

Bimonthly Report

Summary of Information on Jihadist Websites

The First Half of December 2014

Highlights

This report summarizes notable events discussed on jihadist Web forums during the first half of December 2014. Following are the main points covered in the report:

- Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) threatens to attack the American public both on and outside US soil, as a result of the failed American attempt to free American journalist, Luke Somers. The attempt was made after the organization set a three-day ultimatum for the US government to meet its demands or else the captive would be executed, a threat that was carried out as a result of the failed rescue attempt.
- Sheikh Ali al-Anasi, a senior member of AQAP, accuses the US of collaborating with the Houthis, a Shi'ite minority in Yemen supported by Iran, and claims that attacks should be directed at the US due to its support for the Shi'ites. In addition, he expresses support for the Islamic State's jihad against Christians, Shi'ites and abandoners of Islam but he expresses doubts regarding its battle against other jihadist organization, its declaration of new provinces under the caliphate that it does not control on the ground, and the beheadings that it conducts and films.
- The Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Syria, executes a Lebanese soldier for the Lebanese army's crimes against the Sunni population, and threatens to continue executing other prisoners if the organization's members being held in Lebanese prisons are not released. In addition, it accuses the Lebanese army of being at the beck and call of the Lebanese Hezbollah movement and calls on Sunni Muslims to take action to defend their religion and their honor.
- A new jihadist organization called the Al-Ribat Battalion in Sinai announces its establishment and emphasizes that most of its activities will be dedicated to fighting against the Egyptian army. According to the organization, it has differences of opinion with supporters of the Islamic State but due to the existence of a common enemy they must join hands and work toward the same goal.
- A member of the Islamic State calls on Muslims in Canada to move to arenas of jihad and join the ranks of the Islamic State, and on those who are unable to do so to carry out attacks on Canadian soil.

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New Publications

Ideology

- The Al-Malahem jihadist media institution, which serves a platform for the official announcements of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), published three videos (nos. 10-21) regarding morality and religion in the framework of a series of publications titled, “The Good Reminder” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nazari, a member of the organization’s Shura Council.¹

The Rift between Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State

- Several visitors to the Al-Minbar al-‘Ilami jihadist Web forum, which is affiliated with the Islamic State (IS), started a discussion regarding Al-Qaeda in the past and present. Their central claim was that the real Al-Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden, was essentially different from Al-Qaeda today, especially regarding its Syrian branch. In this way, supporters of the IS can legitimize calls against Al-Qaeda without offending bin Laden’s honor as he is a respected figure to them.²
- Sheikh Abdallah Bin Ahmed Al-Bin Al-Husseini, a prominent Saudi adjudicator, published an article in which he expressed support for religious clerics and Muslims who oppose the IS in Yemen and Libya.³
- The ‘Arin al-Mujahidin (“Lion’s Den”) jihadist Web forum published an article titled, “To the one who abandons Islam” by Abu Umar al-Filastini. The article dealt with the personal story of a jihad activist who told how he rejected the deviant idea of the Islamic State. The introduction to the article was written by Dr. Tariq ‘Abd al-Halim, identified as a supporter of Al-Qaeda, and several religious clerics from the Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda’s branch in Syria.⁴

Oaths of Allegiance to the Islamic State

¹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

² <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

³ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁴ https://twitter.com/1u_i_u1/status/540398302517157889; <https://justpaste.it/i9ny>

- The media wing of the IS in Damascus published photos from the oath of allegiance to the IS taken by 200 mujahideen in Al-Ghouta.⁵



The video banner

- The Web site administrator of the Caucasus Emirate published a strongly worded clarification regarding the defection of Sulayman Zayn Abidov, a rogue emir of a jihadist group operating in Kazbek and Novolak near the Chechnya-Dagestan border, and his oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the IS. In the letter, members of the Emirate explained that Abidov, who claimed to be the emir of the jihadist group, is not actually the legitimate emir. They emphasized that they were searching for the activist who claimed to be the emir in Chechnya and Dagestan, and that they would punish anyone who gives him money or helps him to flee. In addition, they noted that he had the right to fight in the name of the Emirate and that on November 9, 2014 he was appointed emir of the jihadist group. The administrator of the site ended the letter by stating that Abidov's oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi should not be seen as an oath of allegiance that applies to the rest of the Caucasus Emirate's members and clarified that they were loyal only to the Emir of the Emirate, Ali Abu Muhammad al Dagestani.⁶ In this context, an audio clip was published in which the kadi (judge) appointed to Dagestan Province, Sheikh Muhammad Abu Uthman al- Ghimarawi, took a strong stance against the oath taken by the rogue emir to al-Baghdadi.⁷ In the framework of his speech, al-Ghimarawi forbade the swearing of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the IS, and explained that anyone who

⁵ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶ <http://www.i-qooqaz.com/?p=500>

⁷ <https://twitter.com/CaucasusAffairs/status/544376450078765057>

does so is contributing to the creation of conflict between the mujahideen. Al-Ghimarawi then asked all of the mujahideen in Dagestan who had previously sworn such an oath to retract it.⁸



The kadi appointed to Dagestan Province warned against swearing allegiance to al-Baghdadi

Strategy

- Jihad activist, Abu Al-Hunasa al-Hamiri, published his memories from his arrest and imprisonment in a Saudi jail. He related how the arrest took place when he had returned home like on any other day, and he recommended the series, “The Industry of Terror” by Abdallah al-Adam in order to avoid such incidents.⁹
- The Al-Himma library, which publishes leaflets and pamphlets for the IS, published a leaflet by the Islamic State’s Office of Research and Ifta titled, “Gold Islamic Dinar or Paper American Dollar?” After reviewing the history of the use of gold and silver coins in the early days of Islam, the document directed blame at the United States, which cancelled the conversion of dollars to gold in 1971, thereby enabling “the Federal Bank, which is owned by Jews, to print dollars” to its heart’s content. Toward the end, the document included a call on all Muslims to go back to using gold and silver, and to stop using dollars in order to contribute to breaking the economic power of the United States.¹⁰

⁸ <http://vdagestan.com/ar/archives/17028>

⁹ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁰ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).



