



ICT
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ICT Jihadi Monitoring Group **PERIODIC REVIEW**

Bimonthly Report

Summary of Information on Jihadist Websites

The First Half of April 2015

Highlights

This report summarizes notable events discussed on jihadist Web forums during the first half of April 2015. Following are the main points covered in the report:

- The month of April begins with a series of killing of senior jihadist leaders from branches of Al-Qaeda. **Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula** eulogizes one of its senior leaders, Sheikh Ibrahim al-Rubaish, who was shot dead by an American drone. **Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent** also loses two of its senior leaders, Sheikh **Ahmad Faruq**, deputy emir of the organization, and **Al-Qari Amran**, member of the organization's Shura Council, who was shot dead by an American drone in January 2015.
- **Abu Muhammad al-Julani**, leader of the **Al Nusra Front** – a branch of Al-Qaeda in Syria – sends his blessings to the organization's fighters and the other jihadist organizations, such as Ahrar Al-Sham, that took part in the liberation of Idlib Province from Syrian regime dominance. According to al-Julani, the best way to control the liberated province is through the Shura Council, as well as maintaining unity among the ranks. In addition, al-Julani calls upon the Muslim civilians in other Syrian cities to support jihad and to wait patiently to be liberated. In response to the military achievement, **Abu Musab Wadoud**, emir of **Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb**, sends blessings to the jihad fighters in Syria and emphasizes the importance of maintaining unity among the ranks, and on focusing on the implementation of shari'a.
- **The Islamic State** takes control of over 80% of the Palestinian refugee camp Al-Yarmouk in Syria, causing heated discourse on social networks, which expresses the existing division between the different jihadist groups in Syria. According to IS fighters, occupation of the camp successfully thwarted the plans of the Palestinian jihadist factions loyal to the Syrian regime to hand the camp over to the latter, and destroyed trade relations between them.
- **Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen** in Somalia threatens to carry out terror attacks against Kenyan civilians, in revenge for the methodological "massacre" of the Muslim population in East Africa – and in particular in Somalia – by the Kenyan government. At the same time, **Al-Muhajiroun in East Africa**, affiliated with Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen, threatens to unleash a wave of terror attacks against Tunisia, Uganda, and Kenya. According to the organization, it intends to collapse

the national borders created by colonial forces in East Africa, through cooperation with the Somali Al-Shabaab organization and Al-Qaeda.

- **Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula** offers twenty kilograms of gold for the heads of Ali Salih, former President of Yemen, and Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, the Houthi leader in Yemen. According to the organization, their capture will contribute to a significant increase in momentum to jihad in Yemen.
- **Ansar Al-Sharia in Libya** offers a prize to anyone who succeeds in killing one of the five commanders of the national army, headed by General Khalifa Hiftar, as well for killing Saqr Al-Geroushi, commander of the Libyan Air Force. This is due to the claim that the commanders are tyrants responsible for causing harm to every home and family in Libya.
- **The Islamic State** calls upon Muslims in Tunisia to join the jihad in Libya, and promises that they will return to Tunisia as victors. In addition, the organization sends threatening messages regarding the Tunisian regime, promising to take revenge in the name of the brothers in prisons, and the sisters whose honor was damaged.
- **The Islamic State** calls upon Sunni tribes in Yemen to fight against the Houthis, and calls upon jihadist organizations in Yemen to dismantle and to pledge allegiance to the Islamic State.

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Ansar Al-Furqan51

 • The Al-Faruq media institution, which serves as the media wing of Ansar Al-Furqan, a Baluchi Salafi jihadist organization published the following:51

The West52

New Publications

Ideology

- The Al-Andalas media institution, operating on behalf of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, published an audio file called “The Meaning of the Holiday” by Sheikh Abu al-Hasan al-Bulaydi. The recording was in honor of the Feast of the Sacrifice, and offers an interpretation of the holiday related to the recent events affecting Muslims in the Middle East. For example, al-Bulaydi pointed out that just like Abraham the Prophet fearlessly guarded his faith, thus the mujahideen guard their faith and the Islamic religion, even paying with their lives. He emphasized that the struggle of the mujahideen, especially in Algeria, against Western and apostate forces, will eventually bear good fruit.¹
- The Al-Basira media institution, operating on behalf of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, published a second audio file called “The Prohibited Sect”. The recording was produced in the framework of a series of publications, "Sharpening Understanding and the Laws of Testimony" by Sheikh Abu Abdallah al-Shami, member of the Shura Council and the shari'a committee of the Al-Nusra Front.²
- The Nukhbat Al-Fikr media group published a booklet called "Commentary on the Chapter in the Quran: Al-Anbiyaa" (the prophet), by Sheikh Umar Mahmud Abu Qatada al-Filastimi, a prominent ideologist from the Salafi jihadist movement.³
- The Al-Ghurba media institution, which helps spread information about the Islamic State, published a second issue of an article that was first published in 2011, called "Guiding the Roaming Lions with regard to the Problem of Fighting against Shi'ite Rulers" by Sheikh Turki al-Bana'ali – a prominent ideologist in the Islamic State who made religious rulings. At the beginning of the article al-Bana'ali clarified that the article was written in response to questions from a number of members of the organization, about whether to assist the rulers in battles against the Shi'ites. Or, in other words, was there any religious endorsement for helping one's worst enemy? Al-Bana'ali clarified, with supportive quotes from Hadith literature and the Quran, that rulers who act against the Islamic religion and Shi'ites are considered to be evil afflictions.

¹ <https://justpaste.it/kfs7>

² <https://justpaste.it/kbhh>

³ <https://justpaste.it/kijw>

The Muslim rulers incessantly work against the implementation of shar'a, and lean towards laws and government systems that do not befit Islam, and therefore one should not assist them.⁴



The article banner

- Fighters from the Salafi jihadist movement in the Gaza Strip published an article called "Between the Islamic State to the Secular Civilian State" by Sheikh Adnan Mayet, a Salafi jihadist Palestinian preacher in the Gaza Strip. In the article, the author praised the establishment of a country that will be founded on the principles of Islam.⁵



The article title page

The Importance of Fulfilling the Commandments of Jihad

- The Labayka media institution, operating on behalf of the Somali jihad Al-Qimma forum, published a book called "The Mujahid Diamond" by a mujahid named Ya'qub al-Umir, a member of the Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen movement in Juba Province in Somalia. According to the author, the motivation for writing the book was related to a defective misunderstanding of the

⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb>

⁵ <https://justpaste.it/ke1g>

significance of jihad, and to the need to understand which moral traits are needed in order to fulfil the commandments of jihad.⁶

- The Labayka media institution, operating on behalf of the Somali jihad forum Al-Qimma, published the transcription of an old audio file, which was itself published several years ago, titled "Our Jihad: Until there is no Fitna [a war between brothers] and the Religion will all be for God", by Mukhtar Abu al-Zubayr, an Al-Shabaab leader who was killed in September 2014. Al-Zubayr emphasized in the audio clip the importance of making jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders, and first and foremost against the United States because of its alleged attacks against Muslim land and the Islamic religion.⁷
- Abu al-Walid al-Ghazi al-Ansari, a Salafi jihadist sheikh in the Gaza Strip, published an article called "To the Sons of Al-Sham!" The article was addressed to the mujahideen in Syria, and focused on the manner in which they should conduct jihad. For example, the author noted that the jihad is supposed to be instrumental for God alone, and not for any party or group.⁸
- The Ansar al-Sharia organization published a series of audio files called "Messages to Those on the Front Lines" (Parts 1 – 7) by Sheikh Abu Tamim al-Libi. The main themes dealt with the importance of fulfilling the commandments of jihad, and how that is a central pillar in the Islamic religion – a foremost tradition since the time of the Prophet Mohammed's life.⁹

Religious Rulings

- In the first half of April, Abu Basir al-Tartusi, a prominent Salafi jihadist Sheikh with Syrian origins, ruled that it is forbidden to join the Al-Nusra Front, since the Al-Qaeda organization has no concrete vision for establishing an Islamic State.¹⁰

As a result of the ruling, one of the members of the Shura Council from the Al-Nusra Front, Abu Abdullah al-Shami, published a document in which he rejected the ruling. In the document, al-Shami criticized al-Tartusi for implicating the Al-Nusra Front out of all the other organizations,

