup> VOA, "20 Killed in Cameroon Twin Suicide Bombing", July 22, 2015

<sup>33</sup> DW, "Suspected Boko Haram suicide attacks kill at least 13 in Cameroon", July 13, 2015

<sup>34</sup> Reuters, "Suicide attacks killed at least 13 in northern Cameroon", July 13, 2015

<sup>35</sup> VOA, "20 Killed in Cameroon Twin Suicide Bombing", July 22, 2015

money. The explosion killed 20 people and injured approximately 20 others.<sup>36</sup> No group has claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Boko Haram.<sup>37</sup>

## Kenya

On July 7, 14 people were killed and 11 others were injured by Al-Shabab Al-Mujahedeen militants who attacked a hostel in Mandera. The majority of casualties were quarry and construction workers.<sup>38</sup> Authorities said the attack occurred at night, when a group of approximately 15 armed male militants attacked the compound and specifically shot Christian workers.<sup>39</sup> Witnesses also said the attackers threw grenades and explosives into the workers homes as they were sleeping.<sup>40</sup> The attackers escaped into the nearby bush and nearby villages.<sup>41</sup>

On July 13, an IED exploded by a police convoy near a military base in Lamu. Two police officers and a civilian were killed and four other people were wounded. The police vehicle was destroyed. Several people were rescued.<sup>42</sup> Al Shabaab Al-Mujihdeen claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>43</sup>

## Libya

On July 4, five people were killed and 15 others injured by a car bomb that exploded in Derna.<sup>44</sup> No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed IS linked militants. Following the explosions, IS linked militants clashed with security forces in the city.<sup>45</sup>

On July 22, two car bombs exploded in Derna. The number of casualties were unclear, as were details of the incident. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed IS militants.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Aljazeera, "Girl suicide bombers' strike northern Cameroon", July 14, 2015

<sup>37</sup> BBC, "Cameroon's Maroua market hit by suicide blasts", October 14, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> Reuters, "Attackers kill 14 in Kenya; Al-Shabaab claims responsibility", July 7, 2015

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> BBC, "Kenya: Al-Shabab kills quarry workers in Mandera gun attack", July 7, 2015

<sup>41</sup> Reuters, "Al Shabaab gunmen kill 14 in night attack on Kenyan workers", July 7, 2015

<sup>42</sup> Reuters, "At least three killed in bomb attack on Kenyan police vehicle", July 13, 2015

<sup>43</sup> AFP, "Shebab militants target Kenyan police in IED attack", July 13, 2015

<sup>44</sup> AFP, "Deadly car bomb rocks Libya's eastern city of Derna", July 4, 2015

<sup>45</sup> AP, "Official: 10 civilians killed in 3 car bombs in Libya", July 4, 2015

<sup>46</sup> Reuters, "Two car bombs explode in eastern Libyan city of Derna", July 22, 2015

## Mali

On July 2, a roadside bomb targeted the convoy of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) killing six Burkinabe peacekeepers and injuring five others. The convoy was travelling in Timbuktu.<sup>47</sup> Four UN vehicles were destroyed in the attack.<sup>48</sup> AQIM claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>49</sup>

## Nigeria

On July 1, a large group of Boko Haram militants, armed with guns, ambushed Kukawa village, setting homes alight and killing 97 civilians. Witnesses said the militants surrounded four mosques shooting local residents who were attending prayers.<sup>50</sup>

On July 3, a teenage female suicide bomber detonated killing seven people and injuring 13 others on the highway from Bama to Konduga. Shortly after, a second female suicide bomber killed three other civilians when she detonated her explosive belt on the same main highway. Authorities said both suicide bombers targeted traders, selling fruit along the highway. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Boko Haram.<sup>51</sup>

On July 5, more than 50 people were killed and many others injured in several terrorist attacks that targeted both Christian and Muslim civilians in Jos, Potiskum and militants set alight approximately 300 homes and churches in several northeastern villages.<sup>52</sup> Authorities said a female suicide bomber detonated inside an evangelical church in Potiskum.<sup>53</sup> In this incident, six people were killed.<sup>54</sup> In Jos, a suicide bomber exploded amongst worshippers at the Yan-Taya Mosque. Many people had gathered to listen to Sani Yahaya, a renowned cleric who believed in coexistence and spoke out against Boko Haram. Witnesses said the suicide bomber, initially attempted to shoot Yahaya and then

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<sup>47</sup> <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc11959.doc.htm>

<sup>48</sup> AP, "Attack on UN convoy in Mali kills 6 peacekeepers, wounds 5", July 2, 2015

<sup>49</sup> Reuters, "Six U.N. peacekeepers killed when convoy attacked in Mali", July 2, 2015

<sup>50</sup> BBC, "Nigeria Boko Haram crisis: Militants 'kill 150'", July 2, 2015

<sup>51</sup> Reuters, "Two suspected Boko Haram suicide bombers kill 'at least 10' in Nigeria", July 3, 2015

<sup>52</sup> BBC, "Boko Haram attack caps week of bloodshed in Nigeria:", July 5, 2015

<sup>53</sup> WSJ, "Suicide Bomb Attack Targets Nigerian Church", July 5, 2015

<sup>54</sup> BBC, "Nigeria's Boko Haram crisis: Jos blasts kill scores", July 5, 2015

he detonated his explosives inside the mosque. Yahaya, was unharmed in the attack.<sup>55</sup> Shortly after in another incident, a bomb exploded targeting a Muslim restaurant in Bauchi Road, the main road in Jos, killing 15 people and injuring 20 others. The restaurant was popular with many politicians.<sup>56</sup> No group claimed responsibility for either of the attacks but authorities blamed Boko Haram.<sup>57</sup> On July 8, authorities arrested the alleged mastermind of the attacks and two accomplices at a checkpoint in Gombe. One of the militants attempted to escape but police shot him. The identities of all three suspects were not made public.<sup>58</sup>

On July 7, 26 people were killed and 33 others injured, when a bomb exploded in Zaria in Kaduna State near government headquarters.<sup>59</sup> The target of the attack were civil servants. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Boko Haram.<sup>60</sup>

On July 16, 48 people were killed and 71 injured when two bombs, including a suicide bomber, exploded at a market in Gombe. Witness said the majority of victims were civilians shopping for the Eid celebrations. No group claimed responsibility but officials blamed Boko Haram for the attacks.<sup>61</sup>

On July 17, approximately 12 people were killed and approximately 80 others were injured when a female child suicide bomber, 10,<sup>62</sup> accompanied by an elderly woman, carried out a twin suicide bombing attack in Damaturu in Yobe State.<sup>63</sup> Witnesses claimed that the two attackers entered the area where security guards were checking worshipers as they were gathering for the Eid-al-fitr prayer (the end of Ramadan) detonated their explosive belts a few meters apart. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Boko Haram.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> AP, “Day of extremist violence across Nigeria kills more than 60”, July 6, 2015