Encouragement to stop using the dollar in an effort to hurt the US economy

Guidebooks and Instruction Pamphlets

- The Al-Kataib jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, published a 40-page booklet in Swahili containing instructions for mujahideen on various topics, including: personal security, ways to train independently, secure telephone and computer use, and a review of Kenya’s security apparatuses.¹¹



Methods for hiding dangerous equipment included in a guidebook for mujahideen in Swahili

- A visitor to the Shabakat al-Jihad al-'Alami jihadist Web forum posted many links to books for new jihad activists. Among the contents posted by the visitor: instructions on explosive

¹¹ <http://www.shabakataljihad.net/vb> (Arabic).

materials, and frequently asked questions about materials for personal and educational development.¹²

Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- The Al-Khilafa jihadist media institution published an article by Abu Muslim al-Qirwani titled, “Dangers on Operation Night”. The article referred to the final moments of a martyr’s life and the thoughts that cross his mind before he carries out the attack. Among other things, the article provided tips for coping with fear during these moments; for example, the writer recommended that the martyr ask himself if he loves Allah and if he is ready to die for him in order to build up his courage.¹³

Magazines

- Issue no. 104 of the magazine, *Al-Somood*, was published by the Taliban in Afghanistan. The magazine article covered various topics, including: the presentation of American involvement in Afghanistan as a defeat; an interview with the official spokesperson of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Dhabihullah al-Mujahed; an in-depth article about the principle of Shura in Islam; and a statistical report on terrorist attacks for the month of November 2014.¹⁴



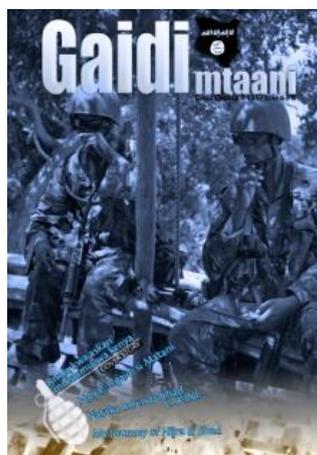
Issue no. 104 of *Al-Somood*

¹² <http://www.shabakataljihad.net/vb> (Arabic).

¹³ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁴ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

- The Somali Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen published issue no. 6 (30 pp.) of the magazine, *Gaidi Mtaani* (Terrorism Street), which included articles in Swahili and English. The main article dealt with the importance of fulfilling the commandment of jihad and the discord between democracy and Islam. Among the topics covered in the issue: the virtues of a martyr's death, personal stories of a jihad fighter who moved from the US to the arena of jihad in Somalia, an article criticizing Bashar al-Assad and the Alawite ethnic group in Syria, the Kenyan regime's persecution of Muslims and the promise that it will pay a heavy price for each and every Muslim soul.¹⁵



The magazine banner

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

Tensions continued in the Afghanistan and Pakistan arenas. Terrorist organizations carried out attacks with all the more vigor and focused on carrying out attacks against government and military targets.

On December 11, 2014 six Afghani soldiers were killed in a suicide attack that took place in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. The suicide terrorist targeted the cars carrying the soldiers and the Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.¹⁶ On December 13, 2014 Taliban gunmen shot and killed a senior official of the Afghan Supreme Court, Atiqullah Raoufi, at the entrance to his house in

¹⁵ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-30426602> (English).

Kabul.¹⁷ On the same day, two American soldiers were killed in a Taliban attack on a US Air Force base near the capital of Kabul.¹⁸

On the other side, significant achievements were recorded against senior members of Al-Qaeda. On December 6, 2014 the Pakistani army announced that it had killed Adnan Shukrijumah, the Head of Overseas Operations for Al-Qaeda who was wanted by the US on suspicion that he planned to carry out an attack on the New York subway.¹⁹ On December 7, 2014 the US achieved a significant victory in Pakistan when an American drone killed senior Al-Qaeda member, Umar Farooq, in North Waziristan. Farooq had served as Head of Operations and Spokesman for Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan.²⁰

The Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan

- The Al-Eamarah jihadist media institution, which serves as a platform for messages from the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan, published a video titled, “The Battle for Shorab”. The video covered the military operation that was carried out by members of the Taliban in Afghanistan at the Shorab airbase in Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan.²¹

The Arabian Peninsula

Houthi rebels continued to strengthen their hold on Sana’a, the capital of Yemen, and other parts of the country. For example, Mohammed Abdel-Salam, spokesman for the Houthis, reported that they had seized control of the Arhab region in Sana’a.²² This trend was also evident in the appointment of Houthi supporters to key positions and government institutions, including the appointment of a new ruler of Hodeida Province who supports the Houthis.²³

In response to this threat, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Sunni tribes hostile

¹⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/13/us-afghanistan-shooting-idUSKBN0JR05D20141213> (English).