⁶ <https://twitter.com/fahdrad/status/585860916488572928>; <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

⁷ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

⁸ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

⁹ <https://twitter.com/fahdrad/status/585860916488572928>; <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

¹⁰ <http://goo.gl/2lqlhJ>

and dismissed the claim that Al-Qaedaization of the Syrian revolution would be harmful.¹¹ A visitor to the Al-Fida jihadist forum also made a negative comment about Sheikh al-Tartusi's religious ruling. According to the visitor, the fact that al-Tartusi didn't bother to mention at all the reasons behind the ruling was very puzzling.¹²

In response to the reverberations caused by the ruling, al-Tartusi published a statement about the subject. He clarified that the ruling was not made in an attempt to criticize the Al-Nusra Front, but rather to advise the mujahideen in general on how to conduct themselves in their efforts to transform Syrian into an Islamic State with fitting government institutions and a fitting government system. According to al-Tartusi, Al-Qaeda, and in particular the Islamic State, are disrupting this effort.¹³

The Rift between Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State

- The Al-Tahaya media group published the transcription of an interview conducted by an independent journalist named Bilal Abd al-Karim, with Sheikh Abu Qatada al-Filastini, a senior official in the Salafi jihadist movement in Jordan. The interview itself was first published in three parts during the month of March. It dealt with the relationship between Qatada and the Jordanian regime, the reasons why he was extradited by the British to Jordan, his position towards the West, and harsh criticism against the Islamic State because – among other things – it defined Muslims who don't meet its criteria as apostates, and because it established a Caliphate illegally without the consensus of the Muslim People.¹⁴

¹¹ <https://justpaste.it/kotn>

¹² <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

¹³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

¹⁴ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>



Footage from the interview conducted by the journalist Bilal with Sheikh Abu Qatada

- The Al-Tahaya media group published a book called "Important Questions about the Leaders – The People's Right" (135 pages), based on a series of lectures given by Sheikh Abu Abdullah al-Shami, member of the Shura Council and the shari'a committee of the Al-Nusra Front, a branch of Al-Qaeda in Syria. Al-Shami listed criteria and conditions permitting a Muslim to serve as head of the Muslim leadership, in accordance with shari'a. In addition, he criticized the "underhanded opportunism" on the part of Islamic State fighters – their gall in claiming for their organization the status of leadership of the Muslim People.¹⁵
- Opponents of the Islamic State published a collection of audio files, video files, and books denouncing the Islamic State, under the title "The Crimes of the State of [Abu Bakr] Al-Baghdadi". The online collection was publicized on social media sites, and on a special site established just to address that subject: <http://jaraem.k-alfasad.cf/>.¹⁶



The home page of the collection, on the website devoted to castigating the Islamic State

¹⁵ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

¹⁶ <https://justpaste.it/kh7e>; <http://jaraem.k-alfasad.cf/>

- The Nukhbat Al-Fikr media group published an article called "Not a day of ashes? A response to the alleged Shari'aman, of the [Islamic] State that hides [behind the nickname] Abu Khuzayma al-Mudhari, and the victory of our Sheikh al-Maqdisi with regard to the tragedy of the Jordanian pilot". The article was written by Abdullah bin Ahmad al-Bin al-Hussayni, a member of the shari'a committee on the Minbar al-Tawhid wal-Jihad website – a Salafi jihadist site established by Sheikh Mohammed al-Maqdisi, father of the Salafi jihadist movement in Jordan, and a supporter of Al-Qaeda. The article supports al-Maqdisi's position regarding the illegality of burning war captives, as the Islamic State did when it burned the Jordanian pilot in the beginning of 2015.¹⁷
- A visitor to the jihadist forum Al-Fida, which supports Al-Qaeda and its official branches, posted words of criticism regarding the activities of the jihadist forum Shumukh al-Islam, which identifies with the Islamic State. According to the visitor, the Shumukh Al-Islam forum customarily provided a platform for different jihadist organizations, and preferred to take a neutral stand. But this trend started to change for the worse when the forum moderators began to limit the number of visitors to the forum from among the supporters of the certain jihadist organizations, such as Fatah al-Islam – a Palestinian Salafi jihadist organization in Southern Lebanon. He added that the moderators of the Shumukh al-Islam forum claimed that narrowing the freedom of action of the forum members who did not find favour in their eyes was in an effort to prevent Fitna – meaning, a deterioration to a state of arguing and a war between brothers. According to the visitor, it may be that Al-Fida was among the groups groomed by Shumukh, but later it became clear that the management of Al-Fida was stronger and more independent in its decision making, which was not seen in a favourable light by the managers of Shumukh Al-Islam. Due to that development, Shumukh recently began to demand from its members to pledge allegiance to its site – or to be removed from the forum. This policy led to the banishment and voluntary departure of many senior writers on the forum. Eventually the Shumukh Al-Islam management agreed to support across the board the Islamic State, and to administer harsh treatment to anyone who dared to condemn the IS. In conclusion, the writer

¹⁷ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

expressed disappointment over the change in direction taken by Shumukh Al-Islam, and reminisced about better times in the forum's past.¹⁸

Women and Jihad

- The Al-Zawraa media institution, that posts jihadist content for women, distributed a written ad encouraging women to make "monetary jihad". That is to say, to donate some of their money and earnings for the good of jihad. In the ad – that featured images of Islamic State coins, which were issued by the Islamic State in November 2014 – women were called upon to donate money to the jihad fighters, and in that manner earn a great reward from Allah. The ad ended with a personal request made to the women in Saudi Arabia, and a promise that the "Vanguards of the Caliphate" would soon arrive there as well.¹⁹



An attempt to collect money from women, for the benefit of jihad

Strategy

- Husayn bin Mahmud, a prominent writer on jihadi forums, published an article criticizing a military operation called "Decisive Storm". Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and other Arab countries formed an air coalition against the Houthis in Yemen. According to Mahmud, despite the fact that the operation was meant to weaken the base strength of the Houthis - who were supported by Iran and served as the war head for the spread of Shi'itism in Yemen – there was no cause for joy. He claimed that the campaign in Yemen could not be won from the air, but only by sending in ground forces. He also claimed that there is no force powerful enough to overcome the Houthis aside from Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, the author

¹⁸ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

¹⁹ <https://www.mnbr.info/vb>

suggested to the Ansar Al-Shari'a fighters in Yemen, who were affiliated with Al-Qaeda in Yemen, and to the other jihadist fighters, to use the weapon stores – and in particular the anti-tank rockets and planes in order to regain control in the field at the end of the "Decisive Storm" operation. In addition, he suggested that they get help from the Yemenite tribes in fighting the Houthis.

According to the author, the enemies of Islam – such as the United States and Saudi Arabia – were presently concentrating their efforts on a campaign to halt the Islamic expansion of the Islamic State. Different methods were being implemented, such as support of the other jihad bodies in and around Syria. According to the author, it would be better if Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri - head of Al-Qaeda, and the other branches of jihad joined forces with the Islamic State in order to prevent their enemies from furthering their plots, and as part of the scheme to topple their enemies.²⁰

Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent published a statement containing a eulogy for the deaths of two of its senior leaders. The first leader, Sheikh Ahmad Faruq, deputy emir of the organization, was killed on January 15, 2015 as a result of shelling by an American drone. The second leader, Al-Qari Amran, member of the organization's Shura Council, was killed after being shot at by an American drone on January 5, 2015.²¹ In response to the publication, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb also published a eulogy.²²



The banner in memory of the Al-Qaeda leaders in the Indian Subcontinent

²⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb>

²¹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>; <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

²² <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

- The Al-Malahem media institution published an announcement eulogizing Sheik Ibrahim al-Rubaish, mufti of the organization. According to the organization, al-Rubaish was shot dead by an American drone. Along with the words of eulogy, the announcement covered central events in his life, such as his participation in combat against US forces in Afghanistan, his term in the American prison in Guantanamo, his being one of the founders of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and more.²³

In response to the announcement, many jihad fighters eulogized him in jihadist forums and social networks, such as Twitter.²⁴ Among the jihadist groups that eulogized him were: Dagestan Province of the Islamic Emirate in the Caucasus²⁵, and Al-Nusra Front in Syria.²⁶