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> CNN, “At least 20 people killed in attacks in Nigeria”, July 6, 2015

<sup>58</sup> Reuters, “Nigerian troops arrest mastermind of Jos, Zaria bombings”, July 8, 2015

<sup>59</sup> CNN, “26 killed in Nigeria bombing”, July 7, 2015

<sup>60</sup> BBC, “Nigeria's Boko Haram crisis: Zaria bomb 'kills 25'”, July 7, 2015

<sup>61</sup> CNN, “Girl, elderly woman carry out bombings in northeastern Nigeria, army says”, July 17, 2015

<sup>62</sup> Independent, “Eid Nigeria bombing: '10-year-old girl' kills 12 in suicide attack”, July 17, 2015

<sup>63</sup> CNN, “Girl, elderly woman carry out bombings in northeastern Nigeria, army says”, July 17, 2015

<sup>64</sup> Independent, “Eid Nigeria bombing: '10-year-old girl' kills 12 in suicide attack”, July 17, 2015

## Somalia

On July 10, three simultaneous attacks in Mogadishu killed six civilians. All five militants who carried out the attacks were killed.<sup>65</sup> Authorities said two car bombs exploded at the Weheliye and Siyaad hotels. This was followed by gunfire that targeted the hotel guests.<sup>66</sup> During the attack, mortars were fired at what was previously the central football stadium in the city, which is currently a central base of African Union troops. No casualties were reported.<sup>67</sup> Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen claimed responsibility for the attacks.<sup>68</sup>

On July 16, a US airstrike killed 30 suspected Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen militants on the outskirts of Bardere town in Gedo region.<sup>69</sup> Authorities said that two senior Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen leaders, who were identified as Jama Dere, and Ismael Jabhad were amongst the dead.<sup>70</sup>

On July 26, a truck bomb exploded at the Jazeera Hotel located near the Mogadishu International airport, killing 15 people including two journalists. Authorities believe the hotel was targeted as it houses several diplomatic offices in the city.<sup>71</sup> Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>72</sup>

## Tunisia

On July 12, security forces carried out counter-terrorist raids in Gafsa killing five Okba Ibn Nafaa Brigade militants, who have ties to AQIM.<sup>73</sup> Mourad Gharsalli, 33, the leader of the cell was amongst the militants killed.<sup>74</sup> Authorities believe he was involved in the March 2015 Bardo Museum attacks in Tunis.<sup>75</sup> The three other dead militants were identified as: Tunisians Mourad Gharsalli and Hakim

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<sup>65</sup> CNN, "Al-Shabaab says it is responsible for three Somalia attacks", July 16, 2015

<sup>66</sup> Al-Jazeera. "Deadly car bomb attacks hit Mogadishu hotels", July 11, 2015

<sup>67</sup> Yahoo News, "Somalia's Shebab in twin Mogadishu hotel attacks", July 10, 2015

<sup>68</sup> UPI, "Five dead in al-Shabab attack on Mogadishu hotels", 10 July 2015

<sup>69</sup> VOA 'Drone Strike Kills High-ranking Militants in Somalia, 16 July, 2015

<sup>70</sup> VOA News, "Drone Strike Kills High-ranking Militants in Somalia", July 16, 2015

<sup>71</sup> Al-Jazeera, "Al-Shabab attack devastates Mogadishu landmark", July 26, 2015

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> AP, "Tunisian government claims to have killed top terrorists", July 12, 2015

<sup>74</sup> AFP, "Senior Leader of Tunisian Qaida-Linked Group Killed", July 12, 2015

<sup>75</sup> See ICT March 2015 database report for details about the Bardo Museum attack <http://www.ict.org.il/Article/1448/Terrorist-Incidents-and-CT-Operations-March-2015>

Hazi, and Algerian national Lounis Abou Fath. The fifth militant was not identified.<sup>76</sup> Tunisian authorities said the militants were plotting attacks in Tunisia and were sending militants to fight abroad.<sup>77</sup>

## **Middle East**

### **Bahrain**

On July 28, a bus transporting security personnel exploded in Sitra, a Shia village, killing two police officers and a severely injuring a third officer. Six civilians were also wounded in the incident.<sup>78</sup> The attack occurred near a school, which was closed due to the summer vacation, but authorities said significant damage was caused to the building. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Iranian linked militants.<sup>79</sup>

### **Egypt**

In early July, an intensive assault by IS linked militants targeted Egyptian security forces. The Egyptian military repelled the militants. Authorities said 241 IS linked militants were killed and 30 militants, including four senior militants, were arrested. During the offensive, the military seized weapons and destroyed IS targets and vehicles. However, 17 soldiers were killed and more than 50 others wounded.<sup>80</sup> On July 1, 15 checkpoints mainly concentrated in the towns of Sheikh Zuweid and Rafah were simultaneously attacked by militants who detonated three suicide bombs, car bombs and by the use of automated weapons.<sup>81</sup> Authorities said the militants planted bombs in the perimeter of the Sheikh Zuweid police station, and along a main highway between Rafah from al-Arish. The militants seized two armored vehicles, weapons and ammunition. Several militants were arrested.<sup>82</sup> It was also reported that the militants raised black flags with Arabic inscriptions representing the IS

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<sup>76</sup> Naharnet, “3 Leaders of Qaida-Linked Tunisia Group Killed”, July 13, 2015

<sup>77</sup> AP. *ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Al-Jazeera, “Deadly bombing strikes Bahrain amid rising sectarian tensions”, July 28, 2015

<sup>79</sup> Reuters, “Bomb kills two policemen in worst Bahrain bombing in months”, July 28, 2015

<sup>80</sup> AFP, “Egypt killed 241 Sinai militants from July 1-5, army says”, July 6, 2015

<sup>81</sup> Ynet, “F-16 vs. ISIS: Biggest battle in Sinai since Yom Kippur War”, July 1, 2015

<sup>82</sup> Reuters, “More than 100 dead as militants, Egyptian army clash in North Sinai”, July 1, 2015

logo on the rooftops of the buildings in the area.<sup>83</sup> Authorities said 123 militants were killed during intense firefights, with security forces, which lasted 11 hours. During the fighting 17 soldiers were killed and 50 others injured. The Sinai Province (formerly known as the Ansar Beit al-Maqdis group) claimed responsibility. Security forces regained control of the area supported by F16s and Apache helicopters.<sup>84</sup> The following day, on July 2, 23 militants were killed in airstrikes by the Egyptian military. Authorities said the militants' killed had been involved in the previous day's attacks.<sup>85</sup> On July 4, airstrikes in the north Sinai Peninsula targeted and killed 12 militants and destroyed large quantities of weapons and explosives.<sup>86</sup> It was also reported that on the same day, the Egyptian military seized a large cache of weapons in tunnels by the Egypt/Gaza border.<sup>87</sup>