¹⁸ <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/12/13/world/asia/afghanistan-violence> (English).

¹⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/06/us-pakistan-military-militants-idUSKCN0JK08O20141206> (English)

²⁰ <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/12/07/world/asia/pakistan-al-qaeda-member-killed> (English).

²¹ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

²² <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/12/14/Houthis-expand-territory-in-Yemeni-capital-.html> (English).

²³ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/12/houthi-fighters-killed-yemen-attack-20141214141358989304.html>

to the Houthis concentrated their efforts on defeating the Houthis. For example, Sunni tribal members and Al-Qaeda operatives killed 14 Houthi rebels in a joint attack on their positions in the Qalala Mountains in Radaa, Al-Bayda Province.²⁴ The house of the Iranian Ambassador in Sanaa was also bombed on December 3, 2014 by members of Al-Qaeda in response to Iran's support of the Houthis.²⁵

In addition to these developments, AQAP announced that it had executed Pierre Korkie, a teacher from South Africa, and Luke Somers, an American journalist, who were being held captive by the organization, after a failed rescue attempt by American commando forces.²⁶

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- During the first half of December 2014, the jihadist media institution of AQAP, Al-Malahem, published the following:
 - An announcement by Nasser bin Ali al-Ansi, a senior AQAP member, regarding American captive, Luke Somers. In the announcement, AQAP gave the US a three-day ultimatum to meet its demands (which were not disclosed in the announcement) in order to spare Somers from being executed.²⁷ After Somers was killed in a failed American rescue attempt,²⁸ AQAP published another video in which al-Ansi referred to the failed operation and made a threat against the American public, which he claimed faces danger both within and outside the US. He noted that his organization demanded the release of Sheikh Omar Abd al-Rahman and demanded to know the fate of Aafia Siddiqui, a Pakistani with ties to Al-Qaeda who was arrested in the US.²⁹
 - An interview with Nasser bin Ali al-Ansi, in which he responded to questions from the press. In the framework of the interview, al-Ansi accused the US of collaborating with the Houthis and explained that attacks must be directed at the US since it is the one

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ <http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/al-qaeda-bomb-attack-on-iranian-ambassadors-house-in-yemen-kills-six> (English).

²⁶ <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/12/06/world/meast/yemen-u-s-hostage-killed/> (English).

²⁷ <http://www.shabakataljihad.net/vb> (Arabic).

²⁸ <http://abcnews.go.com/International/american-hostage-luke-somers-killed-us-rescue-attempt/story?id=27397528> (English).

²⁹ <http://www.shabakataljihad.net/vb> (Arabic).

galvanizing Shi'ites around the world. With regard to the IS, al-Ansi expressed support for the jihad waged by the organization against Christians, Shi'ites and apostates but he also expressed doubts about other actions by the IS, such as fighting against other jihadist organizations, declaring new provinces to be part of the caliphate despite not having control over them, and carrying out and filming beheadings.³⁰

- A video documenting various operations against the Houthis in Al-Baydaa Province. In addition to the operations themselves, the video included words of incitement against the Houthis by Nasser bin Ali al-Ansi.³¹



Nasser bin Ali al-Ansi threatened Houthis in Yemen

- Ansar al-Sharia in Yemen, which is affiliated with AQAP, announced that it had plundered five million Yemeni riyal and a car from Yemeni army soldiers in Marib Province in northern Yemen. It also stated that the soldiers who were present in the car when it was captured were not executed after they surrendered themselves at gunpoint and promised the AQAP militants that they were not Houthis.³²

³⁰ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

³¹ <http://www.shabakataljihad.net/vb> (Arabic).

³² <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).



A photo of one of the soldiers in the vehicle when it was captured by AQAP militants

- A visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum called on Saudi women to re-examine their relationships with their husbands if they serve in the Saudi security forces since by doing so they are serving a dictator and tyrant. The visitor added that Saudi women must try to persuade their husbands to leave the security forces and, if they do not succeed in doing so, they should leave their husbands.³³

The Islamic State

- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the IS, published a propaganda video documenting the attempted shooting attack of a Danish diplomat named Thomas Hopner in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The introduction to the video included excerpts from speeches by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Sheikh al-Adnani regarding the need to expand their influence to the Arabian Peninsula.³⁴



A clip from the video

³³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³⁴ <http://www.shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

Iraq

The month of December began with reports of an air strike by Iran in eastern Iraq. According to the reports, F4 Phantom planes attacked IS sites in Diyala Province, but both Iran and American denied any coordination or collaboration in the matter.³⁵ Meanwhile, Western intervention in Iraq continued with air strikes by France (the French Defense Minister attributed 120-130 air strikes to France since the start of the operation),³⁶ and with declarations by Britain and France regarding their intention to send hundreds of soldiers to Iraq in order to train local security forces.³⁷ Additional support came from NATO, which announced that it would look into Iraq's request for assistance in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the army in order to enable it to combat IS fighters.³⁸

On the ground, intense battles between IS and Kurdish fighters continued to claim lives. According to an announcement by the Kurdish Peshmerga militia, at least 727 Kurdish fighters were killed in their battle against the Islamic State, 3,564 were wounded and 34 were missing.³⁹

With the close of 2014, the situation of refugees in Iraq could be summed up in numbers. According to a UN report, as a result of the war and violent incidents, over two million Iraqis have been displaced from their homes. Various humanitarian agencies warned that the situation of the refugees was going to deteriorate as a result of the winter weather, and especially the fall of snow in north Kurdistan.⁴⁰

The Islamic State

- The Al-Hayat jihadist media institution, which serves as a platform for the Islamic State's official publications, published a psalm titled, "Our State is Winning".⁴¹

³⁵ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/12/141201_iran_iraq_air_raids (Arabic).