The banner produced in memory of Sheikh Ibrahim al- Rubaish

- Jund al-Aqsa, a Salafi jihadist organization in Syria, published a eulogy in memory of Sheikh Harith al-Nadhari, member of the Shura Council of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Nadhari was shot to death by a drone at the end of January 2015. In addition, the organization promised that the United States and her allies would pay a price for killing al-Nadhari.²⁷
- The Al-Tahaya media group published the transcription of an audio file containing a eulogy following the death of Luqman Abu Sakhr, leader of the Uqbq ibn Nafi Brigade, a Salafi jihadist organization in Tunisia. The brigade was probably connected to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. The eulogy was given by Sheikh Wanas al-Faqih al-Tunis, a jihad fighter of Tunisian

²³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

²⁴ https://twitter.com/hashtag/استشهاد_الشيخ_ابراهيم_الربيش

²⁵ <http://vdagestan.com/ar/archives/17296>

²⁶ <https://justpaste.it/kjgg>

²⁷ <https://justpaste.it/kg2d>

origins, and member of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria. Luqman was killed together with other jihad fighters, by Tunisian security forces, near the end of March, 2015.²⁸



Luqman Abu Sakhr, leader of the Uqbq ibn Nafi Brigade

- The Nafih al-Tayyib media group, in coordination with the Al-Malahim media institution, and acting on behalf of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, published a biography of a *shahid* named Hamza al-Baydhani.²⁹



Hamza al-Baydhani

- A visitor to the Al-Fida forum posted a eulogy in memory of Abu Mariam, field commander for Al-Jabha al-Shamiyya, an Islamist organization in Syria. According to the visitor, Abu Mariam was killed in a suicide attack by a member of the Islamic State, at one of the Al-Jabha al-Shamiyya headquarters.³⁰

²⁸ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>; <https://justpaste.it/kg2f>

²⁹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

³⁰ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>



Abu Mariam

Magazines

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published the April issue of the magazine *Shariat*, in the Urdu language.³¹



The issue cover

- Markaz Ibn Taymiyya, which focuses on the Palestinian Salafi jihadist movement, produced a new magazine called *Al-Wa'd al-Akhir* [The Final Promise], containing eighteen pages. In the introduction, it was written that the magazine is another information dissemination tool for sanctifying God and jihad. Topics covered in the first magazine included: the need for maintaining unity among the ranks of mujahideen, security and intelligence, a biography of

³¹ <http://alemara1.org/>

Sheikh Abdullah Azzam - one of the founders of Al-Qaeda, a report about the structure of the IDF, obligations of fighters, a guide to making explosives, and more.³²



From left to right: the issue cover, a guide to making explosives

- Issue #64 of the periodical *Al-Waqi* was published.³³

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

In the first half of April, clashes between the Afghan Taliban and the government and army continued throughout Afghanistan. On April 9, armed militants attacked a government compound in Balkh Province in north Afghanistan, causing the deaths of twelve people – including the area police commander.³⁴ The Afghan Taliban organization claimed responsibility for the attack.³⁵ In addition, on April 10 the organization claimed responsibility for an explosion alongside a convoy of American forces in Jalalabad, in central Afghanistan.³⁶ Furthermore, on April 12, there were confrontations between the army and the Afghan Taliban organization in Badakhshan Province, as Taliban fighter simultaneously attacked a number of police centers in

³² <https://shamikh1.info/vb>

³³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

³⁴ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/deaths-gunmen-storm-afghan-government-compound-150409155740345.html>

³⁵ <http://goo.gl/dYHQoS>

³⁶ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/civilians-killed-separate-bombings-afghanistan-150410092052640.htm>

*the area. During the clashes, 21 armed militants and nine policemen were killed.*³⁷

*Meanwhile, in the Pakistan arena, army operations against the Afghan Taliban organization continued. On April 8, it was reported that Pakistan positioned a drone capable of launching rockets on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, as a tactic against Afghan Taliban fighters.*³⁸

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published an official biography of its leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar, on the 19th anniversary of his appointment as head of the Afghan Taliban organization and of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. At the beginning of the biography, it was emphasized that Mullah Omar had been the leader of Afghan Taliban since 1996, and still held that position. Later in the biography, details about Mullah Omar's personal life were revealed, such as his jihad struggles against Russia, and the lack of order after Russia withdrew from Afghanistan. The biography also discussed the establishment of Afghan Taliban control. Mullah Omar's charismatic personality and leadership abilities were also described, including his tactical and fighting expertise. With regard to the jihad struggles he oversaw, the biography focused on his opposition to Russia's invasion of Afghanistan, during which he joined a number of organizations. The book stated that Omar's favourite weapon was an RPG-7, because he was an expert at using that type of weapon. It was also written that during the jihad activities he participated in, Mullah Omar was injured four times, and on one occasion lost his right eye. At the end of the biography, a detailed description was provided of the Afghan Taliban organization during Mullah Omar's time, noting again that he was head of the organization.³⁹
- The Manba al-Jihad Studio media institution, operating on behalf of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, published a video called "Caravan of Heros – part 12". The video described different military activities carried out by members of the Emirate against Afghan and American

³⁷ <http://goo.gl/iVA7MK>

³⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/pakistan-burraq-drone-150408154913546.html>

³⁹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

security forces. The video emphasized the importance of fulfilling the commandments of jihad.⁴⁰

The Arabian Peninsula

On April 1, Houthi rebels reached the center of Aden and the next day captured the presidential palace.⁴¹ On April 2, AQAP militants stormed a prison in Mukalla and freed 300 inmates.⁴² On April 3, both the Saudi and Yemeni governments claimed that Houthi rebels were being pushed out of Aden and that forces loyal to the president controlled 95% of the city.⁴³ That same day, AQAP seized Mukalla, the fifth largest city in Yemen.⁴⁴ On April 13, an American drone strike killed Ibrahim al-Rubaish, a 35-year-old Saudi citizen, who had been held for five years in the United States military prison at Guantanamo Bay. After being released from Guantanamo Bay, al-Rubaish was sent to a Saudi rehabilitation program and afterwards left to join al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), where he became a top ideologue and spokesperson for the terrorist organization.⁴⁵ On April 14, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution prohibiting the sale or transfer of arms to Houthi rebels and demanding that they immediately cease armed violence and return to the negotiating table.^{46, 47} Saudi airstrikes were also criticized for their high level of civilian casualties.^{48,49}

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- The jihadist Al-Malahim media institution, acting on behalf of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, published a statement (#92) announcing a reward of twenty kilograms of gold for

⁴⁰ <https://justpaste.it/kcia>

⁴¹ <http://www.voanews.com/content/houthi-rebels-push-into-key-yemen-city/2703214.html>

⁴² <http://www.voanews.com/content/hrw-airstrike-on-camp-raises-grave-concerns-in-yemen/2703724.html>

⁴³ <http://www.voanews.com/content/pakistan-pm-calls-for-peaceful-resolution-in-yemen/2705677.html>

⁴⁴ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/04/world/middleeast/al-qaeda-al-mukalla-yemen.html>

⁴⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/15/world/middleeast/us-drone-kills-a-top-figure-in-al-qaedas-yemen-branch.html>

⁴⁶ <http://www.voanews.com/content/un-security-council-to-vote-on-yemen-arms-embargo/2718156.html>

⁴⁷ <http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2015/04/02/396987722/al-qaeda-force-in-yemen-hits-port-city-miles-away-fighting-rages-in-aden>

⁴⁸ <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/04/07/middleeast/yemen-crisis-houthis-saudi-arabia/>

⁴⁹ <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-04-01/human-rights-groups-condemn-civilian-deaths-in-yemen-air-strikes>

anyone who could kill or capture Ali Salih, former President of Yemen, and Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, the Houthi leader in Yemen. The offered reward was a sign of support for the mujahideen and the jihad against Houthis, who helped spread Iranian influence in Yemen.⁵⁰

- The Ansar Al-Sharia organization, affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, published a news report about the actions taken against the Houthis in Yemen. For example, the organization claimed responsibility for the deaths of two Houthis who were killed by a roadside bomb in Lahij Province.⁵¹

