



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

ICT Jihadi Monitoring Group **PERIODIC REVIEW**

Bimonthly Report

Summary of Information on Jihadist Websites The Second Half of December 2014

Highlights

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

- Omar Mansoor, a senior member of the Taliban in Pakistan, justifies attacks on relatives, including children, of Pakistani soldiers in revenge for killing members of the organization. His position on the matter is published following the massacre that members of the organization carried out in a school in Peshawar.
- Members of the Islamic State publish photos of a Jordanian pilot who they captured after they managed to shoot down his plane, according to their claim. The magazine, *Dabiq*, which is produced by the Islamic State, publishes an interview with the Jordanian pilot regarding the types of planes being used by coalition forces in their battle against members of the Islamic State, American assistance received by the Arab countries fighting this battle, and the circumstances surrounding the pilot's capture.
- Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula publishes a new edition of the magazine, *Inspire*, calling on Muslims, especially in the United States, to carry out individual, "lone wolf" attacks in their native lands, mainly against American, British and French economic targets and aircraft. In addition, the magazine provides an explanation on how to build a "hidden bomb" and how to overcome security checks in airports.
- Members of the Islamic State threaten to attack members of the Tunisian leadership and army for deviating from Islam and failing to implement shari'a, and they call on Tunisian citizens not to take part in the country's elections.
- Sheikh Muhammad Abu Uthman al- Ghimarawi, the kadi (judge) appointed to Dagestan Province, issues a scathing criticism of all those who swore allegiance to the caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and describes the Islamic Caliphate as an illegal entity established in sin.
- Members of the Islamic State increase their PR activities with official publications and posts on social networks against France, and call on its citizens to carry out terrorist attacks on French soil due to France's hostile attitude towards Islam.

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New Publications

Ideology

- During the second half of December 2014, the Al-Malahem jihadist media institution, which serves a platform for the official announcements of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), published six videos in the framework of a new series of publications titled, “Laws of the Emirate” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nadhari, a senior member of the organization’s Shura Council. In the series, al-Nadhari discussed the conditions for establishing an emirate, the obligations of the emir, Shura laws, and more.¹

The Rift between Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State

- The Al-‘Awali jihadist media institution, which is involved in advocacy for the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, published a propaganda video against the Islamic State (IS) and its jihadist media institution, Al-Furqan, titled, “Exposing the Lie of the Al-Furqan [Media] Institution”. The video described members of the IS as gang members serving Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi who are motivated by personal interests and act contrary to the principles of Islam.²
- Abu Mariya al-Qahtani, a senior member of the Shura Council of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, gave several reasons for why members of the IS are considered Khawarij, an ancient sect that split from Islam in the 7th century and since became a derogatory name used by deviant groups seeking to achieve their objectives through violence. According to him, members of the IS are hindering the efforts of the mujahideen in Syria to topple the Alawite regime.³

Strategy

- The Al-Malahem jihadist media institution, which serves a platform for the official announcements of AQAP, published a video titled, “Battling Camera [Fitted] Spy Planes”.⁴ Under the title, “Raising Security Awareness – Warfare against Spy Planes”, it described methods of hiding from and avoiding the cameras installed on these planes. Among the methods presented

¹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

² <https://twitter.com/alawalee5/status/546660891618713601> (Arabic).

³ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

in the video: the use of insulated material covering to prevent thermographic photography, and the use of materials and colors to camouflage people and vehicles.⁵



A clip from the video

“Lone Wolves”

- The “Media Front for Assistance for the Islamic State”, “Al-Battar” and “Sariyyat al-Malhama” jihadist media institutions, which publish propaganda materials for the IS, published an article titled, “The Army of the State and Lone Wolves” by an author named “Turkestan 1”. According to the author, the article was written as a result of discussions with his brothers-in-arms on Twitter regarding the effectiveness of individual, or lone wolf, attacks against infidels as a fighting method. He noted that the IS enjoys a strong flow of manpower to its ranks and that it is capable of opening new battlefronts. Nevertheless, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, spokesman for the organization, called on Muslims who are unable to join the jihad fronts to carry out individual attacks by stabbing people with knives, running them over with cars, throwing stones, burning their houses, etc. He emphasized that this declaration begins a new war in the interest of the IS, outside of its territory but brought about through its soldiers. Finally, the author noted that the IS relies on two tactics –armies and lone wolves.⁶

⁵ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶ <http://justpaste.it/ig7c> (Arabic).