³⁶ <http://goo.gl/aCLfze>

³⁷ <http://goo.gl/jLGFgs>

³⁸ <http://goo.gl/OP5YPo>

³⁹ <http://www.alhurra.com/content/peshmerga-iraq-isis/262980.html>

⁴⁰ <http://www.alhurra.com/content/iraq-refugees-un-kurdistan/262446.html>

⁴¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



The banner of the psalm

- Jihad activists who identify with the Islamic State’s messages posted a photo on social networks of a Muslim religious leader who moved from Xinjiang (East Turkestan according to jihad activists) in western China to Iraq in order to join the ranks of the organization.⁴²



Photo of a Muslim religious leader who moved from Xinjiang, China to Iraq in order to join the IS

- The IS reported on an attack that one of its members, Abu Abdallah al-Baritani, carried out near the city of Samara. Al-Baritani detonated a car bomb containing four tons of strong explosives next to police forces, killing and injuring dozens.⁴³

The Islamic State - Baghdad

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Baghdad published the following:
 - The sixth video in a series titled, “This is My Last Will and Testament”, which documented the final words of suicide terrorists before they embarked on their missions. This video documented a terrorist named Anu Muawiyah al-Falluji, who encouraged – with a blurred face – other Muslims to join jihad. According to a slide that appeared toward the end of the video, al-Falluji was the one responsible for a suicide

⁴² <https://twitter.com/twer1394/status/544141007672340481>

⁴³ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb/> (Arabic).

attack that was carried out on a UN convoy near the Baghdad Airport on November 16, 2014.⁴⁴ According to the video, the attack claimed lives even though a UN statement said that no UN personnel were killed or injured in the attack.⁴⁵



A visualization of the attack on a UN convoy

The Islamic State – Kirkuk Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Kirkuk Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of an attack that was carried out against Peshmerga forces in the province. The photos showed the fighters resting and praying before they left on their mission, photos of the corpses of Peshmerga forces who were killed, vehicles that were plundered, and suicide terrorists of Lebanese and Kurdish origin.⁴⁶



A boy among the ranks of IS fighters in Kirkuk Province

The Islamic State – Salah al-Din Province

⁴⁴ <http://theshamnews.com/?p=581> (Arabic).

⁴⁵ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49358#.VIhfGTGUeVM>

⁴⁶ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Salah al-Din Province published the following:
 - A statement titled, “Free the Al-Motasem Region”. According to the statement, following an extensive attack that included small and medium arms as well as artillery and rockets against the police and security forces of the infidel Iraqi regime, IS fighters managed to take control of the Al-Motasem region, which is located southeast of the city of Samara. The statement even mentioned that the afore-mentioned attack, which was carried out by Abu Abdallah al-Baritani, was part of the overall offensive that led to the liberation of the region.⁴⁷
 - A filmed review showing the execution by shooting of 13 activists in a group called Fursan al-Alam, a militia operating in the province.⁴⁸



The IS against the militias – an execution in Salah al-Din Province

- A filmed documentation of battles that took place in the province between IS fighters and Iraqi army forces.⁴⁹



The banner of the publication

⁴⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁸ <http://theshamnews.com/?p=1024>

⁴⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

The Islamic State – Al-Anbar Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Anbar Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of an attack that was carried out against the border guard at the Al-Tanf crossing, on the Iraq-Syria border. The photos showed the firing of machine guns and small arms at a police center at the border crossing, as well as photos of the corpses of those killed.⁵⁰
 - A filmed review of an attack that was carried out in Al-Sajariyya, which is considered a stronghold of the Albu Fahd tribe, known to be part of the Awakening Movement that opposes the IS.⁵¹
 - A filmed review of the lives of residents in the city of Hit.⁵² The review serves as another indicator of IS efforts to demonstrate its ability to govern in the areas under its authority, and to provide a pastoral picture of normal life under shari'a.



The banner of the publication

The Islamic State – Al-Furat Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Furat Province published the following:
 - A video documenting the training and activities of air defense forces in the province. The video showed members of the organization riding in vans and practicing firing anti-aircraft missiles, first at ground targets and then at planes in the air. The video ended

⁵⁰ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵¹ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

with a recorded clip by one of the fighters reciting a jihadist psalm and making threats against Western forces.⁵³

- A video regarding renewed activity in the markets in the city of Al-Qa'im. The video included interviews with merchants and residents who praised the IS for restoring security, which in turn led to the renewal of commerce.⁵⁴



The video banner

- Documentation of the execution, by stoning, of a married man who was accused of adultery.⁵⁵



The stoning death of a man accused of adultery

Al-Sham [The Levant]

During the month of December, the Al-Nusra Front claimed success in capturing two of the regime's strategic military sites in Idlib: the Al-Hamediyya camp and the Wadi al-Daif camp.⁵⁶ It