On July 11, one person was killed and nine others injured, when a car bomb exploded in front of the Italian Consulate in Cairo. The majority of victims were policemen. No Italian Embassy staff members were hurt. The casualty figures was relatively low as the attack happened in the early hours of the morning on a weekend when the embassy was closed.<sup>88</sup> The bomb, that was remotely detonated, caused severe damage to the building and caused a water pipe to rupture and flood the area.<sup>89</sup> The IS claimed responsibility for the attack and claimed the bomb contained 450 kg of explosives.<sup>90</sup>

On July 16, the IS linked Sinai Province group claimed responsibility for its first naval attack on an Egyptian frigate off the coast of Sinai and the Gaza Strip in the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>91</sup> The group said it fired a guided missile at the ship killing all soldiers on board. The Sinai Province also posted images on the internet illustrating the ship ablaze.<sup>92</sup> The Egyptian military denied the circumstances of the claim and said the navy vessel had caught alight following a clash with militants just off the coast of

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<sup>83</sup> Jamestown Foundation, "Egypt's Growing Militant Threat", July 24, 2015

<sup>84</sup> Reuters, "More than 100 dead as militants, Egyptian army clash in North Sinai", July 1, 2015

<sup>85</sup> Reuters, "Egyptian air strikes kill 23 militants in North Sinai: sources", July 2, 2015

<sup>86</sup> Reuters, "Egypt says kills 12 militants in air strikes as Sisi inspects troops", July 4, 2015

<sup>87</sup> Jpost, "Egypt says kills 12 militants in air strikes as Sisi inspects troops", July 4, 2015

<sup>88</sup> CNN, "1 dead, 9 hurt in car bomb blast at Italian Consulate in Egypt", July 11, 2015

<sup>89</sup> BBC, "Islamic State 'behind blast' at Italian consulate in Cairo", July 11, 2015

<sup>90</sup> New York Times, "ISIS Claims Responsibility for Blast at Italian Consulate in Cairo", July 11, 2015

<sup>91</sup> Jamestown ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Time, "ISIS Claims Responsibility for Rocket Attack on Egyptian Navy Ship", July 16, 2015

Sinai. The Egyptian military claimed the suspected militants escaped after firing upon the boat.<sup>93</sup>

On July 24, the Egyptian military destroyed two warehouses in Sheikh Zuwei, in the Sinai Peninsula. Authorities claimed the warehouses were used to store weapons and explosives. During the operation, 12 militants were killed. Their identities were not made public but authorities claimed they were tied to the IS.<sup>94</sup>

## **Iraq**

During July 2015, according to the US ministry of Defense, there was “a total of 460 airstrikes against IS targets which destroyed 240 tactical units, 168 Fighting positions, 181 vehicles, 68 Heavy machine Guns, 54 Mortar systems, 16 VBIED’s, three VBIED Factories, 32 Rocket and Missile Positions, six Anti-aircraft artillery units, four Recoilless Rifles, 18 Light machine guns, two IED’s, 19 tunnel systems, eight Bridges, four Tunnel entrances, 15 Weapons caches, 138 Buildings, six checkpoints, 43 Bunkers, two Caves, three Sniper positions, 129 staging Areas, six Mortar Tubes, and two fuel tankers.” The airstrikes were carried out as part of “Operation Inherent Resolve”- a counter-terrorist offensive to counter the IS in Iraq and Syria.<sup>95</sup>

Some of the significant air strikes included, amongst others:

- On July 2, a series of airstrikes targeted and destroyed IS 11 fighting positions, weapons, buildings and four mortar systems in and around Al Huwayjah, Fallujah, Habbaniyah, Haditha, Makhmur, near Mosul, Rawah, and Sinjar. As a result of the airstrikes, seven tactical units were also destroyed and several IS staging areas were targeted and hit.<sup>96</sup>
- On July 5, US-led coalition airstrikes struck IS targets in Fallujah destroying two IS tactical units, weapons, fighting units and an IS tunnel entrance. US-led coalition airstrikes were also carried out targeting and destroying IS structures, fighting positions and buildings in Bayji, Habbaniyah, Haditha, Makhmur, Mosul, Sinjar and near Tal Afar.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Guardian, “Isis affiliate claims responsibility for rocket attack on Egyptian navy ship”, July 16, 2015

<sup>94</sup> Ahram Online, “Egypt’s army says it killed 12 ‘terrorists’ in North Sinai”, July 2015

<sup>95</sup> [http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814\\_Inherent-Resolve](http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814_Inherent-Resolve)

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> <http://www.centcom.mil/en/news/articles/july-5-military-airstrikes-continue-against-isil-terrorists-in-syria-and-ir>

- On July 7, coalition military forces conducted 16 airstrikes using attack, fighter, bomber and remotely piloted aircraft against IS targets. The airstrikes were carried out in and in the vicinity of: Al Asad, Al Huwayjah, Fallujah, Baiji, Makhmur, Haditha, Sinjar, Tal Afar, Kirkuk and Mosul. IS targets that were destroyed included: tactical units, fighting positions and weapons, vehicles, buildings, heavy machinery and armoured vehicles.<sup>98</sup>
- On July 13, 39 airstrikes were conducted in Ramadi, Al Huwayjah, Habbaniyah, Hit, Makhmur, Sinjar and Tal Afar. It should be noted though that the majority the strikes were focussed on Ramadi, where 29 airstrikes hit 67 IS staging areas, excavators, an armoured personnel carrier, and a vehicle were also destroyed.<sup>99</sup> Amongst the targets hit in the other cities were tactical units, weapons, IS buildings, excavators and fighting positions.<sup>100</sup>
- On July 21, 14 airstrikes targeted and destroyed IS targets in and around Habbaniyah, Makhmur, Mosul, Ramadi, Sinjar, and Tal Afar. Authorities said the main target of these strikes were IS tactical units.<sup>101</sup> Also, a US led coalition airstrike killed five IS militants, wounded three others and destroyed an explosive laden vehicle near Khaldiyah.<sup>102</sup>

Other significant incidents in Iraq during July 2015 included:

On July 5, seven soldiers were killed, when five IS suicide bombers targeted an Iraqi military unit protecting a dam northeast of Fallujah.<sup>103</sup>

On July 12, four explosions targeted the Shia-dominated neighborhoods of Al-Shaab. The first bomb was a suicide bomb. The result of the explosion was the death of 11 people, three of whom were members of the security forces. A car bomb killed six people and injured 20 others in the Adan Square and a third car bomb detonated in the Al-Bunuk area, killing two and wounding another 11. The fourth and final bomb in this string of explosions was a car bomb that was detonated in the Iskan