Iraq

After capturing Tikrit from the Islamic State in the beginning of April, Iraqi explosive experts had to dismantle many roadside bombs and improvised explosive devices.⁵² On April 3, the Islamic State released a video showing militants from the group destroying artifacts with sledgehammers and assault rifles, in the ancient city of Hatra.⁵³ On April 7, mass graves of Iraqi soldiers were being exhumed near the presidential palace in Tikrit. Many of the dead were thought to be Shi'ite soldiers from nearby Camp Speicher, a former US Army base. The Islamic State claimed to have executed 1,700 soldiers from Camp Speicher.⁵⁴ On April 8, Islamic State militants released over 200 Yazidi hostages to Kurdish forces in al-Hamira, a town about 30 miles south of the Kurdish-held city of Kirkuk.⁵⁵ On April 11, the Islamic State began an attack on Ramadi and quickly gained territory. Ramadi, the capital of the majority Sunni Anbar Province, is just under 80 miles west of Baghdad.⁵⁶ And on April 14, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi met with President Obama in the Oval Office. President Obama promised \$200 million dollars in humanitarian aid to Iraq, although no firm commitment about increased military aid was announced.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb>; <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

⁵¹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

⁵² <http://www.voanews.com/content/iraqi-explosives-experts-dismantle-bombs-in-liberated-tikrit/2704200.html>

⁵³ <http://www.wsj.com/video/isis-destroys-hatra-artifacts-new-video-claims/AE71A6B3-1B0E-4471-8250-B921B586C161.html>

⁵⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32199244>

⁵⁵ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-release-over-200-yazidi-hostages-in-iraq-1428504327>

⁵⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/11/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0N11OR20150411>

⁵⁷ http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/15/world/middleeast/iraqi-prime-minister-haider-al-abadi-in-washington.html?_r=0

The Islamic State

- The Al-Itisam media institution published a video called "Repelling the Safavids in Saladin Province".⁵⁸ The beginning of the video covered historic attacks by the Safavids (a nickname for Shi'ites) against Sunnis in Iraq, and afterwards current footage from battles between Islamic State fighters and the Iraqi Army. The Islamic State was portrayed as saving the Sunnis from the Shi'ites. Among the footage of the battles, the following images were featured:
 - A filmed final statement of a French fighter named Abu Talha al-Faransi, who carried out a suicide attack in the province. In his statement, al-Faransi called upon Muslims in France who were not able to make *Hijra*, to instead carry out attacks in France, where there were many "Jews and apostates" [secular Muslims].
 - A filmed final statement of a Qatar fighter called Abu Umar al-Qatari, who called upon Muslims to visit Qatar and abandon their lives under the rule of tyrants, and to make *Hijra* to an Islamic country. Al-Qatari also died in a suicide attack.
 - A pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State by a group of Kurdish fighters, called "The Saladin Brigade".
 - Documentation of the beheading of four people who were described as apostates and traitors.



A pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State by a brigade of Kurdish fighters in Saladin Province

The Islamic State – Saladin Province

- The Islamic State in Saladin Province published the following:
 - Videos #3-5 in a series called "Incineration of the Safavids in Saladin Province". Video

⁵⁸ <https://goo.gl/x0nqlb>

#3 documented an explosion of two roadside bombs by Iraqi Army forces;⁵⁹ video #4 documented a suicide attack by a fighter named Abu Umar al-Tunisi against an Iraqi Army post in the province (in the video's subtitles it was written that all those present were killed, though no number of casualties was provided).⁶⁰ Video #5 documented an attack on an Iraqi Army patrol.⁶¹

- Photo reports about the end of training for a new group of fighters, in a training camp named after Abu Musa'b al-Zarqawi,⁶² and about the execution of an individual presented as a member of SWAT forces.⁶³

The Islamic State – Nineveh Province

- The Islamic State in Nineveh Province published the following:
 - A video called "Eradication of Corruption by the Law of the Lord of Mankind (1)". The video documented four individuals accused of stealing money from Muslims and killing a woman, while disguised as members of the Islamic State. On the other hand, three civilians were documented thanking the Islamic State for returning to them their stolen money. After confessing to their crimes, the four guilty parties were executed, and their beheaded bodies were hung on crosses and displayed in the city streets, in accordance with the Quran ruling that appears in subtitles at the beginning of the video: "The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His apostle and strive to make mischief in the land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified." (Quran 5:33)⁶⁴

⁵⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

⁶⁰ <http://www.dostor.org/805015>

⁶¹ <https://vimeo.com/124608852>

⁶² <https://twitter.com/abosalhbzaa/status/588106031009501186>

⁶³ <https://dump.to/aXY>

⁶⁴ <http://goo.gl/bdKd6d>



The execution of individuals accused of theft in Nineveh Province

- A video about the Al-Bayan radio station broadcasting in Nineveh. In the video, it was explained that the radio station began broadcasting on July 18, 2014 (about a month after the capture of Mosul), and that it broadcasts throughout all of Nineveh Province (with plans to expand the range of reception in the future). In addition to broadcasting sermons by IS sheikhs, jihadist songs, sections of Hadith and verses from the Quran, the radio also broadcasts a program that aims "to refute the false accusations made against the Islamic State". Interspersed throughout the video were street interviews about the station with pedestrians, who praised the station and explained that it enriches their knowledge about Islam.⁶⁵



The Al-Bayan station – Islamic Tradition alongside Current Events

- A video called "The Response of Muslims to the Threats from Apostates". The video included a collection of street interviews with pedestrians and with IS activists, about their responses to those who send coalition force airplanes into the province. The speakers in the video rejected suggestions to cooperate with the Iraqi Army against the Islamic State, claiming there is no point in "liberating" Nineveh Province from IS

⁶⁵ https://archive.org/details/bayan_radio

since the residents were interested in living under the wing of the Caliphate that upholds the laws of shari'a.⁶⁶

- A photo reports about a tour of the marketplace in the city of Mosul. Stalls and workshops in the market were featured, in order to demonstrate that daily life in the city is normal.⁶⁷
- Photo reports about Dawa convoys: A minibus was used as a mobile center for Dawa activities among adults, youth, and children.⁶⁸

The Islamic State – Kirkuk Province

- The Islamic State in Kirkuk Province published the following:
 - Two photo reports about the battles opposite the Shi'ite Popular Mobilization Forces in the area around the Allas oil field. The battles included IS using mortar shells and 57 mm cannons to "weaken targets", the dispatch of five suicide terrorists who detonated themselves at militia posts, and an exchange of gunfire with medium size weapons. At the end of each report were images of dead bodies of militia fighters who were killed in the battles, and of military vehicles taken by IS as booty.⁶⁹



Battles between the IS and Shi'ite militias near the Allas oil field

- A video documenting an attack by IS fighters on the posts of Kurdish Peshmerga militias. The video began with a briefing by a field commander before IS fighters, in preparation for staging an attack. Later a fighter from Indonesia was interviewed,

⁶⁶ <https://archive.org/details/raad.al3aWwaamo0o>

⁶⁷ <https://isdarat.tv/8374>

⁶⁸ <http://forum.ebadalrhman.net/t17546.html>

⁶⁹ <https://isdarat.tv/8377>; <https://isdarat.tv/8415>

before setting out on a suicide attack in a car bomb. He praised jihad and the emigration from apostate areas to Islam Caliphate territories considered the land of the faithful. Still later in the video the launching of rockets and shooting by IS fighters at Kurdish positions was documented. In addition, IS fighters taking control of positions, and seizing weapons was documented. At the end of the video, the faces of IS members who were killed as *shahids* during the attack were displayed.⁷⁰



The Indonesian fighter before leaving to carry out a suicide attack

The Islamic State – Dijla Province

- The Islamic State in Dijla Province published the following:
 - A photo report documenting activity at the hospital in the city AL-Shirqat. In the report, images of the medical staff and equipment at the hospital were shown, in order to demonstrate that medical services “under the wing of the Caliphate” were functioning properly.⁷¹
 - A video documenting the destruction of antiquities in the province. At the beginning of the video, two militants announced that they intended to smash statues because they symbolized heresy and polytheism.⁷²

⁷⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

⁷¹ <https://isdarat.tv/8375>

⁷² <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>



The video banner

The Islamic State – Al-Janub Province

- The Islamic State in Al-Janub Province published the following:
 - A video reporting statistical data about the military actions the organization's fighters in Al-Janub Province during February 2015.⁷³
 - A video documenting several fighters burning a plant that may be Belladonna or Poppy, in order to derive a drug found in the plant.⁷⁴

The Islamic State – Al-Anbar Province

- The Islamic State in the Al-Anbar Province published video documenting fighters raiding a border crossing in Al-Tanf.⁷⁵

