



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

ICT Incident and Activists Database

PERIODIC REVIEW

Summary of Terrorist Incidents and Counter-Terrorist Operations Worldwide May 2015

Highlights

- On May 4, two gunmen opened fire outside an art exhibition and cartoon contest, which was organized by an anti-Islam group, at the Culwell Event Centre in Dallas, North America. The gunmen were fatally shot by police, after they shot and injured a security guard.
- On May 6, as a result of a series of nationwide counter-terrorist raids in Germany, four people who allegedly created a right wing extremist cell, were charged with plotting to attack Muslims in mosques and the homes of asylum seekers. Authorities said during the raids, police seized explosives but they were unclear if a specific target had been chosen for the attack.
- On May 7, it was reported that a US drone strike killed Nasser bin Ali al-Ansi, a senior AQAP militant in Yemen. His son and several other militants were also killed in the strike. Authorities said al-Ansi appeared in a video in January 2015 claiming responsibility for the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris, France.
- On May 10, 50 prisoners and 12 police officers were killed as a result of a prison break in Diyala province, Iraq in which 40 inmates escaped. The IS claimed responsibility for the incident and claimed 30 IS members were among those who escaped.
- On May 13, it was reported that Abdul Rahman al-Qaduli alias Abu Alaa al- Afari, the deputy leader of the IS in Iraq, was killed in a suspected US-led coalition airstrike. According to the reports, Al-Afari was targeted, along with several other militants as they were meeting in the village of al-Iyadhiya, near Tal Afar, in a mosque, where witnesses said al-Afari was a preacher.
- On May 14, almost 20 counter-terrorist raids were carried out in Wexford, Leitrim and Louth countries. Police seized explosives and safely detonated the devices. The raid were part of a counter-terrorist operation in Northern Ireland, UK targeting dissident republican militants ahead of a Royal official visit by the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall.
- On May 14, armed Taliban gunmen killed 14 guests, many were foreign nationals and wounded 40 others at the Park Palace guesthouse in Kabul, Afghanistan. A five hour firefight between security forces and the militants took place. Authorities said 44 guests were rescued.
- On May 14-16, 17 explosions occurred in multiple locations in Yala, Thailand, injuring 20 people. Police said 14 explosions were reported almost simultaneously during the night and

then the following morning three additional bombs were discovered and safely defused by bomb disposal experts. No group claimed responsibility for the attacks.

- On May 16, US Special Forces carried out an overnight counter-terrorist raid in Deir Ezzor province, killing 32 IS militants, including the main target of the raid, an IS mid-level operative known as Abu Sayyaf. US officials said Abu Sayyaf was responsible for the “illicit oil, gas and financial operations” that funded IS operations in Syria. His wife, Umm Sayyaf was also arrested and detained for questioning.
- On May 16, four people, including three prominent judges were killed and a fourth was seriously injured by unidentified gunmen in the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt. No group claimed immediate responsibility but authorities suspected the Sinai Province, whose leaders had recently threatened to attack judges for sentencing militants to jail terms.
- On May 22, 21 people were killed and 81 others were injured, when a suicide bomber detonated during Friday Prayers inside the Iman Ali Mosque in Qatif province, Saudi Arabia. A group affiliated with the IS, called the Najd Province, claimed responsibility for the attack. Following this incident, on May 30, a suicide bomber, who according to witnesses was disguised in woman clothing, killed four people at the Imam Hussein Shia mosque in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. The IS claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On May 27, a Lebanese-Canadian man, 26, with suspected ties to Hizballah was arrested in Larnaca, Cyprus. Police discovered he was hiding two tons of ammonium nitrate in the basement of an apartment he was staying in. Authorities claimed he was plotting an attack on Israeli targets in Europe but did not disclose the exact location.
- On May 31, an IS suicide car bomber killed six security forces and injured eight others at the main checkpoint in Misrata, Libya. The IS claimed responsibility naming the suicide bomber as Abu Wahid al-Tunisi.

Contents

Highlights	2
Europe	6
Bosnia	6
Cyprus.....	6
Germany.....	6
Macedonia	7
Spain	7
United Kingdom.....	8
Africa	8
Algeria.....	8
Kenya	9
Libya	10
Nigeria	10
Somalia	11
Middle East	12
Egypt.....	12
Iraq	12
Israel and the West Bank	16
Lebanon.....	17
Syria.....	19
Turkey.....	22
Yemen.....	22
North America.....	24
USA	24
Canada.....	26

Asia.....	26
Afghanistan.....	26
Bangladesh.....	28
Indonesia.....	28
Singapore.....	29
Pakistan.....	29
Philippines.....	30
Thailand.....	31
Oceania.....	31
Australia.....	31

Europe

Bosnia

On May 15, authorities charged 12 people with setting up an Islamic State (IS) cell. Authorities said that following an eight month surveillance into the alleged cell, raids were carried out in several locations (although authorities were not specific), leading to the arrests of the suspects and the seizure of documents, ammunition and weapons. Authorities said the 12 suspects had all travelled in 2013 and some in 2014, to Syria via Turkey. The identities of the suspects were not made public. Authorities suspected the cell were planning to carry out attacks in Bosnia, although the exact location and target was not known.¹

Cyprus

On May 27, a Lebanese-Canadian man, 26, was arrested in Larnaca, when police discovered he was hiding two tons of ammonium nitrate in the basement of an apartment he was staying in. It was reported that the suspect had rented the apartment in early May, when he arrived in Cyprus.² His identity was not made public but authorities said the suspect had ties to Hezbollah and was a close associate of Hezbollah leader, Hassan Nasrallah. Authorities claimed he was plotting an attack on Israeli targets in Europe but did not disclose the exact location. Israeli authorities were alerted to the arrest by their counter-parts in Cyprus.³ In accordance with Cypriot law, the suspect was detained in custody for eight days and faced a closed court hearing.⁴

Germany

On May 6, as a result of a series of nationwide counter-terrorist raids, four people who allegedly

¹ Reuters, "Bosnia indicts 12 for fighting in Syria, Iraq", May 15, 2015

² Jerusalem post, "Cyprus arrest of Hezbollah man 'uncovered large-scale Iranian terror plot across Europe'", May 30, 2015

³ Haaretz, "Cyprus police foil planned Hezbollah attacks against Israeli targets in Europe", May 29, 2015

⁴ Ibid.

created a right wing extremist cell, were charged with plotting to attack Muslims in mosques and attack the homes of asylum seekers.⁵ The suspects, were only identified according to German privacy laws, as Andreas H. (the suspected leader), Markus W (vice leader), and members Denise Vanessa G and Olaf. O. Authorities said during the raids, police seized explosives but they were unclear if a specific target had been chosen for the attack.⁶

Macedonia

On May 9, violent clashes between armed militants and police killed 22 people, including eight police officers, in Kumanovo. During the incident, the clashes destroyed homes and cars in the area.⁷ The interior ministry said the militants were planning to target government institutions. Macedonian authorities said that the cell consisted of Kosovan nationals as well as an Albanian and 11 Macedonian nationals.⁸ On May 11, a court in Skopje indicted 30 people on terror related charges, for their roles in the violent clashes. Amongst those charged were 18 Ethnic Albanians from Kosovo. According to authorities the suspects faced charges of illegal possession of the weapons.⁹

Spain

On May 12, the Spanish Interior Ministry said that as a culmination of an eight month investigation, two Moroccan male citizens were arrested in Barcelona's Cornellà neighborhood charged with incitement via the internet. The men, who were not named, were also accused of radicalizing people about IS ideology in a local mosque and at secret meetings in residential areas.¹⁰