The article banner

- A visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum called on Muslims around the world to launch a wave of individual, “lone wolf” style, attacks in revenge for debasing the dignity of Muslims, denying their freedom and more. In addition, the visitor posted photos of two soldiers in France who were stabbed by a Muslim who he described as a “lone wolf” as an example of individual attacks against security forces and non-Muslim civilians. Finally, the visitor asked that his words be spread among the enemies of Islam via email and Twitter, and among hotels and churches in Europe and Canada.⁷

Guidebooks and Instruction Pamphlets

- A visitor to the Al-Jihad al-Alami jihadist Web forum published a video in Arabic explaining how to produce C4 explosives.⁸
- One of the administrators of the Al-Minbar al-'Ilami jihadist Web forum published a document titled, “General Principles of Conventional Warfare” by Naval Officer Sharif Sukri Yunes. The document reviewed various principles, such as fighting strategy, the element of surprise, camouflage, etc.⁹
- A visitor to the Al-Jihad al-Alami jihadist Web forum published a collection of various military materials relevant to the world of jihad: military encyclopedias written by Salafist sheikhs, a guide to building a remote-controlled bomb, etc.¹⁰

⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

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

¹⁰ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- The media institution of the IS in Baghdad published the recorded will of a suicide terrorist known as Abu Abdullah al-Hulandi. Incorporating verses from the Quran, al-Hulandi appealed to Muslims in Holland and called on them to perform hijra and join the ranks of the IS. One slide that appeared at the end of the video stated that al-Hulandi had carried out a suicide attack by detonating an explosives belt in a gathering of police forces, killing two commanders and dozens of police officers.¹¹



A call on Muslims in Holland to join the IS

- A visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum published a two-part biography of the martyr, Abu Yasir al-Wali, a senior AQAP commander. The biography itself was highlighted by the forum administrators.¹²



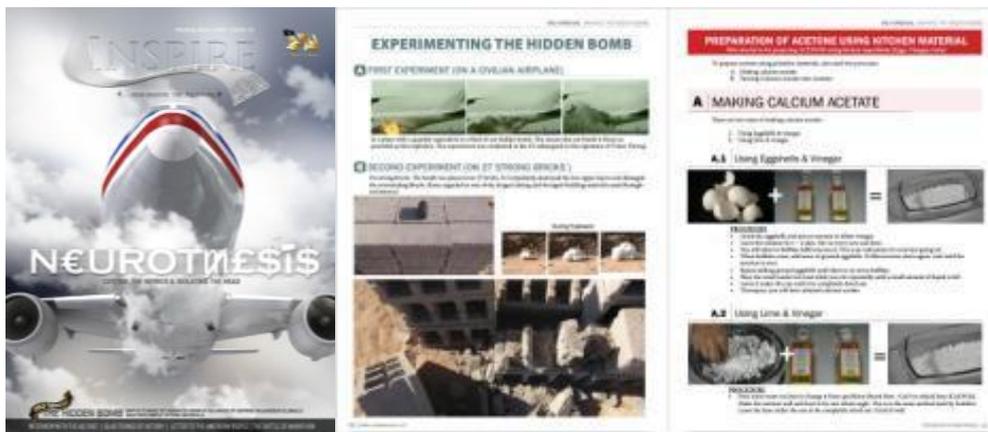
Photos of Abu Yasir al-Wali

¹¹ <https://isdarat.org/?p=2369> (Arabic).