The Islamic State – Saladin Province

- The Islamic State in Saladin Province published a report about cutting off the hand of a man accused of theft.⁷⁶

⁷³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

⁷⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

⁷⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

⁷⁶ <https://isdarat.tv/8371>



Cutting off a thief's hand in Saladin Province

The Islamic State – Al-Furat Province

- The Islamic State in the Al-Furat Province published the following:
 - A video calling upon Muslims in Libya not to shirk their duties to jihad. The video, which began with a news report about clashes between Fajr Libya and the IS in Libya – featured a fighter from Al-Furat Province quoting Hadith passages that emphasized the commandments of jihad, and calling upon Muslims in Libya to join the Islamic State and assist its fighters. The video ended with a message to General Khalifa Hiftar, and a threat that convoys of suicide bombers would reach Libya.⁷⁷
 - A photo report about the destruction of cartons of cigarettes worth nearly half a million dollars.⁷⁸



Destroying cigarettes in Al-Furat Province

⁷⁷ https://archive.org/details/rs_fr

⁷⁸ <https://www.mnbr.info/vb/>

Al-Sham [The Levant]

On April 1, Jordan closed its only official border crossing with Syria because of the threat from Islamist rebels.⁸³ The next day militants from the al-Nusra Front secured the Syrian side of the border crossing and "three nearby military posts, prompting government bombing raids on the area."⁸⁴ On April 4, Islamic State militants seized control of the Yarmouk refugee camp, a Palestinian refugee camp in the suburbs of Damascus.⁸⁵ On April 5, Islamist rebels, purportedly from Al-Nusra Front, kidnapped 300 Kurdish men in a small village west of Aleppo, but later released the hostages on April 7.⁸⁶ On April 10, Syrian rebels shelled government controlled areas of Aleppo, killing eight, and in response a government air strike, killed eight people in a rebel-controlled area of the city.⁸⁷ However, by April 15 Islamic State militants had withdrawn from the refugee camp leaving the Al-Nusra Front as the largest force in the camp.⁸⁸

Syria

The Al-Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp

- At the beginning of April 2014 Islamic State fighters raided into the Al-Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp in southern Damascus, and conquered about 80% of its territory. That was in spite of a siege the camp was placed under by the Syrian regime since February 2014, and as a result of clashes near the camp between IS fighters and fighters from the Aknaf Bait al-Maqdis – an armed Palestinian militia connected to the Palestinian Hamas. The Islamic State's establishment in the camp was received with anger on the part of the Syrian regime. In response, Syria dropped barrel bombs on the camp, killing civilians and rebels alike.

These developments lead to discussion on social media sites, in which IS fighters participated – mainly justifying the conquest of the camp. For example, they posted comments using the hashtag "Yarmouk shames Hamas" and "The Caliphate State Breaks the Siege on Yarmouk". According to the IS posters, Hamas was waging a propaganda campaign, falsely reporting that

⁸³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/01/us-mideast-crisis-syria-jordan-idUSKBN0MS47F20150401>

⁸⁴ <http://www.voanews.com/content/syrian-rebels-nusra-front-capture-jordan-border-crossing/2703815.html>

⁸⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/05/world/middleeast/islamic-state-seizes-palestinian-refugee-camp-in-syria.html>

⁸⁶ <http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/04/06/mideast-crisis-syria-kurds-idINKBN0MX0V220150406>

⁸⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/11/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUSKBN0N208Y20150411>

⁸⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/15/us-mideast-crisis-yarmouk-idUSKBN0N611820150415>

the Islamic State was treating the camp residents cruelly. According to the same posters, Iran, Syria, the PLFP headed by Jibril, and the Aknaf Bayt Al-Maqdis organization controlled by Hamas, were not interested helping the refugees in Al-Yarmouk – but rather wanted to deal in Palestinian blood in order to further their own narrow interests. One of the IS fighters tweeted: "Ever since the death of Sheikh Yassin, nothing has remained of Hamas aside from mercenaries who care about nothing but their own interests." Another poster tweeted that with the entrance of the Islamic State into camp Al-Yarmouk, Aknaf Bayt Al-Maqdis's plan to hand the camp over to the Syrian regime was foiled.⁸⁹

Another post discussed the impressions of a Syrian journalist named Khalid Sha'ban, who professedly reported from the camp, saying that the residents of the camp amicably welcomed the entry of the Islamic State fighters. He was incredulous over the fact that that Aknaf Bayt Al-Maqdis and other armed organizations in the camp did not fight against Assad's forces in order to end the siege for the residents, and thereby ease their suffering. He explained that they actually had an interest in maintaining that poor state of humanitarian affairs in the camp, in order to rake in money from trade with the Syrian regime. For example, they made a profit selling rice to the camp residents at inflated prices. It should be mentioned that this post was published by Al-Nusra Al-Maqdisiyya, a Palestinian media group that supports the Islamic State.⁹⁰



The Syrian journalist, Khalid Sha'ban, with main points in his report from the AL-Yarmouk camp

⁸⁹ #دولة_الخلافة_تكسر_حصار_اليرموك; #اليرموك_يفضح_حماس

⁹⁰ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

Following the Islamic State takeover of the Al-Yarmouk camp, Al-Nusra Front – a branch of Al-Qaeda in Syria – published an official announcement stating that the organization assumed a neutral position with regard to the clashes between the Islamic State and Aknaf Bayt Al-Maqdis within the Al-Yarmouk camp, and that other organizations were taking a similar stance, including the Ahrar Al-Sham organization. According to the announcement, Al-Nusra Front's decision to maintain a neutral position was based on the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Al-Yarmouk refugee camp. It was also written in the announcement that the organization turned down the request of Jaysh Al-Islam to pass through their territory in order to reach the camp. That was because, according to the Al-Nusra Front, the "Al-Islam army" intended to join forces in battle with the Sham Al-Rasul brigade, a brigade they claimed collaborated with the Syrian regime and fought against the Al-Nusra Front in Bayt Sahem.⁹¹

The conquest of Al-Yarmouk also resulted in critical responses directed at the Islamic State and the Al-Nusra Front. For example, Jaysh Al-Islam, an umbrella organization for several Salafi rebel groups, published a statement in which it accused Al-Nusra Front of assisting the Islamic State in its conquest of the camp. That was on account of its failure to intervene, and its blocking of the access roads, to prevent Jaysh Al-Islam fighters from helping Aknaf Bayt Al-Maqdis in combat against the Islamic State.⁹²

Al-Nusra Front

- During the first half of March 2015, the jihadist media institution of Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manarah al-Bayda, published the following:
 - A speech by the Al-Nusra Front Emir, Abu Muhammad al-Julani, recorded as an audio file called "Victory from God and Conquest in Close", discussing the Al-Nusra Front victory in the Syrian city Idlib. At the beginning of the speech, al-Julani blessed the Islamic nation for the victory achieved by the mujahideen in Idlib, and the mujahideen for orchestrating the battle. In addition, he claimed that maintaining a state of control in Idlib was more difficult than achieving it, because the organization had many enemies that were waiting for its downfall. Therefore, he emphasized that the members of the

⁹¹ <http://all4syria.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/download10.jpg>

⁹² <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

organization must remain united, and not to occupy themselves with the arguments between them. He added that the Al-Nusra Front had no desire to rule over the city alone, and that the best way to control it would be via the Shura Council. In addition, he wanted a promise that all the public services in the city would continue to function for the good of the Muslims, and called for the establishment a shari'a court to preserve justice, and assured that any complaint of lack of justice from the past could also be dealt with by the court. Later in the speech, Al-Julani addressed the groups that were members of Jaysh Al-Fatah, calling up them to remain united opposite their enemies who controlled other Syria cities. In addition, he called upon the Muslim residents of conquered Syrian cities to wait patiently until their cities were liberated, and to meanwhile support jihad. At the end of the speech, al-Julani strengthened the hands of the mujahideen and their commanders, and called upon them to help need Muslim civilians.⁹³



Al-Julani's speech banner

- Various videos from Syrian battlefields, including: threats by Al-Nusra Front fighters to continue jihad until the fall of the Alawite regime;⁹⁴ documentation of the inauguration of a health clinic named after Sheikh Ali, that also engaged in charitable activities for the Muslim residents in Western Aleppo and its surroundings. In an interview, one of the center employees described the medical services and the new center's activities.⁹⁵
- An announcement (#25) about the negotiation process for the release of Lebanese Army soldiers taken captive by Al-Nusra. According to the organization, for the past four