⁵³ <http://theshamnews.com/?p=601>

⁵⁴ <http://theshamnews.com/?p=505>

⁵⁵ <https://storify.com/Maha026/story-39>

⁵⁶ <http://goo.gl/SSKBGs>

should be noted that some of the Al-Nusra Front's success can be credited to its cooperation with other jihadist organizations, in this case Jund al-Aqsa and Ahrar al-Sham.⁵⁷ Its military success came after it made good on its threat at the beginning of the month to execute one of the Lebanese soldiers held captive by the organization, and its threat to execute the next one in line.⁵⁸

Meanwhile, clashes continued between the Syrian regime and opposition forces throughout the country. In Dar'a, air forces dropped approximately 16 explosive barrels,⁵⁹ and the regime suffered dozens of casualties in Aleppo and Dar'a.⁶⁰

The intense battles continued to exact a high price from civilians and the situation of Syrian refugees continued to be difficult. The fact that only five countries were carrying the burden (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt) led Amnesty to call on more affluent countries to accept the refugees.⁶¹ The call seemed to fall on attentive ears as the President of the United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) announced that 28 countries had expressed willingness to absorb 100,000 Syrian refugees.⁶²

Syria

The Al-Nusra Front in Syria

- During the first half of December 2014, the jihadist media institution of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manarah al-Bayda, published the following:
 - A statement (no. 19), which was published on December 3, 2014, calling on Sunni residents of Lebanon to take responsibility for their fate and wage an armed struggle against the Syrian regime and Lebanese Hezbollah due to their policies of oppression against Sunnis in Syria and Lebanon. It also stated that the Lebanese army, unfortunately, was under the influence of Hezbollah and, therefore, Sunnis must defend their honor.⁶³

⁵⁷ <http://goo.gl/lfsLPa>

⁵⁸ <http://goo.gl/LBUcto>

⁵⁹ <http://www.elfagr.org/752727>

⁶⁰ <http://www.erehnews.com/?id=88757>

⁶¹ <http://goo.gl/zwRzb0>

⁶² <http://goo.gl/5MKQhU>

⁶³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

- A statement (no. 20) titled, “The One Who Paid the Price”. According to the statement, which was published on December 5, 2014, the Lebanese army was continuing its nefarious actions, including the arrests of women and children; therefore, the Al-Nusra Front executed one of its prisoners, Ali al-Bazzal, and intended to continue executing prisoners unless the organization’s members being held prisoner in Lebanon are freed.⁶⁴
- A statement directed at all of the residents living in territories under its control. The statement included a new regulation: it is forbidden to open stores or hold any type of commerce activity during prayer times since there is an obligation to pray in a mosque. Anyone who opens his store during prayer times will be punished.⁶⁵
- A statement titled, “A Call and Advice”, which stated that Al-Nusra Front fighters had purified the villages of Nabl and Zahra. It also stated that the Al-Nusra Front was under intense media attacks by the IS, which was also trying to attack Al-Nusra Front fighters as they returned from war against the infidels. The organization called on all mujahideen following the correct path to join it and ignore the lies being spread by the IS.⁶⁶
- A video that included interviews with several residents in the village of Karsa'a, in Rif Idlib Province. In the interviews, the residents spoke of the sense of security and calm that they enjoy under the Al-Nusra Front. The video could also be seen as an imitation of the Islamic State’s strategy of publishing videos of residents who are seemingly satisfied following the takeover of their village.⁶⁷
- Du’at al-Jihad (“Calling for Jihad”) Center, which serves as an instruction and indoctrination center for the Al-Nusra Front, announced the opening of the Al-Izz bin Abd al-Salam Institute to be involved in teaching shari’a studies to youth and adults.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁵ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁶ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁷ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁸ https://justpaste.it/mujahed_lens1 (Arabic).



Shari'a studies instruction at the Al-Izz bin Abd al-Salam Institute

The Islamic State – Al-Raqqah Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Raqqah Province published the following:
 - A recorded sermon by a preacher at a mosque in response to Western attacks against the IS. In the framework of the sermon, the preacher (who was not identified by name) emphasized that the attacks by the “Crusaders and the Jews” were the direct continuation of attacks by Jews and idolaters against the Prophet Muhammad in early Islam and that the union of the infidels against Muslims is a positive sign that should give strength the faithful.⁶⁹



The video banner

- A video about the Public Service Authority in Raqqa Province. The video showed various services provided to civilians, including: the distribution of flour for baking; telephone,

⁶⁹ <http://theshamnews.com/?p=564> (Arabic).

electric, cleaning and maintenance services; and supervision of garages.⁷⁰ In addition, a filmed review was published documenting the provision of services by members of the organization for residents of the city of Suluk in the north of the province, including cleaning services.⁷¹



From left to right: the video banner; the banner of the filmed review

- A video documenting the damage caused to the lives and property of Muslims living in Al-Raqqah as a result of Syrian Air Force shelling.⁷²



The video banner

- A filmed review of the destruction of the Holy Saints' shrines in the city of Al-Tabaqa.⁷³

⁷⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



- A filmed review of the execution of Muslims who were accused of blasphemy of the Prophet Muhammad.⁷⁴

The Islamic State – Al-Khayr (formerly Deir Ezzor) Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Khayr (formerly Deir Ezzor) Province published the following:
 - A filmed review documenting the execution of soldiers who were captured in the battle at the Deir Ezzor Airport.⁷⁵
 - A video documenting the execution of an Alawite officer who was taken captive by the organization. The video included a short interrogation of the captive and documentation of his beheading. At the end of the video, his beheaded corpse was shown to a group of children playing and laughing nearby who asked to be given “a live one” next time so that they could punish him themselves.⁷⁶
 - Photos of a suicide attack that was carried out by a member of the organization named Abu Al-Farouq al-Libby, using a booby-trapped tank.⁷⁷
 - An announcement about the opening of special offices for “repentance” for fighters from other jihadist factions who fought against the IS, at the instruction of the Caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. According to the IS, many fighters from other jihadist factions in Al-Khayr Province responded to the initiative, repented from their rebellious ways and joined the ranks of the IS. This came at a time when many fighters were being punished

⁷⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁵ <https://twitter.com/2012Mosab/status/540633192995110912> (Arabic).