¹² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

Magazines

- AQAP published issue no. 13 of *INSPIRE* magazine (57 pp.). The main articles in the issue detailed a strategy for defeating the US by carrying out attacks against American military technology, manpower, media and economy while encouraging “lone wolf” attacks and “open source jihad”. Among other things, the magazine explained how to cope with security checks and how to prepare a “hidden bomb”. In addition, it mentioned the names of American, British and French airline companies on which to focus attacks.¹³

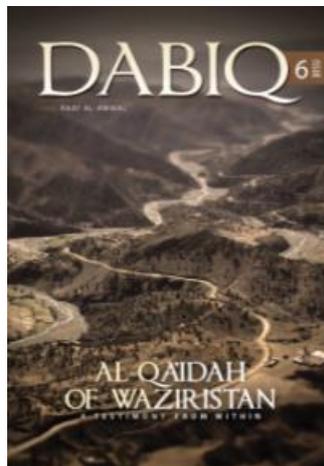


From left to right: the banner of the issue; detailed instructions for preparing a “hidden bomb” in issue no. 13 of *INSPIRE* magazine

- The Al-Hayat jihadist media institution, which belongs to the Islamic State’s communications department, published issue no. 6 of the magazine, *Dabiq* (63 pp.). The issue opened with praises for all individual terrorists who act in the name of the IS in the West, including Man Haron Monis who took hostages at a coffee shop in Sydney, and Bertrand Nzohabonayo who carried out a stabbing attack at a police station in France. Among the articles published in the issue: 31 tips for IS fighters on how to conduct themselves in the field, such as avoiding idleness and investing energy in the battle; criticism for the negative attitude displayed by AQAP towards the IS; IS operations in its various provinces; an interview with the captive Jordanian pilot; jihad experiences from Waziristan accompanied by criticism of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in

¹³ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

Afghanistan; an article by John Cantlie, the captive American journalist, about the production of new coins by the IS and the need to weaken the US economy in order to curb its power.¹⁴



The issue banner

- Issues no. 32-33 of the magazine, *Al-Naba*, were published by the Islamic State.¹⁵



The issue banner

- An anonymous visitor announced the launch of the first issue of a new jihadist magazine called Al-Sidiq, to focus on issues concerning Sunnis in Lebanon and news about mujahideen around the world. The issue was viewable through an installation file on the computer,¹⁶ and seemed to be an amateur version.

¹⁴ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁵ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁶ <http://justpaste.it/AlSeddik>



The issue banner

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

On December 16, 2014 one of the largest terrorist attacks ever carried out by the Taliban in Pakistan took place. Armed Taliban militants attacked a school belonging to the Pakistani army in Peshawar and carried out a mass slaughter of students and teachers. 141 people were killed in the attack, including 132 children. A Taliban spokesman declared that the attack was in response to the army's activities against the organization. Many condemned the attack, from the President of the United States, Barak Obama, to the Taliban in Afghanistan.¹⁷

On December 17, 2014 four members of the Taliban in Pakistan were killed in an American drone strike in Afghanistan.¹⁸ Several days later, the US released four Afghani prisoners from Guantanamo Prison. The four were returned to Afghanistan and, according to claims against the US, had been subjected to torture in prison.¹⁹

On December 31, 2014 at least 26 Afghani civilians were killed by a rocket that struck a house where a wedding was being held in Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan. The attack was carried out in the framework of gun battle between Afghani soldiers and the Taliban.²⁰

The Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan (Taliban in Afghanistan)

- Zabihullah Mujahid, spokesman for the Taliban in Afghanistan, published a statement condemning the attack carried out by the Taliban in Pakistan (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) at a

¹⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-30491435> (English).

¹⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/17/us-afghanistan-security-idUSKBN0JV0G720141217> (English).