⁹³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

⁹⁴ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

⁹⁵ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

months there had been no negotiations, and all statements made by any Lebanese politician regarding the progress of the negotiation were lies – “There are no lines of communication between us and the Lebanese government.” Also according to the organization, the matter was an internal political game in Lebanon, orchestrated by Hezbollah and Iran. All things considered, the organization emphasized that it would be best if there was one clear source of information about the negotiations and its results. Finally, the organization noted that it handed over the body of one soldier in exchange for an easing of the siege on the residents of Jurud Arsla, and for providing aid to the refugee camps in the area.⁹⁶

- An announcement titled "An Invitation and Recommendation to all the Branches of Mujahideen in Eastern Al-Ghouta", to preserve the unity among their ranks and prevent the bloodshed of innocent Muslims in the area.⁹⁷
- A video documenting the release of a female Muslim from the Al-Mausalam tribe, from a Syrian regime jail, after a prisoner exchange deal in which the Al-Nusra Front released a Syrian regime fighter.⁹⁸

The Islamic State in Deir Ezzor Province

- The Islamic State in Deir Ezzor Province, also known as the Al-Khayr Province among IS fighters, published the following:
 - A video about the administration of the system of Zakat collection and distribution in the province. In the video, one of the employees from the Zakat Office was featured, visiting stores and businesses and handing out slips to be used for paying Zakat. Later, people who owed payments were featured in the Zakat Office paying the required sum of 2.5% of the net value of their merchandise. In the second part of the video, distribution of Zakat to the needy and to refugees was documented, in the form of cash and in goods.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

⁹⁷ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

⁹⁸ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

⁹⁹ <https://archive.org/details/Al.Khaier.Az.Zakat.Hakk.Al.Mal>



Paying Zakat in Deir Ezzor Province

- A photo report titled "A Tour by the Control and Inspection Office in Stores". In the footage, employees of the office were featured examining various products in the storehouses and supermarkets, and checking the expiration dates.¹⁰⁰
- A photo report about the maintenance and paving of sidewalks in the city of Al-Mayadin.¹⁰¹
- A photo report about lashes given to a man who was accused of false testimony and to others who were accused of consuming alcohol. The guilty parties were dressed in special robes and publically lashed before an audience.¹⁰²



Receiving lashes as a punishment for consuming alcohol

The Islamic State – Aleppo Province

¹⁰⁰ <https://isdarat.tv/8365>

¹⁰¹ <https://isdarat.tv/8383>

¹⁰² <https://isdarat.tv/8367>

- The Islamic State in the Aleppo Province published the following:
 - A video called “The Sahawat Harvest, documenting two suicide attacks against positions held by fighters from the Sahawat Rebel Movement, in Mare and Hur Kals. According to the Islamic State, more than 80 people were killed in the attacks. The video included the final statements of the two suicide bombers – one Syrian and the other Kurdish – who sent empowering messages to the mujahideen, alongside threatening messages to the “Sahawat and the dictators”, blaming them for collaborating with the coalition forces, and for giving them information about the locations of Kobane fighters.¹⁰³
 - A photo report about a training camp in the province. Footage showed the fighters receiving ideological training, weapons training, physical training, and lessons about tactics and identifying enemy targets.¹⁰⁴



Physical training in an IS training camp in Aleppo Province

- A photo report about distributing money to the poor and needy by the Zakat Office.¹⁰⁵
- A video documenting the pledge of allegiance to the Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi Caliphate, by the Albu Batush tribe.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ https://archive.org/details/SAHAWATE_HARVEST

¹⁰⁴ <http://goo.gl/CqDg1l>

¹⁰⁵ <https://isdarat.tv/8420>

¹⁰⁶ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>



The video banner

- A video called “A Mujad’s Serenity”. The video includes interviews with fighters on the topics of faith, such as sanctifying God, jihad, and teachings about the Prophet Mohammed’s life.¹⁰⁷
- According to the ARANEWS Syrian news agency, IS began a mandatory recruitment of all men over age eighteen in Jarabulus, in Aleppo Province. The news items states that the young recruits were transferred to locations outside of the city (probably for training purposes), and that the city residents were asked not to complain or express any opposition to the decision.¹⁰⁸

The Islamic State – Al-Raqqah Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Raqqah Province published the following:
 - A video titled “Control and Inspection Office”. In the video, the Office - which is affiliated with the Hisbah Bureau (an Islamic body responsible for maintaining public morality and for supervising weights and measurements) – supervised the quality of the province’s imported and exported merchandise, paying strict attention meat products and checking the expiration date of other products. The office is divided into three departments: the Health Department that issues tickets to stores and businesses found selling expired merchandise; the Computer Department that maintains a database of the tickets; and the Administration Department that transfers the files to the Shari’a Court for processing.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

¹⁰⁸ <http://goo.gl/OYQ1O5>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWOwZnw0E-c>



Stamping meat with the Islamic State seal of approval

- A video called “Pledging Allegiance to Death”. At the beginning of the video one of the organization militants spoke before his friends about the importance of fighting against the enemies of Islam – Shi’ites and Crusaders – who started a war against them. He emphasized that the members of the organization were full of motivation, a sense of mission, and a willingness to sacrifice themselves as *shahids* in the war against their enemies.¹¹⁰
- News sources published that aside from licenses for every vehicle, the Islamic State in Raqqa Province had issued license plates bearing the name of the organization. According to local reports, in order to receive a driver’s license, a certificate of ownership for a vehicle, and license plates, one must pay the traffic police a registration fee and undergo an oral test about driving, including several questions about the Islamic Faith.¹¹¹



Islamic State license plates in Raqqa

The Islamic State – Homs Province

¹¹⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

¹¹¹ <http://goo.gl/vPHaoX>

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Homs Province published the following:
 - A video titled "A Message to the Residents of Yemen". In the video, a fighter appeared calling upon Sunni tribes in Yemen to fight against the Houthis. He also called upon the jihadist organizations in Yemen to dismantle and pledge allegiance to the Islamic State. In addition, the speaker in the video sent arrows of criticism towards the attacks in Yemen lead by Saudi Arabia, in the framework of the Decisive Storm operation.¹¹²



A message from Syria to the residents of Yemen

- A video called "A Message to Nusayris Soldiers". The video, which began with the interrogation of a Syrian Army soldier accused of killing an IS fighter, ends with the execution of the soldier by the *shahid's* widow, who shot him to death. At the very end of the video, the body of the soldier was shown tied to a vehicle and being dragged through the dust. It is worth mentioning that the widow also appeared at the edge of the frame, and that was - as far as we know – the first time an Islamic State execution was carried out by a woman.¹¹³

The Islamic State – Damascus Province

- The Islamic State in Damascus Province published the following:
 - A series of photographs documenting a raid by IS fighters on the Khalkhala military airbase.¹¹⁴

¹¹² <https://archive.org/details/Homs.A.Message.To.The.People.Of.Yemen>

¹¹³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

¹¹⁴ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>



From left to right: an announcement about the establishment of the new organization;
the logo of the Al-Sham Rebel Brigades

The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

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

- The Islamic State in Sinai Province published the following:
 - An announcement in which the organization claims responsibility for an attack on seven security positions on the international highway between Al-Arish and Rafah, using light and heavy weapons, including RPG shells. As a result, dozens of Egyptian Army soldiers were killed, and two armoured vehicles were seized. In response, the Egyptian Air Force bombed the area.¹¹⁸ In addition, the organization filmed the aforementioned attack.¹¹⁹



The publication banner

- A video documenting the execution of an Egyptian soldier named Ahmad Fathi Abu

¹¹⁸ <http://www.wa3iarabi.com/story/2038>

¹¹⁹ <http://www.dawaalhaq.com/?p=28013>

al-Fatuh Salam, a member of a tank crew, who was captured by dispatch fighters on April 3, 2015. In the video, the captured soldier revealed his role in the battle against the IS fighters in the Sinai Peninsula. In addition, he called upon all who serve in the Egyptian Army to cease their attacks in Sinai, and said that their actions defended Israel, and not the Muslims. At the end of the video, the execution of an unidentified individual – probably a collaborator - was documented, as well as that of the Egyptian soldier.¹²⁰