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<sup>98</sup><http://www.centcom.mil/en/news/articles/july-5-military-airstrikes-continue-against-isil-terrorists-in-syria-and-iraq>

<sup>99</sup><http://www.centcom.mil/en/news/articles/july-13-military-airstrikes-continue-against-isil-terrorists-in-syria-and-iraq>

<sup>100</sup> Reuters, "U.S. steps up air strikes on Islamic State targets in Iraq: statement", July 13, 2015

<sup>101</sup> Al-Arabiya, "Anti-ISIS coalition intensifies strikes in Syria, Iraq", July 21, 2015

<sup>102</sup> UPI, "Iraq: Bombings and clashes against Islamic State kill 54 people", July 21, 2015

<sup>103</sup> Al-Jazeera, "Scores killed in Iraqi army raids in Anbar province", July 5, 2015

neighborhood, which killed two and wounded eight. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>104</sup>

On July 17, IS militants detonated a car bomb killing 80 people in Khan Bani Saad. The target of this attack was the worshipers celebrating the end of Ramadan.<sup>105</sup> The IS claimed responsibility on Twitter saying the attacks were to avenge the killing of Sunni Muslims in the northern Iraqi town of Hawija, and that the suicide car bomber was carrying around three tons of explosives.<sup>106</sup>

On July 21, 54 people were killed in a car bombing attack at a military base in Fallujah. Following the incident, a battle between security forces and militants resulted in the deaths of seven militants and 14 others wounded. Iraqi authorities also said 11 soldiers were killed and 20 others wounded. The IS claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>107</sup>

On July 22, four explosions occurred in Baghdad, killing at least 37 people and injuring dozens more. In the first incident, a car bomb targeted a crowded market killing at least 18 people. Following this, a bomb detonated in al-Bayaa in southwestern Baghdad and two bombs exploded in Al Shaab area of Baghdad killing eight people, including four soldiers. Eleven civilians, were killed in a fourth explosion in Shurtaa. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed the IS.<sup>108</sup>

On July 25, two suicide bombers attacked a crowded swimming pool in Tuz Khurmatu, killing 12 people and injuring 45 others. Police said the first attacker detonated his explosives vest at the swimming pool and then the second suicide bomber on a motorcycle exploded at the entrance to the swimming pool as authorities were evacuating casualties. Witnesses said many children were amongst the casualties. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but authorities blamed the IS.<sup>109</sup>

On July 29, the Turkish military launched airstrikes targeting six PKK militant bases, storages and artillery storages in northern Iraq. The strikes also targeted and destroyed PKK shelters, depots and

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<sup>104</sup> Guardian, “Baghdad bombings reportedly kill at least 21 and wound 62 during Ramadan”, July 12, 2015

<sup>105</sup> AP, “ISIS Attack: More Than 80 People Killed In Eid Al-Fitr Bombing In Khan Bani Saad, Iraq”, July 17, 2015

<sup>106</sup> Reuters, “Islamic State claims suicide car bomb that kills more than 100 in Iraq”, July 18, 2015

<sup>107</sup> UPI *ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Al-Jazeera, “Car bombings and suicide attacks kill dozens in Iraq”, July 22, 105

<sup>109</sup> Reuters, “Bomb attacks at swimming pool in northern Iraq kill at least 12”, July 25, 2015

caves.<sup>110</sup>

## Israel and the West Bank

On July 1, the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) announced that together with the Israeli police and the IDF, 40 Hamas militants, including senior leaders and former security prisoners were arrested in Nablus and surrounding villages in the West Bank.<sup>111</sup> The investigation, that lasted several months, charged that the cell, which operated from a jewelry store in Nablus, was financially aiding Hamas activities in the West Bank and that the cell intended to create a largescale terror network in a number of Palestinian cities in the West Bank. According to Israeli authorities, the activities were facilitated by a gold trader from Nablus identified as Anan Sabba Ali Fatuch. The cell received jewelry and gold, originally purchased in Jordan and then it was illegally transferred to Nablus. The Shin Bet said nearly \$1 million worth of goods were seized from the cell during the counter-terrorist operation.<sup>112</sup> A second cell that operated from the Farah refugee camp near Jenin, was also discovered to be part of the money laundering scheme. Authorities said during questioning, members of the second cell admitted they were planning future attacks on Israelis citizens and had used the money from the cell to purchase binoculars and military night vision equipment.<sup>113</sup> According to the Shin bet, the head of the cell is A'anem Taufik Salech Salma, 49, who is a senior Hamas official in Nablus. They also named Ahmmad Taufik Yussef Sualche, 42, who was allegedly responsible for communicating with Hamas members locally and abroad. The militant responsible for financing the cell was identified as Samih Saliman Muhammad Eilawi, 52.<sup>114</sup> According to the Shin Bet, the cell had a clear structure and hierarchy and that the cell had direct links with Husam Badran, a Hamas spokesman and official based in Qatar. Israeli authorities said the cell also used the money to create a stronger Hamas infrastructure in the West Bank in order to carry out future terror attacks against

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<sup>110</sup> Reuters, "Turkey launches heaviest air strikes yet on Kurdish group", July 29, 2015

<sup>111</sup> Ynet, "Shin Bet arrests 40 Hamas members in Nablus", July 1, 2015

<sup>112</sup> Algemeiner, "Hamas Used Jewelry Shop to Fund Nablus Terror Network", July 3, 2015

<sup>113</sup><http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Palestinian/Pages/Nablus-Hamas-terror-cell-uncovered-3-Jul-2015.aspx>

<sup>114</sup><http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Palestinian/Pages/Nablus-Hamas-terror-cell-uncovered-3-Jul-2015.aspx>

Israeli citizens.<sup>115</sup>

On July 15, a female Palestinian militant approached an Israeli checkpoint in the West Bank and stabbed an Israeli soldier in the back. The militant was identified as Ruan Abu Matar, 22, a resident of Bitulu in the West Bank<sup>116</sup> and was arrested at the scene. During her interrogation by authorities, she confessed to the attack and said she was motivated by nationalistic reasons. Authorities said she was not previously known to them.<sup>117</sup>

On July 19, the Shin Bet announced they had dismantled a Hamas cell comprising of seven people who were allegedly responsible for two incidents in the West Bank in June 2015.<sup>118</sup> The Shin Bet said all cell members were arrested, four of whom were placed in Israeli custody, and two were detained by PA forces.<sup>119</sup> The Shin Bet named Ahmed Najar,<sup>120</sup> as the mastermind of the cell. He remains at large.<sup>121</sup> His brother, Amjad, confessed to receiving instructions from his elder brother. He admitted to receiving weapons and financial support to carry out the attack. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attacks.<sup>122</sup>

On July 31, a Molotov cocktail was thrown into a Palestinian family home in Duma, in the West Bank killing infant Ali Dawabsha and seriously injuring his parents and brother, 5.<sup>123</sup> The child's father, Saad Dawabsha died of his wounds in hospital several days later<sup>124</sup> and his mother, Riham Dawabsha, 26, also later succumbed to her injuries.<sup>125</sup> His brother was the sole survivor of the attack. Authorities said an adjacent unoccupied house was also set alight and Hebrew 'price tag' graffiti was sprayed on

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<sup>115</sup> Jpost, "Shin Bet: Hamas attempt to build terror network in West Bank thwarted", July 1, 2015

<sup>116</sup> Ynet, "Young Palestinian woman stabs soldier in West Bank", July 15, 2015

<sup>117</sup> Jpost, "Terror attack: Palestinian woman stabs IDF soldier in back in West Bank", July 15, 2015

<sup>118</sup> Times of Israel, "Shin Bet nabs Hamas cell behind fatal West Bank shooting", July 19, 2015

See June ICT Database report.