⁵ AP, "German police arrest 4 they say were plotting to attack Islamic targets; seize explosives", May 6, 2015

⁶ BBC, "German arrests over 'terror' plot", May 6, 2015

⁷ AFP, "30 charged with 'terrorism' over deadly Macedonia shooting", May 11, 2015

⁸ BBC, "Macedonia charges 30 with terrorism after Kumanovo", May 11, 2015 clashes

⁹ IBT, "Macedonia Terror Operation: Police Fighting Street-To-Street With 'Foreign' Group", May 9, 2015

¹⁰ The local, "Two 'jihadists' arrested for recruiting in Spain", May 12, 2015

United Kingdom

On May 1, a cylinder bomb was safely detonated by police in Brompton Park, northern Belfast. Local police said they received a warning and proceeded to evacuate the area where they believed the device was planted. The bomb was discovered in the evening hours at the Crumlin Road junction with Brompton Park and safely defused.¹¹ There was no claim of responsibility for this incident.¹²

On May 4, army bomb disposal units safely defused two explosive devices that were discovered in Londonderry, near an Army Reserve Centre. The bombs were discovered close to the residential area, leading to the evacuation of approximately 20 homes. No group claimed responsibility.¹³

On May 14, authorities carried out 20 counter-terrorist raids in Wexford, Leitrim and Louth counties where they seized and safely detonated, several explosive devices. The raids targeted dissident republican militants ahead of a Royal official visit to Northern Ireland by the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall.¹⁴ Authorities arrested six people who were accused of planning to attack the Royal couple.¹⁵

On May 28, Mohammed Rehman 24 and a female suspect who was not named, 23 were arrested in the West Midlands at two separate residential addresses. The suspects were taken into custody of West Midlands Police where they were questioned about the alleged plot.¹⁶ No additional details were made public.¹⁷

Africa

Algeria

On May 19, 22 militants were killed by the Algerian military who carried out a large counter-terrorist

¹¹ BBC, "North Belfast: 'Substantial bomb' found in Brompton Park", May 1, 2015

¹² BBC, "Timeline of dissident republican activity", May 6, 2015

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ BBC, "Six arrests as bombs found in Irish dissident republican investigation", May 14, 2015

¹⁵ Telegraph, "Six held over dissident IRA plot to kill Prince Charles", May 14, 2015

¹⁶ Telegraph, "Couple arrested on suspicion of planning terror attack in UK", May 29, 2015

¹⁷ Guardian, "Counter-terrorism police make two arrests in Reading", May 29, 2015

operation in Boukram forest near Bouira.¹⁸ Authorities said as a result of the operation, the military seized a large cache of ammunition including, amongst other items, automatic weapons, rifles and grenades.¹⁹ Although the identities of the slain militants were not made public, it was reported that the militants belonged to a group called the Jund Al-Khilafa (The Caliphate Soldiers), which have ties to the IS. The group claimed responsibility in September 2014 for kidnapping and killing Herve Gourdel, a French Mountaineer, leading the military to increase military operations in the area.²⁰ On May 28, a court in Algiers sentenced 12 militants in absentia, to the death penalty for their roles in an IED incident on June 9, 2009 that killed a French engineer and his driver. The IED was followed by a second explosion close by that wounded seven other people. Two other militants, who appeared in the Algiers court, received a sentence of life in prison, for their part in the bombing.²¹

Kenya

On May 25, al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen militants attacked police in Yumbis village in Garissa County resulting in the death of both militants and police. However, the exact figure was unclear as the police said one officer was killed and four others wounded but Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen said they killed 26 officers.²² In addition, an IED exploded as police carried out a patrol in Garissa and the Dadaab refugee camp. As a second team of police came to help, they were targeted and fired upon by the militants.²³

On May 26, police in Mombasa, arrested a wanted militant who they identified as Khalid Mohamed. Authorities said Mohamed is an explosives expert and a member of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen. He was also accused of recruiting other younger militants in Somalia to join Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen. At the time of arrest, authorities also seized explosives, weapons and ammunition from the

¹⁸ Reuters, “Algerian forces kill 22 Islamic State-tied militants: military”, May 19, 2015

¹⁹ APS, “22 terrorists killed in Bouira, quantity of arms and ammunition recovered”, May 20, 2015

²⁰ See September 2014 database report and DW, “Algerian troops kill 22 Islamist militants”, May 20, 2015

²¹ AFP, “Algeria sentences 12 Islamists to death over 2008 bombing”, May 28, 2015

²² Al-Jazeera, “Al-Shabab claims to have killed Kenyan police officers”, May 26, 2015

²³ Al-Jazeera, “Al-Shabab claims to have killed Kenyan police officers”, May 26, 2015

property.²⁴

Libya

On May 1, three people were killed and seven others were injured in Benghazi when a rocket landed at a medical Centre. No group claimed responsibility for the rocket fire but authorities blamed IS.²⁵

On May 24, two people were injured as a result of a Libyan military counter-terrorist offensive that targeted an oil tanker near Sirte. The military alleged the ship was used to smuggle militants and weapons.²⁶

On May 30, a rocket landed in Benghazi, in a residential area killing eight civilians and wounding eight others. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed IS.²⁷

On May 31, an IS suicide car bomber driving a 4x4 killed six security forces and injured eight others at the main checkpoint in Misrata. Witnesses said the incident caused a large crater in the road. The attack took place in the early morning at around dawn.²⁸ In a statement, the IS claimed responsibility and said the suicide bomber was a Tunisian national who used the alias Abu Wahid al-Tunisi.²⁹

Nigeria

On May 2, Nigerian soldiers rescued a group of 300 woman and girls from the Sambisa Forest, where they had been taken hostage by suspected Boko Haram militants. The military carried out counter-terrorist raids searching Boko Haram hideouts, when the soldiers discovered the woman and girls.³⁰

²⁴ Hiraan.com, "Terror suspect arrested, explosives recovered in Mombasa", May 26, 2015

²⁵ Reuters, "Rocket attack kills three at Benghazi medical center in Libya", May 1, 2015

²⁶ Al-Jazeera, "Libya warplanes bomb ship near the city of Sirte", May 24, 2015

²⁷ The Guardian, "Islamist fighters blamed as eight killed in rocket attack on Benghazi", May 26, 2015

²⁸ Reuters, "Suicide bombing claimed by Islamic State in western Libyan city kills five: official", May 31, 2015

²⁹ Independent, "Isis in Libya: Suicide bomber who killed six at Misrata checkpoint was Tunisian, says Tripoli", May 31, 2015

³⁰ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/11578630/Nigeria-army-rescues-200-girls-from-Boko-Haram-stronghold.html>

Authorities said many of the alleged militants escaped.³¹

On May 14, two female suicide bombers detonated their explosive belts at the Giwa army barracks near Maiduguri. Shortly after, Boko Haram militants who were heavily armed with grenades and weapons stormed the military base and fired indiscriminately. The soldiers returned fire but many of the attackers escaped.³²

On May 16, seven people were killed and 31 others injured, when a child female suicide bomber, 12, detonated an explosive vest at the entrance of the main bus station in Damaturu.³³ No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Boko Haram, who in recent months have forced young girls to carry out suicide attacks.³⁴

On May 18, Nigerian authorities said 10 Boko Haram training camps were destroyed during a military counter-terrorist offensive. Authorities said the main battle took place in and around the Dure camp, where notaries Boko Haram militants allegedly were hiding. There were also battles in the Sambisa forest but the number of casualties were unclear.³⁵