The captured Egyptian soldier before his execution

- The Islamic State in Sinai Province published a photo report about a series of attacks carried out against the Egyptian Army forces on the Al-Arish – Rafah highway on April 2, 2015. The report included images of the battles and bodies of the dead soldiers, as well as images of the ammunition and weapons that were seized as booty, and of two armored vehicles before they were exploded. In a written claim of responsibility for the attack, it was stated that dozens of soldiers were killed and injured in the attack, and that an Egyptian Apache helicopter was damaged. According to the announcement, the damage to the helicopter “caused Al-Sisi to ask his Jewish lords for help, who then intervened with drones and warplanes that poured out their wrath on the simple Muslim people and bombed them indiscriminately”.¹²¹
- Jihad fighters blamed Hamas’s internal security mechanism for the arrest of Adnan Mayet, a Salafi preacher who left Hamas and became an enthusiastic supporter of the Islamic State. In the framework of the efforts to get him released, the Salafi jihadist activists in Gaza

¹²⁰ <https://isdarat.org/8446>

¹²¹ <https://archive.org/details/Sinai.Bayan.Saa2a.Sbah.Al.Monzreen>; <https://dump.to/aRC>

launched an online campaign demanding his release.¹²²



A banner calling for the release of Adnan Mayet from a Hamas prison

Africa

The Maghreb

On April 5, a suicide bomber detonated an explosive device, killing four people and wounding at least 20 people at a security checkpoint near the city of Misrata. Afterwards, it was unclear who had carried out the attack.¹²³ On April 12, gunmen fired from a car upon the South Korean embassy in Tripoli, killing two Libyan security officers and wounding another.¹²⁴ The next day, before peace talks between the rival Libyan governments were set to begin, a car bomb was detonated outside the Moroccan embassy in Tripoli, causing no casualties, but damaging multiple vehicles. The Islamic State claimed responsibility for both embassy attacks.¹²⁵

On April 6, French commandos freed a Dutch hostage, killed two militants, and killed two others in a pre-dawn raid in Mali by the North African al-Qaeda-affiliated group AQIM.¹²⁶ An Associated Press article from April 14 noted that violence related to armed groups and Islamists was increasing in central Mali, including by “the Macina Liberation Movement, which is believed to have ties to the same jihadists who ruled the north in 2012-13.”¹²⁷

On April 2, Tunisia said that it planned to reopen a consulate in Syria and invite the Syrian ambassador back to Tunisia in order to gain a better handle on the estimated 3,000 Tunisians

¹²² https://twitter.com/adnan_amit1/status/585112934520619008

¹²³ <http://www.voanews.com/content/libya-suicide-bomber-kills-four-near-misrata-checkpoint/2707341.html>

¹²⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/12/us-southkorea-libya-idUSKBN0N307V20150412>

¹²⁵ <http://www.voanews.com/content/libyan-parties-to-meet-as-kerry-european-ministers-urge-peace/2716726.html>

¹²⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/06/us-mali-hostage-idUSKBN0MX0HS20150406>

¹²⁷ <http://www.voanews.com/content/militant-attacks-increase-central-mali/2719487.html>

fighting with Syrian rebel groups against the Assad regime.¹²⁸ On April 3, the Tunisian government announced that it had arrested 23 more suspects in the terror attack on the Bardo Museum, bringing the total of suspects in custody to 46.¹²⁹ On April 10, a senior United States defense official announced that the United States would triple military aid to Tunisia as well as help train its troops, in response to the terror attack on the Bardo Museum.¹³⁰

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

- The Al-Andalus media institution, operating on behalf of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, published an audio file titled “Assisting and Strengthening the Lions of Islam in Al-Sham”, by Abu Mus’ab al-Wudud – leader of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. In the audio file, al-Wadud blessed the mujahideen in Syria for their successes in the battlefield against Syrian regime forces. That was despite the attacks by the coalition forces in Syria. In addition, he called upon the mujahideen in Syrian to maintain unity within their ranks, to overcome division and conflict, and to focus on the goal of implementing shari’a.¹³¹



The banner of al-Wudud’s speech

Libya

Ansar Al-Sharia

- The Al-Raya media institution, operating on behalf of Ansar Al-Sharia in Libya, published the following:

¹²⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/02/us-mideast-crisis-syria-tunisia-idUSKBN0MT14420150402>

¹²⁹ <http://www.voanews.com/content/tunisia-arrests-more-suspected-militants-in-bardo-attacks/2705341.html>

¹³⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/10/us-tunisia-us-idUSKBN0N122E20150410>

¹³¹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/showthread.php?t=108122>

- An announcement offering a monetary prize to anyone who succeeded in killing one of the five commanders of the national army. At the top of the list was General Khalifa Hiftar, with 100,000 Libyan dinars (About \$72 thousand American dollars) offered for his head. The list also included commander of the Libyan Air Force - Saqr Al-Geroushi, commander of the Al-Jabal al-Akhdar region – Faraj al-Bar’asi, commander of special forces – Wanis Bukhamada, and the spokesman for Operation Dignity – Muhammad al-Hijazi. The announcement described the men listed above as “tyrants whose heads must be plucked off”, and blamed them for causing harm to every home and family in Libya.¹³²



The wanted list

- A series of images documenting the battles between Ansar Al-Sharia fighters and the supporters of Kiftar Benina in Benghazi.¹³³



An image of an Ansar Al-Sharia fighter

¹³² <http://www.alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/70600/>; <https://twitter.com/alqa3da1/status/588391477547417600>

¹³³ <https://justpaste.it/kcts>; <https://al-fidaa.com/vb>

The Islamic State - Tripoli Province

- The Islamic State in the Tripoli Province published the following:
 - A claim of responsibility for planting bombs that exploded in the Moroccan embassy building in the capital city, Tripoli. News sources reported that there were no casualties in that attack.¹³⁴ At the same time, the IS in Tripoli Province claimed responsibility on Twitter for a shooting attack against the South Korean embassy in Tripoli, in which two people were killed.¹³⁵
 - A video titled “A Message to our Brothers in Tunisia”.¹³⁶ The video featured a fighter from Tunisia named Abu Yahya al-Tunisi, who called upon Muslims in Tunisia to join the jihad in Libya. He promised that they would return to Tunisia as conquerors. In addition, al-Tunisi sent threatening messages to the “tyrants” in Tunisia, and to take revenge on them, in the name of the “brothers in prison and the sisters whose honor was damaged”. The video was transcribed by the Al-Battar media institution.¹³⁷



A call upon Tunisians to join the jihad in Libya

- The Islamic State in Barqa Province published the following:
 - A photo report about the exchange of gunfire between IS fighters and General Khalifa Hiftar near a Libyan Commando Force base.¹³⁸ Another report documented

¹³⁴ <https://twitter.com/shab2ghareeb/status/587635936252526592>;

http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/04/150413_libya_bomb_moroccanembassy

¹³⁵ <https://twitter.com/aboyosefsh1/status/587089311981535232>; <http://www.alyaum.com/article/4060030>

¹³⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6odHFcpRtrU>

¹³⁷ <https://justpaste.it/bttar-tf-msgtunes>

¹³⁸ <https://isdarat.tv/8409>

mortar fire from a SPG-9 Recoiless Gun against one of Hiftar’s tanks in the Al-Laythi district of Benghazi.¹³⁹

- A video documenting a suicide attack carried out in the city of Derna by a fighter named Abu Mus’ab al-Muhajer. In his filmed final statement, the fighter sent threatening messages to the apostates, calling upon all Muslims to lend a hand to the mujahideen, and encouraging the residents of Egypt to renounce democracy and the “tyrannical government”.¹⁴⁰
- A photo report about a Dawa conference in Derna, in eastern Libya. The images documented the audience in attendance at the event, listening to lectures about Dawa and watching Islamic State broadcasts on a huge screen.¹⁴¹

Egypt

Ajnad Misr

- Al-Kinana jihadist media institution, which serves as the media wing for Ajnad Misr, published the following:
 - A video titled “The Roar of Roadside Bombs”. The video documented the Egyptian security forces harassing Egyptian civilians, and included images, names, and descriptions of members of the Egyptian security forces who were killed by IS fighters. In addition, the leader of the organization, Majd al-Din al-Misri, called upon the Muslim Egyptian civilians to maintain their fortitude opposite the brutal and oppressive force used against them by the army and the Egyptian regime, and to respond with an equal show of force to release female Muslim prisoners from Egyptian prisons, due to the desecration of their honor.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ <https://isdarat.tv/8418>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl0GjTy9gDs>