⁷⁶ <http://vimeo.com/114450205>

⁷⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

for their unwillingness to repent by having their houses blown up by IS fighters. The announcement also included a filmed review of the destruction of houses and the joining of the fighters to the organization.⁷⁸



Fighters from other jihadist factions who “repented” and joined the ranks of the IS

- A video reviewing “the areas under Islamic State control” in Al-Khayr Province.⁷⁹
- A new series of videos titled, “Words from the Heart”, which included two videos containing interviews with two members of the IS, one from Morocco and the other from Libya. The interviews concerned the importance of fulfilling the obligation to wage jihad, the struggle against oppression and repression, and praise for the Islamic Caliphate.⁸⁰



The banners of the two videos

The Islamic State – Damascus

- The media wing of the IS in Damascus published the following:

⁷⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- A collection of photos documenting the military training of children in one of the Islamic Caliphate’s camps in southern Damascus.⁸¹



A photo of children training in one of the Islamic Caliphate’s camps in southern Damascus

- A collection of photos documenting the arrival of military reinforcements for IS fighters in Damascus.⁸²



The banner of the photo collection

Other jihadist organizations

- Jond Al-Aqsa, a Salafi-jihadist organization in Syria, published a statement titled, “Finding the Body of Sheikh Abu Abdel Aziz al-Qatari”. According to the statement, members of the organization successfully purified the area of Deir Sunbul in northwest Syria after many attacks by supporters of the American alliance. The mujahideen searched for Sheikh Abu Abdel Aziz al-Qatari, the founder of Jond Al-Aqsa - a very prominent figure in the Syrian arena of jihad and

⁸¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

one of the people responsible for attempts to reconcile the mujahideen in Syria. After many searches, the mujahideen found al-Qatari's body in a mass grave.⁸³

The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

The Egyptian government and security forces continued to battle terrorism in Sinai in an attempt to restore calm to the region following many terrorist attacks that recently took place there.

On December 6, 2014 an Egyptian court sentenced to death seven Islamist terrorists who were involved in an attack that claimed the lives of 25 police officers last year. The attack, which took place near the border with Israel, was among the worst attacks to take place since the ousting of President Morsi.⁸⁴

On December 12, 2014 the Egyptian army reported that it had killed 12 terrorists and arrested 70 others in a series of operations in northern Sinai. Those killed and arrested were suspected of involvement in terrorist attacks against security forces, and the military equipment that was confiscated had likely been used in the attacks.⁸⁵

The Islamic State in Sinai Province (formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis)

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Sinai Province (formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis) published the following:
 - A claim of responsibility for the killing of American oil expert, William Henderson, on August 6, 2014. A photograph published by the organization showed Henderson's passport and identity card but the details of his murder were not provided.⁸⁶
 - A list of operations that the organization carried out during October-November 2014, including the bombing of several armored vehicles in Al-Arish, the planting of a car

⁸³ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/06/egypt-sinai-idUSL6N0TQ07W20141206> (English).

⁸⁵ <http://www.tnnegypt.com/army-kills-12-terrorists-in-north-sinai-arrests-70>

⁸⁶ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

bomb, the killing of a senior police official, and the bombing of a house belonging to a man accused of spying for the army.⁸⁷

Supporters of the Islamic State in Jerusalem

- The organization, Supporters of the Islamic State in Jerusalem, published a statement on the Al-Platform Media jihadist Web forum – the official platform for the organization’s publications. According to the statement, Iran continues to try to spread the Shi’ite faith among Palestinians and, until now, has not received a proper response from the Sunnis, who claim that it is Islam that guides them. In response, members of the organization attacked the Shi’ite Yabus Society in Rafah. The organization declared that it would continue to defend the interests of the IS in the region and to strike Shi’ite organizations.⁸⁸

Other jihadist organizations

- A new jihadist organization was established in Sinai: the Al-Ribat Battalion. The first statement published by the organization stated that the Egyptian army was operating against Muslims in Sinai and for the interests of the Jews. Al-Ribat is interested in clarifying to everyone that jihad in Sinai is not the sole pursuit of the supporters of the Islamic State, and that even though Al-Ribat has disagreements with the IS they share a common enemy and, therefore, they must work toward the same goal.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁸ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁸⁹ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).