On May 31, 16 civilians were killed when a suicide bomber detonated inside the Alhaji Haruna mosque in Maiduguri. The attack occurred shortly after the afternoon prayers commenced. Serious damage was caused to the building. No group claimed responsibility but authorities blamed Boko Haram.³⁶

Somalia

On May 8, authorities said Abdifatah Barre, a prominent politician was killed by unidentified gunmen in Galkayo. According to authorities the gunmen escaped. No group claimed responsibility but

³¹ BBC, “Boko Haram: 300 girls and women taken to safety”, May 2, 2015

³² AP, “Boko Haram attacks Maiduguri, army repels but hundreds flee”, May 28, 2015

³³ Times of Israel, “Girl suicide bomber kills 7 in northeast Nigeria”, May 16, 2015

³⁴ Washington Post, “Suicide bomb attack at Nigerian bus station kills 8”, May 16, 2015

³⁵ BBC, “Nigeria's military 'destroys' 10 Boko Haram camps”, May 18, 2015

³⁶ Al-Jazeera, “Suicide bomber hits mosque in northern Nigeria”, May 31, 2015

authorities blamed al-Shabab Al-Mujihdeen.³⁷ In a separate incident, an IED exploded by a convoy of African Union troops as it was passing through Elasha town just outside Mogadishu. It was unclear how many casualties resulted. No group claimed responsibility.³⁸

On May 15, al-Shabab al-Mujihdeen militants released a video, in which the militant group threatened to carry out attacks in neighboring Uganda and Burundi. Ugandan authorities said they increased security in the country but did not confirm whether the video that contained the threats was genuine. Burundi authorities made no comment.³⁹

Middle East

Egypt

On May 16, four people, including three prominent judges were killed and a fourth judge was seriously injured by unidentified gunmen near el-Arish in the Sinai Peninsula, from Ismailia.⁴⁰ No group claimed immediate responsibility but authorities suspected the Sinai Province, whose leaders had previously threatened to target judges in the Sinai for sentencing militants to prison.⁴¹

On May 31, an explosion occurred at a natural gas plant near el-Arish in northern Sinai. No group claimed responsibility for the attack but authorities blamed Ansar Beit-al-Maqdis.⁴² According to authorities, the pipeline was significant as it supplies natural gas to residents in el-Arish and to a nearby power station.⁴³

Iraq

During May 2015, according to the US ministry of Defense, “341 US-led Coalition airstrikes were

³⁷ Garowe online, “Somalia: Gunmen kill Puntland MP in Galkayo”, May 8, 2015

³⁸ Reuters, “Somali Islamists kill government official, bomb AU convoy”, May 6, 2015

³⁹ IBT, “Somalia: Al-Shabaab threatens terror attacks in Burundi and Uganda”, May 12, 2015

⁴⁰ Al-Ahram, “3 judges, driver killed in gun attack in Egypt's North Sinai”, May 16, 2015

⁴¹ Reuters, “Islamic State's Egypt affiliate urges attacks on judges: recording”, May 20, 2015

⁴² Haaretz, “Islamic militants blow up Sinai gas pipeline, Egyptian officials say”, May 31, 2015

⁴³ AP, “Militants blow up natural gas pipeline in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, security officials say

conducted against IS targets in Iraq.” During those airstrikes, some of the targets destroyed included: “69 fighting positions, 90 vehicles, 97 tactical units, 15 ISIL staging areas, three checkpoints, 23 excavators, 31 mortar systems, an IS rocket firing position and two IS defensive positions, 20 IS buildings, four tunnel systems, 85 heavy machine guns, 11 tanks, five weapons caches, an IS command and control facility, an IS rocket launcher, an IS armored personnel carrier, one boat and one generator.” The airstrikes were part of a continued counter-terrorist operation against IS militant dubbed “Operation Inherent Resolve”.⁴⁴

In one of the most significant incidents, it was reported on May 13, that Abdul Rahman al-Qaduli alias Abu Alaa al-Afari, the deputy leader of the IS in Iraq, was killed in a suspected US coalition airstrike. The US neither confirmed nor denied the reports, but did say they did not target a mosque, where al-Afari’s body was discovered. The Iraqi Interior Ministry said they were unclear of Al-Afari’s whereabouts but confirmed an airstrike took place in northern Iraq.⁴⁵ According to the reports, Al-Afari was targeted, along with several other militants as they were meeting in the village of al-Yadhiya, near Tal Afar, in a mosque, where al-Afari regularly attended and preached. The US had placed a 7 million dollar bounty on his head.⁴⁶

Other significant airstrikes included:

- On May 3, US led coalition strikes targeted and destroyed IS staging positions, tactical units, weapons and vehicles near the towns of Beiji, Fallujah, Mosul, Ramadi and Tal Afar.⁴⁷
- On May 7, 14 US-led coalition airstrikes were conducted throughout Iraq including in and around Huwayjah, Beiji, Fallujah, Kirkurk, Mosul, Sinjar and Tal Afar. IS targets that were destroyed, included six large tactical units, an IS generator, two excavators, nine fighting positions and several armed vehicles.⁴⁸
- On May 11, nine US-led coalition airstrikes successfully destroyed IS targets near Beiji,

⁴⁴ <http://www.defense.gov/>

⁴⁵ CBC, “Abu Alaa al-Afari, ISIS commander, killed in U.S. airstrike, Iraq ministry claims”, May 13, 2015

⁴⁶ BBC, “Islamic State deputy leader 'killed in Iraq air strike”, May 13, 2015

⁴⁷ <http://www.centcom.mil/en/news/articles/may-5-military-airstrikes-continue-against-isil-in-syria-and-iraq>

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Fallujah, Haditha, Mosul, Sinjar and Ramadi.⁴⁹

- On May 15, authorities reported 12 US- led airstrikes targeted IS militants in Asad, Beiji, Fallujah, Ramadi and Sinjar. The airstrike in Ramadi hit IS headquarters whilst the other strikes targeted IS strictures, tactical units, fighting positions and mortar firing systems.
- On May 18, 19-US led coalition airstrikes were conducted in and around Beiji, Huwayjah, Fallujah, Ramadi, Sinjar and Tal Afar. Amongst the targets destroyed were IS sniper positions, tactical units, weapons and vehicles.⁵⁰
- On May 20, 16 US-led airstrikes targeted IS militants in al Asad, Falluja, Mosul, Sinjar, Bayji and Huwayja. IS targets that were destroyed included mortar systems, vehicles, tactical unites and fighting positions, weapons manufacturing facilities and buildings, as well as checkpoints and weapons including machine guns.⁵¹
- On May 31, witnesses reported airstrikes targeting IS targets in Fallujah, including marketplaces, mosques and a warehouse in and around Fallujah that were allegedly used to house explosives. Witnesses claimed 14 people were killed and 26 others were injured.⁵²

Significant terrorist incidents in Iraq during May 2015 included:

On May 2, it was reported that the Yazidi Progress Party claimed that 300 Yazidis captives were killed by IS militants near Tal Afar on May 1.⁵³ According to statement, the victims included woman and children. Few other details were known about the details of the incident.⁵⁴

On May 3, a double bombing killed 19 people and injured 40 others in Baghdad's Karrada neighborhood. The neighborhood is filled with restaurants, cafes and shops and was filled with

⁴⁹ MoD. Ibid.