<sup>119</sup> Ynet, "Terror cell behind Malachi Rosenfeld's murder caught", July 19, 2015

<sup>120</sup> Najar is a Hamas operative and former prisoner who was released as part of the 2011 Schalit prisoner swap with Hamas

<sup>121</sup> Ynet, *ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Jpost, "IDF special forces nab Hamas terror cell for deadly June shooting", July 19, 2015

<sup>123</sup> Ynet, "Palestinian baby dies in 'price tag' arson attack", July 31, 2015

<sup>124</sup> Times of Israel, "Father of Palestinian baby killed in Duma attack dies of injuries", August 8, 2015

<sup>125</sup> The mother died in September 2015 see: Times of Israel, "Palestinian mother wounded in Duma firebombing dies", September 8, 2015

the walls of another house in the village.<sup>126</sup> Israeli authorities said dozens of suspects were arrested and three were detained under administrative detention orders.<sup>127</sup> The identities of the perpetrators were not made public, however, the Israeli government said they have been identified and will be brought to justice. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>128</sup>

## **Saudi Arabia**

On July 16, the IS claimed responsibility for a car bombing at the security checkpoint of the Ha'er maximum security prison in Riyadh, which injured two security guards.<sup>129</sup> Saudi security forces named Abdullah Fahd Abdullah al-Rashed, 19, as the perpetrator of the attack and said prior to the incident he had allegedly killed his Uncle, former Saudi Colonel Rashid Ibrahim al Safyan.<sup>130</sup>

On July 18, authorities announced they had carried out wide scale counter-terrorist raids resulting in the arrests of more than 400 IS linked suspects. The Saudi interior ministry said amongst the suspects arrested, many were planning on carrying out suicide bombings targeting mosques and security forces in the country. Authorities also said that they had foiled an IS plot to assassinate security forces and bombing plots that targeted security facilities, government buildings and embassy's in Sharurah province. The interior ministry also said that amongst the suspects arrested were some individuals who were recruiting IS members through the internet. The identities of the suspects were not made public.<sup>131</sup> Saudi authorities also said some of those arrested were responsible for a suicide bombing attack in al-Qudeeh which killed 22 people in May 2015.<sup>132</sup>

## **Syria**

According to the US Department of Defense, during July 2015, there was a total of "431 Airstrikes

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<sup>126</sup> Time of Israel *ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Jpost, "Terror cell behind Duma attack 'goes way beyond Price Tag activists'", September 10, 2015

<sup>128</sup> Israeli Defense minister Moshe Yaalon said in September 2015 the government knew the perpetrators of the attacks were Jewish right wing extremists but would not reveal the identities at this time to the public. See Ynet, "Ya'alon: We know who was behind Duma attack", September 9, 2015

<sup>129</sup> AFP, "Car bomb explodes in Riyadh, driver killed: Saudi government", July 16, 2015

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> AFP, "Saudi Arabia arrests 431 suspected of links to IS group", July 19, 2015

<sup>132</sup> AP, "Saudi Arabia Says It Stopped ISIS Attacks on Kingdom; 400 Held", July 18, 2015

against IS targets which destroyed 224 tactical units, 222 Fighting positions, 118 vehicles, two Heavy machine guns, eight Mortar systems, seven VBIED's, one Anti-Aircraft artillery unit, three crude oil collections points, one antenna, 22 bridges, one Tunnel entrance, four weapons caches, 30 buildings, 13 checkpoints, 33 bunkers, one sniper position, six mined fields and 108 staging areas." The airstrikes were part of a continued counter-terrorist operation against IS militant dubbed "Operation Inherent Resolve".<sup>133</sup>

Some of the significant airstrikes included, amongst others:

- On July 2, 14 airstrikes were conducted near Al Hasakah, Kobani and near Tal Abyad, targeting and destroying tactical units, vehicles, IS buildings and fighting positions.<sup>134</sup>
- On July 5, three IS vehicles, four IS fighting positions and five IS tactical units were targeted and destroyed in an airstrike near Al Hasakah. Additionally 18 airstrikes were conducted near Ar Raqqa, which destroyed an IS tactical unit, three IS vehicles and 16 IS bridges. Authorities also said three airstrikes near Kobani struck two IS tactical units, destroying two IS fighting positions and an IS vehicle.<sup>135</sup>
- On July 8, a US-Led airstrike reportedly killed Muhsin al-Fadhli, a senior al-Qaeda leader and head of the Khorasan Group, which is linked to the Al Nusra Front, as he travelled in a vehicle on the outskirts of Sarmada in north-western Syria.<sup>136</sup> US authorities made the announcement on July 21, saying that Al-Fadhli was directly responsible for terrorist attacks which included an armed assault on the French ship MV Limburg and the killing of US Marines on Faylaka Island in Kuwait, both in October 2002.<sup>137</sup> The US State Department had previously placed a US \$7 million bounty on al-Fadhli's head as a reward for any information that would lead to his capture or death.<sup>138</sup> In September 2014, it was reported that he was killed in a US airstrike,

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<sup>133</sup> [http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814\\_Inherent-Resolve](http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814_Inherent-Resolve)

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> The Guardian, "Senior al-Qaeda figure, Muhsin al-Fadhli, killed in US air strike in Syria, officials say", July 22, 2015

<sup>137</sup> Al Jazeera, "US says air strike in Syria killed Khorasan leader", July 22, 2015