The logo of the Al-Ribat Battalion

The Maghreb [North Africa]

The Libyan Air Force continued to bombard sites belonging to the Fajr Libya (“Libya Dawn”) militia in the capital of Tripoli and it carried out operations in the east of the country against the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries and Ansar al-Sharia.⁹⁰ Meanwhile, the Libyan government, which is temporarily based in Al-Baydaa in eastern Libya, issued a call through the Minister of Communications and Culture to countries around the world to help Libya in its war against terrorism.⁹¹ In this context, the Commander of the United States Africa Command, General David Rodriguez, stated that the US Army was monitoring IS activity in eastern Libya, including a concern that the organization would establish a training camp there.⁹²

In Algeria, senior officials revealed a near-complete tunnel building project designed to defend the border between Libya and Tunisia. According to these sources, the project included trenches at least two meters wide that would prevent the passage of vehicles to smuggle weapons or bring in terrorists.⁹³ Additional steps taken by Algeria included a concentration of efforts against Jund al-Khilafa, which swore allegiance to the IS in September 2014, as well as a series of arrests that were carried out in November but only revealed now.⁹⁴

Morocco and Tunisia also continued to take preventative steps in the framework of the war

⁹⁰ <http://goo.gl/gVSRsk>

⁹¹ <http://24.ae/article.aspx?ArticleId=122466>

⁹² <http://goo.gl/YghGXj>

⁹³ <http://www.alriyadh.com/1001557>

⁹⁴ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/12/04/feature-02 (English).

on terrorism. The Tunisian Interior Ministry reported the dismantling of two terrorist cells in Kaserine Governorate and the arrest of an imam in the city of Sfax who encouraged worshippers to send their sons to join the ranks of the IS.⁹⁵ The Global Counterterrorism Forum opened on December 15, 2014 in Marrakesh, Morocco, with the participation of over 120 representatives from 40 countries, with goal of discussing ways to cope with the phenomenon of “foreign fighters” in terrorist organizations.⁹⁶

Algeria

- The Ifriqiya jihadist media institution, which swore allegiance to the IS, published a statement by the ‘Uqba Ibn Nāfi Battalion, a Salafi-jihadist organization fighting against the Tunisian regime. In the statement, the organization announced that five of its members had been killed in a battle with Tunisian security forces. According to the organization, this incident was exploited in a false way by the Tunisian regime in order to claim, through its propaganda machine, that the organization had suffered a defeat when, in reality, there is no basis to that claim. In response, the organization vowed to avenge the death of its fighters and to behead Tunisian army soldiers.⁹⁷

Libya

- Ansar al-Sharia in Libya published a series of reports regarding its achievements in the city of Benghazi. The reports mainly referred to a strike against security forces and were accompanied by photos.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ <http://www.alriyadh.com/1003340>

⁹⁶ <http://goo.gl/59wYIU>

⁹⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁸ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).



A photo accompanying reports of Ansar al-Sharia’s achievements in Benghazi

- A group of jihadists in eastern Libya announced the establishment of a new group called, “The Shura Council of the Mujahideen in Derna”. In the announcement and corresponding video that were distributed, the group explained that the new organization will serve to unite several factions to fight against General Khalifa Haftar.⁹⁹

Egypt

- The Media Front for the Support of the Islamic State published a statement regarding the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. According to the statement, Muslims in the country should not hope for Morsi’s return to power, but rather for an Islamic regime led by the IS.¹⁰⁰



The statement banner

Ajnad Misr

- The Al-Kinana jihadist media institution, which serves as a platform for Ajnad Misr, published an

⁹⁹ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHuskI4RNMA>

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

announcement declaring an open dialogue with the organization's general official, Majid al-Din al-Misri. In the framework of the dialogue, visitors had to send questions to al-Misri regarding the organization's path, goals and means of achieving them. The questions were to be published on the Al-Fidaa and Shumukhal-Islam jihadist Web forums, on the official Twitter account of the above-mentioned media institution, and on its official blog.¹⁰¹

Nigeria

The first half of December 2014 was characterized by an increase in attacks by Boko Haram against Nigerian security forces and the civilian population. In a terrorist attack that took place in the city of Damaturu in northeast Nigeria, 150 people were killed, including 38 officers.¹⁰² A thorough examination of the organization's activities and publications seem to show a new trend: acts inspired by the IS and/or closely tied to it, including beheadings, indiscriminate attacks and the killing of innocents such as the incident that took place at a mosque in Kano, the production of high-quality propaganda videos, etc.

Somalia

Somalia continued to be politically and economically unstable, and Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, the most prominent jihadist organization in Somalia, tried to exploit this in order to demonstrate its power but was only partially successful.

On December 4, 2014 a Kenyan plane crashed in southern Somalia. Al-Shabab declared that it had fired a missile at the aircraft and brought it down. According to various reports, the pilot was killed and two other crew members who were on the plane with him were missing. In contrast to the claim by Al-Shabab, the Kenyan army claimed that the plane had suffered a technical problem.¹⁰³

On December 6, 2014 the Somali Parliament voted out Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed in a no-confidence vote. Only 80 members of Parliament supported the deposed Prime Minister while 153 voted against him due to his failed attempts to provide security to the embattled

¹⁰¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁰² <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/12/3/boko-haram-nigeria.html>

¹⁰³ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/12/kenya-army-plane-crashes-somalia-2014124171123882141.html>

country. The President of Somalia was given 30 days to appoint a new Prime Minister.¹⁰⁴

Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen

- The jihadist media institution of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, Al-Kataib, published the following:
 - A video about Islamic education in Somalia. The video showed Islamic learning centers that were established by the movement in response to educational institutions in the country that teach under the influence of “inferior Western education”. According to the video, the purpose of the learning centers is to spread the concept of monotheism and religious topics along with the study of secular subjects at a basic level.¹⁰⁵
- The Al-Kataib jihadist media institution published two shari’a videos (2-3). The second video examined institutions for shari’a studies among tribes aligned with the movement, and the third video examined the distribution of livestock as charity for the poor.¹⁰⁶