⁵⁰ <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/604666/military-airstrikes-hit-isil-terrorists-in-syria-iraq>

⁵¹ <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/604679>

⁵² CNN, "Iraqi assaults on ISIS stronghold leave 31 dead, mosque damaged, witnesses say", May 31, 2015

⁵³ BBC, "Islamic State: Militants 'kill 300 Yazidi captives'", May 2, 2015

⁵⁴ Independent, "300 Yazidi captives killed in Iraq by Isis militants, officials say", May 3, 2015

people when the attacks occurred. Two policemen were amongst the casualties.⁵⁵ The first explosion was caused by a car bomb and caused most of the casualties. The second bomb, occurred approximately 10 minutes later and was caused by a suicide bomber.⁵⁶ The IS claimed responsibility for the attack.⁵⁷

On May 5, the Iraqi military said that intense battles continued between IS militants and security forces in and around the Beiji oil refinery in northern Iraq.⁵⁸ According to locals, the militants seized the majority of the oil refinery and cut power lines. However, the Iraq government, denied the militants had seized the majority of the area and made a Television statement to show government forces were in control and that additional security had been deployed to the refinery. In addition, eight US-led coalition airstrikes focused on the Beiji area.⁵⁹ According to reports, five IS fighting positions and fuel tanks were destroyed.⁶⁰

On May 9, 50 prisoners, many of whom were IS militants, and 12 police officers were killed when IS militants attacked a prison in the town of Al-Khalis and freeing 40 prisoners.⁶¹ The IS claimed responsibility for the incident. However, the details of the incident varied: Iraqi prison authorities said the prisoners attacked the prison guards, managing to seize their weapons.⁶² In a statement, the IS said IS militants inside the prison had been in communication with IS militants, who detonated IEDs at the prison gates, enabling them to be set free. The IS said the militants, once inside the prison overtook the weapons rooms and engaged in firefights with the guards.⁶³

On May 17, IS militants staged multiple terrorist attacks in Ramadi, taking control of the city and

⁵⁵ AP, "IS group claims Iraq car bomb attack that killed 19", May 3, 2015

⁵⁶ AP, "Baghdad car bomb attacks leave 17 dead ", May 2, 2015

⁵⁷ Independent *ibid*.

⁵⁸ GMA, "Iraq's largest oil refinery under threat from Islamic State, says US", May 7, 2015

⁵⁹ AP, "Iraq Sends Troops To Key Oil Refinery Amid Heavy Clashes With ISIS", May 5, 2015

⁶⁰ GMA. *Ibid*.

⁶¹ Al-Jazeera, "Scores killed after Iraq prison break", May 10, 2015

⁶² Independent, "Isis claims responsibility for major Iraq prison break leaving 62 inmates and police killed", May 10, 2015

⁶³ Reuters, "Fifty inmates and 12 police killed in Iraq prison break - officials", May 10, 2015

targeting local security forces and police and forcing many to flee.⁶⁴ Three IS suicide car bombers detonated at the gate of the Anbar Operation Command, which is the military headquarters in the region, killing five soldiers and wounding 12 others. Authorities reported that violent clashes between the IS and security forces followed and the militants seized large amounts of weapons.⁶⁵ Authorities also said four coordinated bombings targeted police officers in south Ramadi, killing 10 police officers and wounding 15 others. Col. Muthana al-Jabri, the chief of the Malaab police station, was amongst those killed.⁶⁶

On May 28, 10 people were killed and approximately 30 others injured, when two car bombs detonated near simultaneously, targeting two exclusive hotels in Baghdad.⁶⁷ In the first bombing, the Babylon hotel, which is a popular amongst government ministers, was targeted and then according to witness, a large explosion was reported minutes later outside the Cristal hotel, located close by. This hotel was often frequented by journalists. The hotels are located near the Tigris River. Authorities said a third bomb, was safely defused in the car park of the Babylon hotel. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.⁶⁸

Israel and the West Bank

On May 5, a Hamas weapons making factory in Hebron was discovered and dismantled during an IDF counter terrorist operation in the West Bank. Authorities said amongst the weapons seized were machine guns, as well as, several M-16 rifles. Authorities said four militants, whose identities were not disclosed to the public, were arrested during the operation.⁶⁹

On May 14, four people were wounded, one seriously, when a Palestinian attacker drove his car into a crowd of Israeli citizens, who were standing at a bus stop at the gate of Alon Shvut, in Gush Etzion, in the West Bank. A Palestinian man who was not identified but allegedly a resident of Hebron was

⁶⁴ New York Times, “Key Iraqi City Falls to ISIS as Last of Security Forces Flee”, May 17, 2015

⁶⁵ AP, “Suicide car bombs kill 15 Iraqi troops in besieged Ramadi”, May 17, 2015

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ RT, “10 killed by car blasts at two luxury Baghdad hotels”, May 28, 2015

⁶⁸ BBC, “Ten killed by Baghdad car bombs”, May 28, 2015

⁶⁹ Jpost, “Security forces uncover weapons cache during Hebron security raid”, May 5, 2015

arrested in the Gush Etzion junction and later questioned by the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet).⁷⁰ Following this incident, on May 20, a Palestinian militant, who was later identified as Amran Abu Dhaim, 41 from East Jerusalem, carried out a vehicular attack near the Mt. of Olives in Jerusalem. Two police officers were injured. Other police officers who were at the scene shot and injured Dhaim but he later succumbed to his wounds.⁷¹

On May 19, the IDF conducted security raids in the West Bank and arrested 17 militants suspected of carrying out attacks against Israeli security forces in recent months. Amongst those arrested, authorities said seven suspects were members of Hamas. The raids were carried out in Nabulus, Jenin, Azoun and Al-Aroub, Beth Fajar in the West Bank.⁷²

On May 24, two Israeli teenagers who were returning home from late night prayers during the Shavuot festival, were stabbed and moderately injured by a Palestinian man near the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem.⁷³ Police discovered the weapon in a nearby street and shortly afterwards arrested a male suspect, 19, who was detained for questioning.⁷⁴

On May 26, a Grad missile was fired by militants in the Gaza Strip into Southern Israel. The rocket landed near Ashdod, but there were no casualties and no group claimed responsibility but Israeli authorities blamed Hamas. It was reported that this was the longest range missile fired into Southern Israel since Operation Protective Edge.⁷⁵ In retaliation, the IDF struck four terrorist launching sites in Gaza.⁷⁶

Lebanon

On May 3, Lebanese authorities arrested six IS militants in Tripoli, including Ibrahim al-Barakat, who

⁷⁰ Times of Israel, “Four hurt in suspected car-ramming terror attack”, May 14, 2015

⁷¹ Ynet, “Two Border Police officers hurt in vehicular attack in Jerusalem”, May 20, 2015

⁷² Jpost, “IDF arrests 17 suspects - including 7 Hamas members in security sweeps across the West Bank”, May 19, 2015

⁷³ TOI, “Two Israeli teens stabbed near Jerusalem’s Damascus Gate”, May 24, 2015

⁷⁴ CBN, “Two Jewish Teens Stabbed on Shavuot”, May 26, 2015

⁷⁵ Reuters, “Rocket fired from Gaza lands near Israeli port Ashdod: police”, May 26, 2015

⁷⁶ Times of Israel, “After rocket attack, Israeli jets strike targets in Gaza Strip”, May 27, 2015

authorities claimed is a senior IS leader and recruiter.⁷⁷ He was arrested as he was trying to leave Lebanon with false documents.⁷⁸

On May 4, Lebanese authorities claimed they foiled an attack to assassinate senior politicians in Sidon. Amongst the politicians was MP Bahia Hariri and her son Ahmad, who is involved in the Future movement party.⁷⁹

On May 21, authorities in Aarsal dismantled a car bomb that contained 35 kg of explosives. It was unclear which group abandoned the car bomb. No group claimed responsibility.⁸⁰