<sup>138</sup> AP, "US kills senior Khorasan Group leader", July 21, 2015

however, the information proved false.<sup>139</sup>

- On July 13, 16 US-led air strikes were conducted near Al Hasakah, Ar Raqqa, Aleppo and Kobani targeting IS fighting positions, tactical units and weapons. In the airstrike near Al-Hasakah, authorities said IS militant Abu Hajar al-Hadrami (Maher Meshaal) a Saudi National, was killed.<sup>140</sup> He was responsible for composing theme songs that accompanied recent propaganda videos released by the IS.<sup>141</sup>
- On July 16, 15 airstrikes were conducted near Al Hasakah and near Aleppo, two airstrikes destroyed four IS towed artillery pieces, three IS bunkers and an IS fighting position. Near Ar Raqqa, five airstrikes demolished five tactical units, two vehicles, a structure, checkpoint and excavator. Authorities also said airstrikes were conducted near Ayn Isa and Tal Abyad.<sup>142</sup>
- On July 25, Turkish airstrikes conducted with three F16s, targeted three IS positions in Syria. This was the first time Turkey had conducted airstrikes in Syria against IS targets.<sup>143</sup> Turkish authorities said the airstrikes were a counter-terrorist response to the IS attack in Surac (see page 26 of this report) and a border attack by IS militants in northern Syria<sup>144</sup> (See page 21)
- On July 31, coalition military forces conducted 24 airstrikes using fighter-attack, fighter and bomber aircraft. Seven strikes were carried out in the outskirts of Al Hasakah, destroying a large tactical unit and five small tactical units. Six fighting positions, four motorcycles, weapons, vehicles, and an IS command and control centre were also hit in the strike and destroyed. Near Dayr Az Zawr, 17 airstrikes destroyed eight staging areas, three bridges, four IS checkpoints, an IS training area, and an IS logistics site.<sup>145</sup>

Also in Syria during July 2015:

On July 3, a suicide bomber detonated inside the Grand Mosque in the Tal area in Damascus during

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<sup>139</sup> Al-Jazeera.ibid.

<sup>140</sup> CBS, "ISIS' chief singer and songwriter killed in Syria, activists say", July 13, 2015

<sup>141</sup> Washington Times, "Islamic State's 'chief singer and songwriter' dies in Syria airstrike", July 13, 2015

<sup>142</sup> [http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814\\_Inherent-Resolve](http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814_Inherent-Resolve)

<sup>143</sup> CNN, "Turkish warplanes bomb ISIS positions in Syria for the first time", July 25, 2015

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

Friday Prayers. Forty one people were killed including the cleric, Sheikh Suleiman Afandi. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>146</sup> In a separate incident on July 3, 15 Al- Nusra Front militants were killed and 30 others injured in a suicide bombing inside the al-Salem mosque in the city of Ariha in Idlib province.<sup>147</sup> The IS claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>148</sup>

On July 22, a team of five militants attacked the Syrian-Turkish border, shooting Turkish border soldiers, killing one soldier and wounding two others. The militants attacked from the Syrian side of the border. The Turkish military said they had captured the body of the militants who launched the attack. The military seized weapons that included an AK-47 automatic rifle and a rocket launcher.<sup>149</sup> The IS claimed responsibility for the attack. In response, the Turkish military launched artillery into Syria and then carried out airstrikes.<sup>150</sup> (See page 20 of this report)

## Yemen

On July 3, four AQAP militants were killed in a drone strike that targeted an AQAP base located near Mukalla. No further details were made public.<sup>151</sup>

On July 6, approximately 45 people were killed and 50 others wounded by a Saudi-led airstrike that targeted a market selling livestock, near Aden.<sup>152</sup> Authorities said it was unclear how many militants were killed and how many civilians were amongst the casualties.<sup>153</sup>

On July 8, one civilian was killed and five others wounded by a car bomb that detonated at the Al-Raoudh mosque in Sanaa. The bomb exploded as worshippers were leaving after evening prayers. The IS claimed responsibility for the attacks.<sup>154</sup>

On July 12, four AQAP militants were killed and five others wounded in a suspected US drone strike

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<sup>146</sup> AP, "Bomb goes off inside mosque in Damascus suburb, kills cleric", July 3, 2015

<sup>147</sup> Fox News, "Mosque bombing in northern Syria kills 15 members of al-Qaida's affiliate", July 4, 2015

<sup>148</sup> Al-Jazeera, "Syria army and Hezbollah in major assault near Damascus", July 3, 2015

<sup>149</sup> AP, "IS militants kill Turkish soldier near Syria border", July 23, 2015

<sup>150</sup> CNN. Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Reuters, "Drone attack on al Qaeda in Yemen kills four: witnesses", July 3, 2015

<sup>152</sup> Guardian, "Deadly air strike hits market in Yemen", July 6, 2015

<sup>153</sup> BBC, "Yemen crisis: Many die in Saudi-led coalition air strike", July 6, 2015

<sup>154</sup> AFP, "Deadly car bomb hits Shiite mosque in Yemen capital", July 8, 2015

that targeted their convoy in Abyan province.<sup>155</sup> Residents in the eastern city of Mukalla said a suspected U.S. drone fired two missiles at cars carrying al Qaeda militants on Friday night, killing three including a senior leader in the group, Abu Hajar al-Hadrami.

On July 13, a Saudi-led airstrike killed 25 civilians and injured 50 others in the Sawan neighborhood a poor residential area in Sanaa. Authorities said 15 homes were destroyed.<sup>156</sup>

On July 30, a drone strike targeted an AQAP vehicle transporting four militants in southern Yemen. All four militants were killed. A man identified as Ahmed al-Kazimi was amongst those targeted and he is suspected to have been the local leader of AQAP in the area.<sup>157</sup>

On July 31, nine soldiers were killed by a suicide car bomber who targeted a Yemeni army checkpoint near Qoton city in Hadramawt province. No group claimed responsibility, but authorities blamed AQAP, who operate in the area.<sup>158</sup>

## North America

### USA

On July 20, Irfan Demirtas, also known as Nasrullah, 56, a dual Dutch-Turkish national who is allegedly tied to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan was indicted in US Federal court in Washington.<sup>159</sup> He was charged with raising funds for the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and recruiting European nationals to join the organization. He was allegedly actively recruiting militants in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Jordan, the Netherlands and, France. According to the court indictment his alleged activities dated back to January 2006 through May 2008, he raised money and recruited fighters. He was arrested in Germany in January 2015 on a warrant and extradited to the US. If

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<sup>155</sup> AP, "U.S. drone strike kills 4 al-Qaida fighters in Yemen", July 12, 2015

<sup>156</sup> Reuters, "Saudi-led air raids in Yemen kill 21 two days into truce", July 13, 2015

<sup>157</sup> Fox News, "Saudi-led coalition airstrike hits market in Yemen, 45 dead", July 30, 2015

<sup>158</sup> AFP, "Qaeda suicide bombing kills nine Yemen soldiers: military source", July 31, 2015