The banner of the second video

The Caucasus

- On December 4, 2014 the “Caucasus Voice” jihadist media institution, which serves as a platform for the official messages of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate, and activists affiliated with it on social networks reported intense battles between members of the Emirate and Russian security forces and their collaborators. According to the reports, most of the battles took place

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/12/somali-mps-vote-prime-minister-out-201412610147160270.html>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.shabakataljahad.net/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁶ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

in the city of Grozny, the capital of Chechnya. As a result, 60 members of the Russian security and army forces were killed, including senior officers, as well as over 300 Emirate fighters. The reports included videos documenting the tremendous destruction, including entire buildings.¹⁰⁷ In addition, Emirate fighters emphasized that Russian security and army forces had used great military power, including heavy weapons such as tanks, planes and helicopters.¹⁰⁸ Emirate fighters published that, as a result of the intense battles, the Chechen authorities had decided to destroy the houses of Emirate fighters' family members and to exile activists.¹⁰⁹



From left to right: damage caused to several buildings in Grozny; a group of jihad fighters that burst into Grozny

The West

- The Al-I'tisam jihadist media institution published the fifth video in a series titled, “Message of the Mujahid”, which showed an activist from Canada known as Abu Anwar al-Canadi. In the video, al-Canadi referred to the terrorist attacks that were carried out in Canada in October 2014,¹¹⁰ which he described as a direct response to Canada’s participation in the coalition against the IS. The video concluded with a message to Muslims in Canada, in which al-Canadi

¹⁰⁷ <https://twitter.com/RevOfIslam>; <http://t.co/P0KjoFbDOh>,
<https://twitter.com/CaucasusAffairs/status/540427750952415232>;
<https://twitter.com/RevOfIslam/status/540475628618022912>

¹⁰⁸ <https://twitter.com/CaucasusAffairs/status/540427750952415232>;
<https://twitter.com/euromaidan/status/541163600074010624>;
<http://t.co/7J8KEGsERN> <https://twitter.com/RevOfIslam/status/540492842196807681> ;
<https://twitter.com/ZippyKC/status/540504498943557632>

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.i-googaz.com/?p=517>

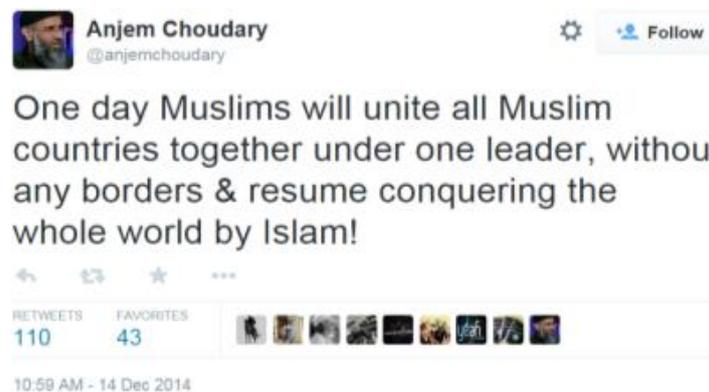
¹¹⁰ <http://goo.gl/6TEP0t>; <http://goo.gl/F71X9D>

called on them to choose between two options: wage jihad in Canada or perform hijra and join the IS.¹¹¹



Abu Anwar al-Canadi delivers a message to Muslims in Canada

- Sheikh Anjem Choudary, a radical Islamic preacher in England, continued to publish controversial correspondence on his Twitter account. During the first half of December 2014, Choudary posted several tweets (see examples below), including: a defense of Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad, a radical sheikh imprisoned in Lebanon and Choudary’s spiritual advisor; an accusation against the Lebanese regime for attempting to poison the sheikh; an emphasis that Jews and Christians cannot be considered trusted allies of the Muslims; a criticism of the United States and Britain for their torture of Muslim prisoners; a justification for the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate; and more.¹¹²



One of Choudary’s tweets¹¹³

¹¹¹<https://alplatformmedia.com/vb>(Arabic);
https://ia801509.us.archive.org/1/items/mm5_36/Message_of_the_Mujahid_5.mp4

¹¹² <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary>

¹¹³ <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/status/544038876965515264>

Miscellaneous

- The Ansar al-Mujahidin jihadist Web forum announced the launch of a new jihadist media institution called Qabas, which will focus on presenting a positive image of the mujahideen. The new media institution has a Twitter account, https://twitter.com/gabas_me, and a Web site, <http://qabas.me>.¹¹⁴



The logo of the Qabas jihadist media institution

- A visitor to the Al-Minbar al-'Ilami jihadist Web forum who is known to be a member of the IS published a link to a Web site containing an archive of the Islamic State's official publications at the following addresses: <https://dawla-is.appspot.com> <https://dwl-is.appspot.com> <https://issdarat.appspot.com>.

¹¹⁴ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

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The Jihadi Websites Monitoring Group (JWMG) is a specialized research and analysis team at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). Composed of researchers fluent in Arabic, the JWMG monitors websites that support and serve the Global Jihad organizations. The unique characteristic of JWMG publications is the team's integration of diverse materials from a wide variety of Arabic sources. JWMG connects each source to larger trends, providing a complete understanding of events on both a local and a global scale.

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