Saudi Arabia

On May 22, 21 people were killed and 81 others were injured, when a suicide bomber detonated during Friday Prayers inside the Iman Ali Mosque in Qatif province.⁸¹ Authorities said approximately 150 Shia Muslims were attending prayers when the explosion occurred.⁸² A group affiliated with the IS called the Najd Province, claimed responsibility for the attack.⁸³ In a statement posted online, the IS affiliated group named the bomber as Abu Amer al-Najdi.⁸⁴ However, the Saudi Interior Ministry said they believed the suicide bomber was a known IS militant called Salih bin Abdulrahman Salih al-Ghishaami, who a Saudi citizen and was wanted by authorities. The Interior Ministry said DNA evidence from the scene helped identify the militant and that he used RDX explosives in the attack.⁸⁵ Following this incident, on May 30, a suicide bomber, who according to witnesses was disguised in woman clothing⁸⁶, detonated in the parking lot of the Imam Hussein Shia mosque in Dammam. The

⁷⁷ Daily Star, "General Security arrests Tripoli's ISIS emir", May 3, 2015

⁷⁸ AFP, "Lebanon forces 'arrest IS-linked cleric'", May 3, 2015

⁷⁹ Daily Star, "Plot foiled to assassinate Sidon figures: report", May 4, 2015

⁸⁰ AFP,

⁸¹ Telegraph, "Several killed after suicide bomber strikes Saudi mosque", May 22, 2015

⁸² Al-Jazeera, "Suicide bomber attacks Shia mosque in Saudi Arabia", May 22, 2015

⁸³ Telegraph *ibid.*

⁸⁴ Al-Jazeera, "ISIL claims responsibility for Saudi mosque attack", May 23, 2015

⁸⁵ AFP, "Saudis identify suicide bomber, confirm link to IS", May 23, 2015

⁸⁶ Guardian, "Second Saudi Arabia suicide bombing fuels Isis campaign fears", May 30, 2015

attack coincided with Friday prayers. Four people were killed. The IS claimed responsibility for the attack.⁸⁷

Syria

According to the US Department of Defense, during May 2015, “143 airstrikes were conducted in Syria against IS targets. During those airstrikes, some of the targets that were destroyed included: “72 tactical units, two trench systems, one checkpoint, four weapons caches, one staging area, 101 fighting positions, 54 vehicles, three tanks, two IS anti-aircraft artillery system, one IS-held buildings, three crude oil collection points, two excavators, one shipping container and one air field.” The airstrikes were part of a continued counter-terrorist operation against IS militant dubbed “Operation inherent Resolve”.⁸⁸

Some of the significant airstrikes included:

- On May 2, a US-led coalition airstrike in northern Syria, allegedly killed 52 civilians and 13 others civilians were reported missing.⁸⁹ US authorities made no official comment but Syrian humanitarian aid agencies said that the airstrike targeted civilian areas rather than militant strongholds.⁹⁰
- On May 7, US authorities claimed US-led coalition forces attacked four IS targets, destroying 12 IS fighting positions, as well as, several IS vehicles and rocket launching systems, near Hasakah.⁹¹
- On May 9, 13 US-led coalition airstrikes were conducted against IS targets near Hasakah, destroying three IS tactical units, nine fighting positions, 10 vehicles and two machine guns.⁹²

⁸⁷ Al-Jazeera, “Deaths in blast near Shia mosque in Saudi city”, May 30, 2015

⁸⁸ Ministry of Defense Operation Inherent Resolve http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814_Inherent-Resolve/cid/social_20141003_32807066

⁸⁹ Reuters, Islamic State crisis: US-led Syria strikes 'kill dozens of civilians'", May 2, 2015

⁹⁰ AFP, “US-led airstrikes 'kill 52 civilians in northern Syria”, May 2, 2015

⁹¹ Ministry of Defense *ibid.* http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0814_Inherent-Resolve/cid/social_20141003_32807066

⁹² *Ibid.*

- On May 11, nine US lead coalition strikes were launched against IS targets close to Raqqah, Hasakah and. IS machine guns, fighting units, tactical units and vehicles were destroyed.⁹³
- On May 18, six airstrikes were conducted near Hasakah resulting in 14 IS vehicles being demolished.⁹⁴
- During the week of May 21, US-led coalition forces carried out almost 50 airstrikes targeting IS targets. Authorities said as a result of these airstrikes, seven IS fighting units and weapon positions were destroyed near Hasakah and an IS tactical unit was destroyed near Dayr Az Zawr. Six IS fighting units were targeted near Kobani and six weapons system were destroyed near Tadmur.⁹⁵
- On May 30, six airstrikes were carried out resulting in two IS tactical units and four IS positions being destroyed near Al Hasakah. Authorities also said IS weapons and mortar system were destroyed.⁹⁶

Other significant incidents in Syria during May included:

On May 4, it was reported by Syrian media that a suicide bomber on a motorcycle attacked a Syrian military logistics facility in Damascus.⁹⁷ A senior army general who is responsible for army logistics and supplies, was suspected to be the main target. He was reportedly wounded in the attack and three of his guards were killed during violent clashes with other militants. However, the military said he was unhurt in the failed assassination attempt.⁹⁸ The Syrian military claimed that they killed a second militant who was involved in the attack. Jabat Al-Nusra claimed responsibility for the attack.⁹⁹ On May 15, IS militants and government forces clashed in intense battles in Palmyra, which is an important historical city, which houses the majority of Syria's antiquities and a UNESCO world Heritage site.¹⁰⁰ Syrian war planes attempted to repel the militants from the eastern edge of the

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid,

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ BBC, "Syria conflict: Suicide blast rocks central Damascus", May 4, 2015

⁹⁸ Reuters, "Army officer reported hurt in Damascus suicide bombing; army denies it", May 4, 2015

⁹⁹ New York Times, "Syrian Forces Kill Attackers in Damascus", May 4, 2015

¹⁰⁰ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23>

city.¹⁰¹ By May 20, IS militants captured Palmyra and authorities said that the IS had captured almost 50% of Syria, mainly from Palmyra to the border with Iraq and also from Palmyra to the Syrian-Jordanian frontier.¹⁰² Authorities said the militants used suicide bombings and explosives as they carried out their advance of the city. Authorities also said that the militants had captured the surrounding gas fields, al-Hail and Arak.¹⁰³ The government backed military attempted to repel the militants using over 15 airstrikes in and around the city.¹⁰⁴ During the offensive, the IS also reportedly captured a military airbase and a prison, freeing hundreds of prisoners.¹⁰⁵ It was reported that approximately 70 soldiers and 65 militants were killed in the battle. The IS also reportedly beheaded 10 civilians and killed 16 others who were local residents, who they accused of collaborating with the Assad regime.¹⁰⁶ Other reports said hundreds of people, who had supposed links to the Assad regime were killed, although the exact figures were not confirmed.¹⁰⁷

On May 16, a US led special forces killed a high ranking IS militant named Abu Sayaff and arrested his wife Umm Sayaff, during an overnight counter terrorist raid in Deir Ezzor province, Syria. During the raid. 31 other IS militants were killed.¹⁰⁸ US authorities said the aim of the raid was to capture Sayaff, however, upon landing in Syria, a firefight broke out between the militants and the US Special Forces as they entered the building where Sayaff was hiding, resulting in his death.¹⁰⁹ US officials said Sayaff was directly responsible for attacks on gas and oil facilities, that funded other IS operations. Authorities