¹⁴¹ <http://goo.gl/ISPnny>

¹⁴² <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>



The video banner

- An announcement containing a eulogy honoring the memory of the organization's leader, Humman Atiyya aka Majd al-Din al-Masri, who was killed by the Egyptian security forces. The organization's Shura Council noted that it had decided to appoint a new leader in Humman's place, named Izz al-Din al-Masri.¹⁴³ In response to the verification of Majd al-Din al-Masri's death, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula published a eulogy (#93) about his death. In addition, the organization called upon Muslims in Egypt to help the mujahideen in Egypt in their war against al-Sisi's regime. Thus, it also strengthened the hands of the mujahideen throughout Egypt, in locations such as Sinai, Alexandria, and Aswan, asking them to be patient until Islamic rule could be implemented on Egyptian land.¹⁴⁴ Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb also published a eulogy in al-Masri's memory, and emphasized his contribution to jihad in Egypt.¹⁴⁵

Nigeria

On April 6, Boko Haram militants dressed as preachers killed at least 24 people and wounded several others after attracting a crowd while preaching about Islam outside of a mosque in the Borno state.¹⁴⁶ On April 9, the United Nations launched an appeal to raise slightly over \$174 million to support refugees who have fled to Chad, Niger and Cameroon to escape from Boko Haram's reign of terror.¹⁴⁷ Finally, On April 13, Amnesty International released a report about Boko Haram which maintained that more than 2,000 women and girls had been abducted by the terrorist organization

¹⁴³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

¹⁴⁴ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

¹⁴⁵ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

¹⁴⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/06/us-nigeria-violence-boko-haram-idUSKBN0MX11420150406>

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.voanews.com/content/reu-un-seeks-funds-to-support-refugees-fleeing-boko-haram/2713149.html>

and that the group had killed approximately 5,500 civilians, all in a single calendar year.¹⁴⁸

Somalia

In the first half of April, clashes continued between Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen and the Somali government and security forces. On April 14, Al-Shabaab fighters attacked a government building in Mogadishu, Somalia's capital city, causing the deaths of seventeen people with a car bomb detonated at the entrance of the building, and by armed fighters who stormed the building and began shooting.¹⁴⁹ Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, the Somali government offered a cash reward for any information about eleven senior members of Al-Shabaab, including the head of the organization – Ahmad Umar Abu Ubaidah.¹⁵¹

Meanwhile, at the beginning of April Al-Shabaab extended its activities to outside of Somalia's borders, to their neighbor in the south-west – Kenya. On April 2, fighters raided the Garissa University in northeast Kenya, killing 148 non-Muslim students and injuring dozens of others, while releasing the Muslim students.¹⁵² Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack, and threatened to carry out more attacks in Kenya due to the country's interference in the war the organization was waging against security forces in Somalia.¹⁵³ In response to the attack, Kenya bombed Al-Shabaab camps in the Gedo region of Somalia,¹⁵⁴ and gave the UN an extension of three months to evacuate the Dabab refugee camp, which housed mostly Somali refugees.¹⁵⁵ This attack against non-Muslims may increase the ethnic tension in Kenya and create a negative attitude towards the Somali refugees there. That, in turn, may in the future lead the Somali refugees in Kenya to identify with Al-Shabaab.¹⁵⁶

Al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen Movement

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/1360/2015/en/>

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32299273>

¹⁵⁰ <http://goo.gl/yjVdZS>

¹⁵¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32242632>

¹⁵² <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/kenya-garissa-university-attack-150402155656780.html>

¹⁵³ <http://goo.gl/uM5SDI>

¹⁵⁴ <http://goo.gl/VOXQn4>

¹⁵⁵ <http://goo.gl/TVjR4T>

¹⁵⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32174235>

- Al-Kataeb media institution, which serves as the media wing for Al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen movement, published the following:
 - A report about the activities in February and March 2015. For example, claiming responsibility for military actions against the Somali security forces, clashes with senior security officials, providing aide to civilians, documentation of the repentance of several Muslims and their alliance with Al-Shabaab, opening an institution for shari'a studies, attack on bases belonging to Ethiopian forces, planting roadside bombs targeting Kenyans in Somali territory, and more.¹⁵⁷
 - An announcement titled "Garissa Attack: Burning Kenya's Hopes", blaming the Kenyan government for the ongoing massacre of tens of thousands of Muslims in East Africa, which began in the past – such as the massacres at Wagalla and Garissa. According to Al-Shabaab, the Kenyan Army practiced systematic elimination of Muslims in Somalia, using different methods. That includes shelling refugee camps, mosques, schools, and more from the air. Therefore, Al-Shabaab promised to carry out revenge attacks, and threatened to carry out attacks against Kenyan civilians, claiming that they bear the responsibility for the killing of Muslims – because they elected the government that persecutes the Muslims. At the end of the announcement, Al-Shabaab addressed the Kenyan government and emphasized that civilian blood will be spilled.¹⁵⁸
 - Two videos called "From Memory" – parts 3 and 4. The first video focused on three members of the organization who carried out a suicide attack against Somali security forces in Mogadishu four years ago. The video began with footage of training the fighters underwent, and continued with interviews of all three about the importance of fulfilling the commandments of jihad, of battling enemies of Islam, and so forth.¹⁵⁹ The second video also focused on interviews with three members of the organization who were killed by enemy gunfire several years ago.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ <https://alfidaa.org/vb/>

¹⁵⁸ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

¹⁵⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

¹⁶⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb/>

Al-Muhajiroun in East Africa

- The al-Muhajiroun organization in East Africa, affiliated with Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen, published a video in Swahili titled "An Important Statement about Jihad in East Africa". Organization fighters threatened to carry out a wave of attacks in East African lands: "Together with our brothers in Al-Shabaab [Al-Mujahideen] and Al-Qaeda we will re-draw the map of East Africa." They emphasized that their goal was to implement shari'a law in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. "The maps drawn by the Colonialists will be void from now on. Countries like Kenya and Tanzania will fall." In another video, the organization's Emir, Khalid Abu Izzadeen, pledged allegiance to the leader of Al-Qaeda.¹⁶¹



Footage from the video

Iran

Ansar Al-Furqan

- The Al-Faruq media institution, which serves as the media wing of Ansar Al-Furqan, a Baluchi Salafi jihadist organization published the following:

¹⁶¹ https://twitter.com/al_muhajiroun

- A statement about the capture of eight Iranian soldiers from among the Basij forces and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, on April 3, 2015. The organization added that because of the clashes between its fighters and the Iranian security forces, one fighter was killed. The number of Iranian injured and killed was not known because they were evacuated by helicopter.¹⁶²
- A short report about the organization's principles of faith. For example, it was written "the group is Sunni, fighting for the sake of raising the flag sanctifying God and the shari'a laws. The organization is composed to two smaller groups – Al-Ansar and the Al-Furqan party. The Al-Furqan party is considered to be the oldest Sunni group battling in Baluchistan, and was established in 1995, who serves today as Ansar Al-Furqan's Emir." It was also written that the group was active in the Baluchistan mountain areas near Iran, and was advancing deep into Iranian territory in an attempt to strike the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, the Basij forces, and the cities and economic centers. However, it avoided attacking mosques, Shi'ite prayer sites, and market places, including the Sunnis in those areas. In conclusion, it was written that its first public appearance was in November 2012 when its official spokesperson – Abu Hafs al-Balushi – was interviewed by the Al-Wisal channel about jihad against the Iranian regime.¹⁶³

The West

- Sheikh Anjem Choudary, who preaches about radical Islam in English, continued to publish controversial text messages in his Twitter account. During the first half of April 2015, Choudary published various tweets, such as: a campaign decouncing the participation of Muslims in the democratic elections in Britian – under the hashtag #StayMuslimDontVote, including images of a protest about that issue in the streets of London and arguments in favour of implementing shari'a law in Britain.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

¹⁶³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>

¹⁶⁴ <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/>



Selected tweets from Choudary's Twitter account¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/status/578437996338348033>;
<https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/status/578804423515844608>

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