<sup>159</sup> US dept. of State, "Facilitator and Fundraiser for Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Extradited to United States to Face Terrorism Charges", July 20, 2015

convicted he faces 30 years in prison.<sup>160</sup>

On July 27, Harlem Suarez, 23, was arrested as a result of an FBI sting operation. He was charged the following day in a court in Miami, with planning to detonate a bomb on a beach in Florida.<sup>161</sup> His arrest was made after an FBI agent gave Suarez an inert explosive device. He allegedly planned to use galvanized nails in the bomb to add extra impact and hide the bomb in a backpack. The FBI agent had received the bomb supplies, the backpack and a cellphone to be used as a detonator from Suarez.<sup>162</sup> US authorities said Suarez had been monitored by federal authorities for several months, acting on concerns that he had posted radicalized messages, praising the IS on Facebook and that he had posted messages about how to construct a bomb. He was charged with “attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction in the US”.<sup>163</sup>

On July 29, Arafat M. Nagi, 42, was arrested and charged in New York, with providing material support and resources to the IS.<sup>164</sup> The charge carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Authorities alleged that Nagi bought military combat gear, including night vision goggles and weapons, then traveled twice, in October 2012 and July 2014, to Turkey.<sup>165</sup> Authorities claimed he radicalized local residents about the IS and spread support of IS on social media sites. He also pledged his allegiance to the IS and its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Reuters, “Dutch-Turkish man appears in U.S. court on terrorism charges”, July 20, 2015

<sup>161</sup> ABC, “Florida Man Arrested in ISIS-Inspired Plot to Bomb Florida Beach, Officials Say”, July 28, 2015

<sup>162</sup> <https://www.fbi.gov/miami/press-releases/2015/florida-resident-charged-with-attempting-to-use-weapon-of-mass-destruction>

<sup>163</sup> Guardian, “Isis-inspired Florida man planned to detonate nail bomb on beach, FBI says”, July 28, 2015

<sup>164</sup> Fox news, “DOJ: 44-year-old New York man tried joining ISIS”, July 29, 2015

<sup>165</sup> <https://www.fbi.gov/buffalo/press-releases/2015/new-york-man-arrested-and-charged-with-attempting-to-provide-support-to-isil>

<sup>166</sup> <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/new-york-man-arrested-and-charged-attempting-provide-support-isil>

## Asia

### Afghanistan

On July 11, Hafiz Mohammed Saeed, the leader of the IS in Afghanistan and Pakistan, was killed along with 30 other militants, who were not named in a US drone strike in Achin.<sup>167</sup> The IS said Saeed was alive but said that Shahidullah Shahid, a former member of the TTP who had recently pledged his allegiance to the IS, was amongst the militants killed. Additionally, IS announced the death of another senior member named Gul Zaman. The Afghan Government, however, did not confirm the deaths.<sup>168</sup> Also on July 11, in a separate US airstrike, Abu Khalil al-Sudani alias Saifullah Khalil, was killed, along with three other militants who were not named. The US said al Sudani was responsible for Al-Qaeda suicide operations and plots against US targets. He reportedly had direct ties with Ayman al-Zawahiri.<sup>169</sup> Al-Sudani also allegedly directed operations against NATO, Afghan and Pakistani forces.<sup>170</sup>

On July 12, a suicide car bomber killed 27 Afghan civilians, including many children and six Afghan security forces members, in addition 10 others were wounded at a checkpoint located outside a military base used by Afghan and international soldiers known as Camp Chapman.<sup>171</sup> No US soldiers were amongst the victims.<sup>172</sup> It was unclear whether the suicide bomber was intending to target soldiers in the base or whether the checkpoint, which is manned by Afghan soldiers, was the intended target. However, Afghan authorities suggested that the soldiers manning the checkpoint were the target and not the base itself.<sup>173</sup> No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed the Taliban.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> CNN, "Afghan Agency: ISIS leader killed in drone strike", July 11, 2015

<sup>168</sup> BBC News, "Islamic State leader in Afghanistan killed by drone", July 12, 2015

<sup>169</sup> Washington Times, "Al Qaeda commander in charge of suicide and explosive operations killed in U.S. airstrike", July 24, 2015

<sup>170</sup> BBC, "'Top al-Qaeda leader killed' in Afghanistan air strike", July 24, 2015

<sup>171</sup> BBC, "Afghanistan suicide bomb 'kills 33' near former CIA base", July 13, 2015

<sup>172</sup> Independent, "Suicide bombing kills at least 17 civilians near Khost US base in Afghanistan", July 12, 2015

<sup>173</sup> Al-Jazeera, "At least 25 people killed in Afghanistan suicide blast", July 12, 2015

<sup>174</sup> BBC. Ibid.

On July 31, the Taliban released a statement to confirm the death of their leader, Mullah Omar.<sup>175</sup> According to the Afghan government, Omar died in April 2013 in hospital in Karachi, Pakistan.<sup>176</sup> The new Taliban leader is reportedly Mullah Akhtar Mansoor,<sup>177</sup> Omar's former deputy and leader of the Quetta Shura council.<sup>178</sup> Authorities said he was the former Taliban aviation minister between 1996 to the 2001 during the US invasion of Afghanistan, and became deputy leader of the Taliban in 2010. Mansoor, is known for taking part in peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government.<sup>179</sup>

## **Bangladesh**

On July 1, counter-terrorist raids took place in three locations in Dhaka, targeting an Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent militant cell. Authorities said 12 suspects were arrested including Mainul Islam, the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent in Bangladesh and his deputy Zafar Amin.<sup>180</sup> It was reported that some of the cells militants were previously members of the Harkat-ul-Jihad al Bangladesh group.<sup>181</sup> Authorities said the majority of arrests were made as the suspects were arriving to Dhaka by boat from southern Bangladesh and at the airport.<sup>182</sup> As part of the operation, Security Forces raided a residential address leading to the arrest of two cell members and the discovery of explosives and bomb making materials, weapons, terrorist training manuals and documents about jihad. Authorities suspect the cell were planning an attack that would target Eid al-Fitr celebrations.<sup>183</sup>

## **China**

On July 14, three Uighur militants were killed by police and a fourth was injured and arrested after attacking police officers with knives in Liaoning in north-east China. No group claimed responsibility

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<sup>175</sup> CNN, "Taliban leader Mullah Omar's death could lead to more ISIS recruits", July 31, 2015

<sup>176</sup> CNN, "Taliban confirm Mullah Omar's death, name new leader", August 1, 2015

<sup>177</sup> For a more detailed profile of Mansoor see:

Telegraph, "Who is 'new Taliban leader' Mullah Akhtar Mansoor?", July 30, 2015 and Al-Jazeera, "Profile: Mullah Akhtar Mansoor", August 3, 2015;

<sup>178</sup> Guardian, "Mullah Akhtar Mansoor: Taliban's new leader has reputation for moderation", August 1, 2015

<sup>179</sup> Telegraph, "Who is 'new Taliban leader' Mullah Akhtar Mansoor?", July 30, 2015

<sup>180</sup> Reuters, "Two top leaders of Al Qaeda Indian Sub-continent (AQIS) nabbed", July 2, 2015