¹⁰¹ BBC, "Syrian forces battle IS near ancient ruins of Palmyra", May 15, 2015

¹⁰² AFP, "Syria's Palmyra in peril after IS overruns most of city", May 20, 2015

¹⁰³ Guardian, "Palmyra: historic Syrian city falls under control of Isis", May 21, 2015

¹⁰⁴ CNN, "ISIS executes 262, as it takes ancient Syrian city of Palmyra, group says", May 25, 2015

¹⁰⁵ Mail online, "The slaughter of Palmyra's citizens begins: First images emerge from Syrian city overrun by ISIS... and show rows of people beheaded as terror group celebrates freeing Islamists from state prison", May 21, 2015

¹⁰⁶ BBC, "Islamic State seizes Syria's ancient Palmyra", May 21, 2015

¹⁰⁷ CNN *ibid.* and RT, "ISIS kills 400, mostly women & children, in Palmyra – Syrian state TV ", May 24, 2015

¹⁰⁸ AFP, "US raid in Syria said to kill 32 Islamic State members", May 17, 2015

¹⁰⁹ AP, "ISIS leader Abu Sayyaf killed in Syria, U.S. says", May 17, 2015

said as a result of the raid, authorities seized laptops, documents and cell phones, which provided important intelligence to US authorities about the IS and their operational activities .¹¹⁰ Authorities claimed Umm Sayyaf was a key source of intelligence about IS operations in Syria. She faced deportation to Iraq, as she is an Iraqi citizen.¹¹¹ During the operation, the US soldiers also freed a Yazidi woman, 18, who was captured by the IS militants.¹¹²

Turkey

On May 18, six people were injured when a parcel bomb exploded by the offices of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) in the city of Adana several days before elections were due to take place. In a separate but related incident, a bomb exploded at the HDP offices in Mersin.¹¹³ There were no casualties in the Mersin bombing. No group claimed responsibility for the bombings.¹¹⁴

Yemen

On May 7, it was reported that a US drone strike in April killed Nasser bin Ali al-Ansi, a senior AQAP operative and leader.¹¹⁵ Authorities claimed his son and several other militants were also killed in the strike.¹¹⁶ The US neither confirmed nor denied he was killed as a result of a US airstrike.¹¹⁷ Al-Ansi appeared in a video in January 2015 claiming responsibility for the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris.¹¹⁸ He was known for his operational activities in Yemen, however US authorities also claimed he was

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² CNN, "Abu Sayyaf, key ISIS figure in Syria, killed in U.S. raid", May 17, 2015

¹¹³ CNN, "Offices of Kurdish party in Turkey rocked by explosion", May 18, 2015

¹¹⁴ Daily Hurriyet, "Blasts hit Turkey's pro-Kurdish party HQs ahead of parliamentary elections", May 22, 2015

¹¹⁵ CNN. "Senior AQAP leader Nasr Ibn Ali al-Ansi killed", May 7, 2015

¹¹⁶ Mail Online, "Senior Al-Qaeda figure who claimed responsibility for the Charlie Hebdo attacks is killed alongside his son in US air strike ", May 7, 2015

¹¹⁷ CNN. Ibid

¹¹⁸ Washington Post, "Al Qaeda says U.S. strike kills man who claimed Paris killings", May 7, 2015

tasked by Al-Qaeda Central to serve as one of its global deputy general managers. He had close ties with Al-Qaeda's senior leadership including Ayman Al-Zawhiri and the late Osama Bin Laden.¹¹⁹

On May 8, it was reported that more than 50 Saudi led airstrikes targeted Houthi militants in northern Yemen in Saada province and Marran. Local residents were warned to leave for their own safety as Saudi led airstrikes continued, despite a ceasefire, to target Houthi rebel strongholds.¹²⁰ Authorities said a landmine and weapons storage facility was destroyed in the strike. Authorities said the air strikes destroyed Houthi weapons and in response the Houthi rebels carried out cross border assaults targeting Saudi border towns. The Houthis allegedly fired weapons and mortars in Saudi villages, killing three people.¹²¹

On May 10, a Saudi led coalition airstrike targeted the home of the former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, which the militants had seized.¹²² On May 11, a five day ceasefire began between the Houthi rebels and the Saudi-led military campaign, to allow for humanitarian aid to the area.¹²³

On May 12, it was reported that a suspected US drone strike killed three AQAP senior militants, identified as Abu Anwar al-Kutheiri, Mohammed Saleh al-Gharabi and Mabkhout Waqash al-Sayeri in Mukalla. A fourth militant with suspected links to the IS, named Maamoun Hatem was also reportedly killed.¹²⁴

On May 18, Saudi led coalition airstrikes targeted Houthi rebel targets in Aden, including targeting the presidential palace where the rebels had taken control.¹²⁵ The following day, air strikes targeted militant strongholds in Saana. Many local residents fled the area. The number of casualties were not

¹¹⁹ Long War Journal, "Al Qaeda's deputy general manager killed in US drone strike", May 7, 2015

¹²⁰ AP, "Saudi Arabia Steps Up Airstrikes On Yemen Rebel Stronghold Saada Despite Ceasefire Pledge", May 8, 2015

¹²¹ AP, "Saudi air strikes continue against Houthi rebels in Yemen", May 8, 2015

¹²² Telegraph, "House of former President flattened", May 12, 2015

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ AFP, "Four al-Qaida suspects believed killed in U.S. drone strike in Yemen's Mukalla", May 12, 2015

¹²⁵ BBC, "Yemen conflict: Saudi-led air strikes resume as truce ends", May 18, 2015

confirmed.¹²⁶

On May 27, authorities two Saudi-led airstrikes that targeted a warehouse in Sanaa and border towns with Saudi Arabia. Authorities said approximately showed approximately 80 people were killed and 100 others wounded.¹²⁷

North America

USA

On May 4, two gunmen identified as Elton Simpson, 31, and Nadir Soofi, opened fire outside an art exhibition and cartoon contest which was organized by an anti-Islam group, at the Culwell Event Centre in Dallas, Texas.¹²⁸ US authorities said the FBI had been monitoring Simpson for several years, due to his radicalized views.¹²⁹ Both men were fatally shot by police after they shot a security officer in the leg.¹³⁰ Amongst the keynote speakers was Geert Wilders, a well-known critic of Islam and it was likely that the main target even though he had not received any threats.¹³¹ The IS claimed responsibility for the attack¹³² and threatened further incidents. This claim of responsibility was the first time the IS said they had carried out an attack in the USA.¹³³

On May 12, Ali Yasin Ahmed, 30, and Mohamed Yusuf, 32, two Swedish nationals and Madhi Hashi, 25, from Somalia, pleaded guilty at a court in New York to conspiring to assist and support Al-Shabab al Mujihdeen.¹³⁴ The three suspects, allegedly took part in terrorist activities in Somalia in December 2008-August 2012. US authorities said in August 2012, police in East Africa arrested the men who

¹²⁶ Reuters, "Saudi-led air strikes hit Yemen's capital Sanaa: residents", May 19, 2015

¹²⁷ Reuters, "Air strikes kill at least 80 in deadliest bombings of Yemen war", May 27, 2015

¹²⁸ CNN, "Two shot dead after they open fire at Mohammed cartoon event in Texas", May 4, 2015

¹²⁹ Washington Post, "FBI had known about suspected Texas shooter for years", May 4, 2015

¹³⁰ WSJ, "Two Gunmen Killed Outside Muhammad Cartoon Contest in Texas", May 4, 2015

¹³¹ BBC, "Gunmen killed at Dallas event on Prophet Muhammad cartoons", May 4, 2015

¹³² TIME, "ISIS Claims Responsibility for Muhammad Cartoon 'Contest' Shooting", May, 5, 2015

¹³³ ABC, "ISIS claims responsibility for Texas Cartoon Attack", May 5, 2015

¹³⁴ <https://www.fbi.gov/newyork/press-releases/2015/three-members-of-al-shabaab-plead-guilty-to-conspiring-to-provide-material-support-to-the-terrorist-organization>

were allegedly planning to travel to Yemen. The suspects were handed over to the FBI in November 2012 and flown to New York for trial. If found guilty, they faced 15 years in prison. The suspects also face extradition if convicted.¹³⁵

On May 22, FBI agents arrested Muhanad Badawi, 24 and Nader Elhuzayel, 24 from California. The men were accused of planning to join the IS and supporting the group.¹³⁶ Both men appeared at a brief court hearing in Santa Ana. Both suspects were accused of using social media sites, including Twitter, to promote IS ideology.¹³⁷ According to the court indictment, Badawi gave his credit card to Elhuzayel to purchase a one-way ticket on May 7 from Los Angeles to Israel, via Turkey. The flight was scheduled to depart on May 21. He was arrested at Los Angeles International Airport, where he admitted that he was planning to use disembark in Istanbul and join the IS.¹³⁸ He claimed he had no intentions to continue his flight to Israel. However, his parents told the media that their son was travelling to northern Israel to stay with relatives and denied he was involved in any terror related activities. Badawi was allegedly also planning a trip to the Middle East but the flights were not booked. FBI agents said they had recorded conversations between the two suspects discussing their plans. If found guilty, both men faced 15 years in prison.¹³⁹

On May 26, according to a court indictment, Saddiq al-Abbadi, a Yemeni national pleaded guilty in New York to “conspiring to murder Americans and of providing material support to a terrorism organization”. Authorities said between late 2005 to early 2007, al-Abbadi travelled to Iraq via Yemen, where he fought against US troops. He then traveled in 2008 to northwestern Pakistan to join Al-Qaeda before he went to Afghanistan to fight US troops. If convicted, Abbadi faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. His sentencing was scheduled for September 2015.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ The Local, “Swedes admit Somali terror group plot in US”, May 3, 2015

¹³⁶ <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/two-california-men-arrested-charges-conspiring-provide-material-support-isil>

¹³⁷ NBC news, “ISIS Recruits Muhanad Badawi and Nader Elhuzayel Arrested Near L.A. Charged”, May 23, 2015

¹³⁸ Guardian, “Two California men arrested over alleged plot to join Isis”, May 22, 2015

¹³⁹ CNN, “Two Southern California men arrested, accused of trying to join ISIS”, May 23, 2015

¹⁴⁰ Reuters, “Yemen man pleads guilty to al Qaeda scheme to kill U.S. military”, May 26, 2015

Canada

On May 19, 10 teenagers were arrested but not charged at Trudeau International Airport, Montreal. The teenagers were accused of planning to leave Canada and travel to the Middle East to join jihadist militants in Iraq and Syria.¹⁴¹ Few details were made public but authorities said the suspects were detained for questioning and their passports were confiscated.¹⁴² Police said the arrests were part of an ongoing investigation and were a preventative action, saying that the suspects were not in the immediate planning stages of an attack.¹⁴³

Asia

Afghanistan

During May, a series of coordinated incidents by Taliban militants targeted civil servants and judges in Kabul. In a statement, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, threatened further attacks in retaliation for claim that the legal system in Afghanistan was conspiring with US allies against Taliban prisoners. The first incident occurred on May 4 when Taliban militants detonated a car bomb next to a bus used to transport employees of the attorney general's office to their workplace. One person was killed. On May 10, another bus transporting civil servants in the same area, was attacked by a suicide bomber, killing five prosecutors. Following, these incidents, on May 19, five people were killed when a car bomb detonated in the car park of the Ministry of Justice. The majority of casualties were civil servants who were leaving the office in the late afternoon as the car bomb exploded.¹⁴⁴

On May 14, armed Taliban gunmen killed 14 guests,¹⁴⁵ many of whom were foreign nationals (four

¹⁴¹ AP, "Canada Arrests 10 Youths Suspected of Plans to Join ISIS", May 19, 2015

¹⁴² Canadian Press, "RCMP arrest 10 youths suspected of wanting to join jihadists overseas", May 19, 2015

¹⁴³ The Star, "RCMP makes preventative terror-related arrests in Montreal area", May 19, 2015

¹⁴⁴ Reuters, "Bomb outside Afghan Justice Ministry kills five, wounds dozens", May 19, 2015

¹⁴⁵ CNN, "Death toll in Kabul hotel attack rises to 14; Taliban claim responsibility", May 14, 2015

Indian citizens, one Italian¹⁴⁶, one American¹⁴⁷, and one British-Afghan¹⁴⁸) and 40 others were injured at the Park Palace guesthouse in Kabul. Many of the victims included diplomats and tourists were targeted as they were arriving at the hotel for a cultural event, which included a concert and dinner.¹⁴⁹ A five hour firefight between security forces and the militants took place. Authorities said 44 guests were rescued. Reports varied on the details of the attack, including how many attackers there were. According to the police and a statement by the Taliban, one gunman carried out the attack, whilst the government made a statement to say three gunmen carried out the assault. In a statement, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the gunman, who was armed with explosives, an automatic rifle and a suicide vest, was motivated to target foreign nationals due to foreign governments' support of the Kabul government.¹⁵⁰

On May 17, a suicide car bomber detonated outside the gates of the Kabul International Airport close to a road leading to a NATO base and targeted a convoy of European Union Police Mission (EUPOL) which works in conjunction with the Afghan police and law enforcement agencies.¹⁵¹ Three people, including two teenagers who were bystanders were killed and approximately 20 others were injured. A British citizen, who was not named but worked as a security contractor, was also amongst the victims.¹⁵² The bomber detonated by a European police vehicle which was travelling to a nearby NATO military base.¹⁵³ The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.¹⁵⁴

On May 26, four Taliban militants were killed by security forces in Wazir Akbar Khan neighborhood in Kabul. Authorities said they seized explosives and weapons from the militants. Authorities said the militants attempted to attack the Rabbani Guesthouse, using grenades and explosives. The hotel has

¹⁴⁶ Guardian, "Taliban launch deadly attack on Kabul guesthouse", May 14, 2015

¹⁴⁷ CNN Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Telegraph, "Taliban launch deadly attack on Kabul guesthouse", May 14, 2015

¹⁴⁹ Guardian ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Reuters, "Taliban claim attack on Afghan guesthouse that killed 14", May 14, 2015

¹⁵¹ Reuters, "Suicide attack on EU vehicle near Kabul airport kills British contractor, 2 Afghans", May 18, 2015

¹⁵² BBC, "Taliban suicide attack kills three near Kabul airport", May 17, 2015

¹⁵³ Reuters ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Guardian, "Kabul suicide attack: British security contractor among three dead", May 17, 2015

a steel security gate, which was damaged in the attack, but the militants were unsuccessful in penetrating the gates.¹⁵⁵ Authorities said a five-hour gun battle then took place between the militants and security forces, resulting in the death of all the attackers. There were no other casualties.¹⁵⁶

Bangladesh

On May 3, Asim Umar, the leader of Al-Qaeda in South-East Asia, released a nine minute online video, in which he claimed responsibility for killing Avijit Roy, a Bangladeshi- American blogger in February 2013. His death was part of a series of attacks by the Al-Qaeda linked militants targeting academics and writers/bloggers who were campaigning against conservative Islam in Bangladesh.¹⁵⁷

On May 25, two suspected IS recruiters were arrested in Dhaka accused of plotting to join the IS in Syria. The men were identified as Aminul Islam, an IT manager for a multi-national company in Bangladesh was accused of also working as a regional coordinator for the IS¹⁵⁸ and Sakib Bin Kamal, a local teacher. They allegedly recruited 25 other militants to join in their plans to join the IS.¹⁵⁹

Indonesia

On May 25, as a result of a counter-terrorism raid, two militants were shot and seven others were later arrested over a few days in a hideout Central Sulawesi, near Poso.¹⁶⁰ Authorities said the militants had alleged ties to the leader of the East Mujahedeen Militant group, led by Indonesia's most wanted militant, named Santoso, who remained at large.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁵ AP, "4 Taliban militants die in attack in Afghan capital", May 26, 2015

¹⁵⁶ BBC, "Afghanistan conflict: Four Taliban die in Kabul attack", May 27, 2015

¹⁵⁷ See February Ict Database report 2013.