<sup>181</sup> New York Times, "Bangladesh Police Arrest 12 Men Suspected of Qaeda Ties", July 2, 2015

<sup>182</sup> AP, "Bangladesh police questioning 12 al-Qaida suspects", July 2, 2015

<sup>183</sup> NYT *ibid.*

for the incident.<sup>184</sup>

## India

On 27 July, gunmen who were disguised as Indian soldiers, opened fire on a civilian bus and attacked a police station in Dinanagar in Gurdaspur Punjab.<sup>185</sup> Three civilians and four police officers, including the police station chief, were killed.<sup>186</sup> The attackers engaged in a firefight with security forces for over 10 hours, resulting in the deaths of the majority of the militants. One attacker was seriously wounded.<sup>187</sup> No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba.<sup>188</sup> Following the attack, authorities also foiled a further attack in the area when five bombs were discovered wired to a railroad track in the area. It was safely defused by military experts. The local train service was temporarily suspended.<sup>189</sup>

## Pakistan

On July 2, security forces carried out counter-terrorist raids at the Urmar refugee camp in Peshawar. Three men, who were suspected of plotting IS attacks, were arrested.<sup>190</sup> They had in their possession IS and Taliban literature and maps of London, UK. Authorities seized a computer containing IS videos. Authorities also seized leaflets citing information against the Pakistani government and its security forces. The suspects were identified as Asmatullah and Abdur Rehman, from Afghanistan, and Muhammad Ibrahim, from Pakistan. Authorities believed the men were planning an attack on London to coincide with the ten year anniversary of the July 7, 2005 bombings that targeted the London transport system.<sup>191</sup> The suspects were charged with conspiracy against Pakistan and being in possession of harmful literature.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> AFP, “Chinese police kill three 'Xinjiang terrorists' in north-east, authorities say”, July 14, 2015

<sup>185</sup> New York Times, “Gunmen in Indian Army Uniforms Attack Bus and Police Station, Killing 5”, July 27, 2015

<sup>186</sup> PTI, “Terror strikes Punjab, SP among 6 killed, 1 terrorist eliminated “, July 27, 2015

<sup>187</sup> The Hindu, “Encounter ends; 3 civilians, 4 policemen dead”, July 27, 2015

<sup>188</sup> Times of India, “Terror strikes Punjab, SP among 6 killed, 1 terrorist eliminated”, July 27, 2015

<sup>189</sup> IANS, “Punjab terror attack: Five live bombs found on railway track”, July 27, 2015

<sup>190</sup> IHT, “Spreading militant propaganda: Police arrest three IS-inspired men in Peshawar”, July 2, 2015

<sup>191</sup> Telegraph, “Men arrested over feared 7/7 anniversary terror plot”, July 4, 2015

<sup>192</sup> Mailonline, “Three arrested in Pakistan with ISIS propaganda and London maps over planned 7/7 anniversary attack”, July 3, 2015

## Turkey

On 20 July, 33 people were killed and approximately 100 others wounded in a suicide bombing, that targeted a crowd of approximately 300 members of the Federation of Socialist Youth Associations (SGDF) activists in the grounds of the Amara Culture Centre in Suruc, located near the Syrian border.<sup>193</sup> The activists, who were staying at the center during the summer, were taking part in a meeting and press conference about their volunteering efforts to rebuild Kobane in Syria.<sup>194</sup> Authorities named the perpetrator as Seyh Abdurrahman Alagöz, 20, a male Turkish Kurdish student who authorities suspect was recruited by the IS earlier this year. His identity card was found at the scene of the attack and DNA evidence linked him to the attack.<sup>195</sup> The IS claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>196</sup>

On July 25, Turkish authorities carried out wide scale counter-terrorist raids in Istanbul, Adana and Adiyaman. Authorities said nearly 600 militants were arrested, the majority were members of the IS and the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK).<sup>197</sup>

On July 26, two soldiers were killed and four others injured when a car bomb targeted their military vehicle in Lice. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed the PKK. Assailants also opened fire at police stations in the southeastern cities of Diyarbakir, Siirt and Mardin. However, there were no casualties in the attacks. No group claimed responsibility.<sup>198</sup>

On July 28, Turkish authorities said a Turkish-Iranian gas pipeline was targeted by suspected PKK militants in Agri. The explosion caused a large fire and caused gas flow to be closed between Turkey and Iran. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>199</sup>

On July 29, the Kirkuk – Yumurtalık oil pipeline in the Silopi district of southeastern Şırnak province,

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<sup>193</sup> IBT, "Turkey: 'Isis suicide attack' on Suruc young socialists kills 27", July 20, 2015

<sup>194</sup> BBC, "Suruc massacre: At least 30 killed in Turkey border blast", July 20, 2015

<sup>195</sup> Guardian, "Turkey releases bombing suspect details as Twitter temporarily shut down", July 22, 2015

<sup>196</sup> CNN, "Dozens dead after terror attack in Turkish border city", July 20, 2015

<sup>197</sup> UPI, "Turkey arrests hundreds in terrorism crackdown, airstrikes continue", July 25, 2015

<sup>198</sup> AP, "Car bomb kills 2 Turkish soldiers in mainly Kurdish province", July 26, 2015

<sup>199</sup> UPI, "Explosion shuts down Turkey-Iran natural gas pipeline amid increasing violence", July 28, 2015

Turkey, was damaged by an explosion that caused the oil flow passing through the pipeline to be blocked. The explosion caused a significant oil leak that damaged surrounding agriculture cornfields. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed the PKK militants.<sup>200</sup>

## Oceania

There were no significant incidents in Oceania during July 2015.

## Attacks on Energy facilities

On July 28, Turkish authorities said a Turkish-Iranian gas pipeline was targeted by suspected PKK militants in Agri.<sup>201</sup> The explosion caused a large fire and caused gas flow to be closed between Turkey and Iran. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>202</sup>

On July 29, the Kirkuk – Yumurtalık oil pipeline in the Silopi district of southeastern Şırnak province, Turkey was damaged by an explosion at approximately 3am. Authorities said the explosion blocked the oil flow and caused significant environmental damage to the surrounding agriculture cornfields.<sup>203</sup> No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed the PKK militants.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> <http://istanbulnewspost.com/blog/explosion-on-kirkuk-yumurtalik-oil-pipeline/>

<sup>201</sup> UPI *ibid.*

<sup>202</sup> Reuters, “Attack halts flow in natural gas pipeline from Iran to Turkey”, July 28, 2015

<sup>203</sup> Antoliaturknews, “Explosion on Kirkuk-Yumurtalık oil pipeline”, July 29, 2015

<sup>204</sup> <http://istanbulnewspost.com/blog/explosion-on-kirkuk-yumurtalik-oil-pipeline/>

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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.

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