¹⁵⁸ Reuters, "IT Chief at Bangladesh Coca-Cola Unit Arrested as ISIS Suspect ", May 25, 2015

¹⁵⁹ Reuters, "Bangladesh arrests two suspected Islamic State activists", May 25, 2015

¹⁶⁰ AFP, "Indonesian police shoot dead two terror suspects, arrest seven others linked to most-wanted Santoso", May 26, 2015

¹⁶¹ ABC News, "Indonesian police shoot dead two terror suspects, arrest seven others linked to most-wanted Santoso", May 26, 2015

Singapore

On May 27, police arrested M. Arifil Azim Putra Norja'i, 19, who was accused of planning to join the IS in Syria. Authorities claimed he was plotting an attack in Singapore. He was arrested in late April 2015. A second teenager, 17, who was not named was arrested in early May.¹⁶² The Singaporean authorities said that both suspects were radicalized online and that they befriended IS supporters and militants, who helped them research travel routes to Syria and ways to use and make IEDs. Authorities said the suspects were planning attacks in Singapore, using knives as the main weapon.¹⁶³

Pakistan

On May 13, 43 people were killed and 13 others injured, by a team of six gunmen who had ties to the IS, who targeted commuters on a bus in Karachi. Witnesses said the gunmen, approached the bus on a motorcycle where they shot indiscriminately at the passengers. Jundallah claimed responsibility for the attack. In November 2014, the group pledged allegiance to the IS.¹⁶⁴

On May 16, Pakistani authorities recovered a large amount of explosives that were planted by a bridge near the Swat River. All the explosives, including a suicide vest, were safely destroyed by bomb explosives experts. It was unclear which group was responsible and who had planted the bombs.¹⁶⁵

On May 17, a suspected US drone strike killed six militants and wounded two others in North Waziristan. Authorities said the militants were foreign nationals.¹⁶⁶ The identities of the militants were not made public.¹⁶⁷

On May 29, a group of armed gunmen killed 19 civilians and injured one other person, as they were

¹⁶² IBT, "Singapore 2 Singaporean youths radicalised by ISIS arrested, one of them detained for planning terror attacks", May 27, 2015

Arrests 2 Teenagers On Terrorism Charges; 1 Planned Local Attacks", May 27, 2015

¹⁶³ Straits Times,

¹⁶⁴ Reuters, "Gunmen kill 43 in bus attack in Pakistan's Karachi", May 13, 2015

¹⁶⁵ Pak Tribune, "Police foil terror bid in Charsadda, recover explosives", May 16, 2015

¹⁶⁶ Dawn, "US drone attack in NWA kills six", May 17, 2015

¹⁶⁷ Long war Journal, "US drone strike kills 6 jihadists in North Waziristan", May 17, 2015

travelling by bus from Quetta to Karachi. The militants attacked as the bus passed through Mustang. Security forces said the exact details of how the militants were unclear but the bodies were discovered in a nearby forest. All the victims were Shite Muslims. Five people were rescued unharmed.¹⁶⁸

Philippines

On May 3, the corpse of wanted militant Abdul Basit Usman was discovered by Philippine military, with five other bodies thought to be his bodyguards by MILF militants in Maguindano town.¹⁶⁹ It was reported initially that the militants were killed by the MILF rebels during a gun battle but later these claims were denied and authorities suspected that Usman was killed by his bodyguards who were attempting to acquire the 1 million US dollar bounty that was placed on his head. It was unclear, however, who killed the bodyguards.¹⁷⁰ Authorities said Usman, who was a bomb making expert was responsible for multiple bombings in the Philippines since 2002 and he had ties to the IS and Jemaah Islamiyah. He was the leader of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). He was suspected of leading terrorist training camps in the southern Philippines.¹⁷¹

On May 15, four soldiers were killed and seven others injured as a result of violent clashes between security forces and Abu Sayaff militants on Basilian Island. Three militants were killed and three others sustained moderate injuries. Following the battle, the soldiers discovered an Abu Sayyaf bomb making factory and terrorist training camp close by where they seized explosives.¹⁷²

On May 30, police in Jolo were the target of two bombs that exploded in a police compound, injuring 18 people, including many policemen. The bombers escaped. The first bomb detonated outside the mosque in the police compound, injuring seven civilians. As police officers attended to the victims, a

¹⁶⁸ Reuters, “Gunmen kill 19 bus passengers in Pakistan attack”, May 29, 2015

¹⁶⁹ Inquirer, “But who killed Abdul Basit Usman?”, May 5, 2015

¹⁷⁰ IBT, “Philippines BIFF rebels: Terrorist Abdul Basit Usman killed by own bodyguards for \$1m bounty”, May 4, 2015

¹⁷¹ PhilStar, “11 cops, 7 civilians hurt in twin explosions in Jolo”, May 20, 2015

¹⁷² Washington Post, “4 killed as Philippine troops clash with Abu Sayyaf”, May 15, 2015

second IED, that was more powerful exploded close by, injuring 11 police officers.¹⁷³

Thailand

On May 14-16, 17 explosions occurred in multiple locations in Yala, primarily in the Muang district, injuring 20 people.¹⁷⁴ Police said 14 explosions were reported almost simultaneously during the night and then the following morning three additional bombs were discovered and defused.¹⁷⁵ No group claimed responsibility, but authorities suspected Muslim separatists.¹⁷⁶

Oceania

Australia

On May 8, armed counter-terrorism police carried out a counter-terrorist raid on a house in Melbourne and arrested a teenage boy, 17, who was suspected of planning to carry out a terror attack in the city. Police also said they seized explosives.¹⁷⁷ Authorities said they believe the suspects were planning to detonate three IEDs in Melbourne although the target was not clear.¹⁷⁸ On May 10 the teenager appeared in court where he was charged with terrorist related offenses that included planning and preparing for an act of terrorism. He remained in custody faced additional court hearings. He did not make a plea at this stage.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷³ Reuters, “Bombs in Thailand's restive south injure 18 people”, May 15, 2015

¹⁷⁴ Bangkok Post, “Bombs explode in Yala, injuring 11”, May 14, 2015

¹⁷⁵ Bangkok post, “Bombs in Thailand's restive south injure 18 people”, May 15, 2015

¹⁷⁶ Guardian, “String of bomb attacks in Thailand's restive south injure 18 people”, May 18, 2015

¹⁷⁷ BBC, “Australian police hold Melbourne youth on terror charges”, May 9, 2015

¹⁷⁸ Guardian, “Counter-terrorism raid in Melbourne as police swarm over house”, May 8, 2015

¹⁷⁹ ABC, “Melbourne teen remanded in custody after facing court over alleged terror plot”

May 10, 2015

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