¹⁹ <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/12/20/afghan-guantanamorelease.html>

²⁰ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/12/dozens-killed-as-afghan-wedding-hit-rocket-2014123123324221261.html> (Arabic).

school in Peshawar, in which over 200 people were killed and injured, including 132 children. In the framework of the statement, the spokesman expressed condolences to the families of the victims and emphasized that the killing of innocents goes against the values of Islam.²¹

- The Taliban in Afghanistan published an announcement regarding the expected evacuation of foreign forces from the country. In the announcement, the organization emphasized that the withdrawal must be complete without leaving any remnant of a foreign presence, and it stressed the loss of life and property caused to the US as a result of its interference in Afghanistan. The announcement ended with an assurance that the end of the foreign occupation would also lead to the end of security instability in the country.²²

The Taliban in Pakistan

- The jihadist media institution of the Taliban in Pakistan (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan), Mehsud, published a video containing a threat by Umar Mansoor, a senior military commander in the organization, against the Pakistani regime and army. According to him, his organization is not willing to accept the oppressive policies and systematic killing carried out by the Pakistani army against civilians, prisoners and mujahideen. He promised that “if our women and children are killed as martyrs, your children will not escape” and threatened to carry out terrorist attacks against members of the regime and army, as well as their family members.²³ The video was published following the massacre at a school in Peshawar and was intended to justify the attack.

In response, Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent published a statement condemning the massacre and emphasized that it was a blatant transgression of the principles of Islam. Visitors to the Al-Fidaa jihadist Web forum and social networks emphasized that it would have been better had the Taliban in Afghanistan published a condemnation of the incident.²⁴

²¹ <http://goo.gl/GCtsEO>

²² <http://goo.gl/30SaZh>

²³ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

²⁴ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic); https://twitter.com/Adaam_shiech/status/546320569738985472



Umar Mansoor

The Arabian Peninsula

The civil war continued to unfold in Yemen. It was obvious that the Houthis' deepened hold on the country served to strengthen the resolve of Sunni tribes in opposing them and taking steps to push them out of central cities. In Al-Baydha Province, for example, clashes were noted between the Houthis' popular committees, and Sunni tribes and Al-Qaeda. Ansar al-Sharia, which is affiliated with AQAP, increased its operations against the Houthis and claimed responsibility for a series of attacks against them, including two car bomb explosions in Al-Hudayda in western Yemen – a city taken over by the Houthis at the end of September 2014 - as a result of which 26 people were killed²⁵, and an ambush on Houthis in Arhab in northern Sana'a.²⁶ At the same time, the organization also focused efforts on attacking security forces in the country. For example, ten army personnel were killed by a roadside charge planted by members of the organization.²⁷

Meanwhile, the Houthis continued to concentrate efforts on strengthening their hold on the country by, among other things, expelling forces that could threaten their control. For instance, they arrested senior commanders in the Yemeni army and placed them under house arrest, took control of important army bases, and kidnapped the head of internal intelligence in the political security system, Yahya al-Marani, who had previously served as an intelligence officer in Sada'a Province,

²⁵ <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2014/12/18/> اليمن-قتلى-وجرحى-في-هجومين-يسيارتين-/- (Arabic). [مفختين-استهدفتا-الحوثيين.html](http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2014/12/18/)

²⁶ <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2014/12/26/> اليمن-مقتل-20-حوثيا-بكمين-نصبته-القاعدة-في-/- (Arabic). [أرحب.html](http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2014/12/26/)

²⁷ <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2014/12/25/> اليمن-الحوثيون-يخطفون-مسؤول-أمني-بارز-في-/- (Arabic). [صنعاء.html](http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2014/12/25/)

the Houthi center.²⁸

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- The jihadist media institution of AQAP, Al-Malahem, published the following:
 - A video titled, “The Shari’a War and the Sacrifice of Commanders – Part I”. The video included biographies of several leaders of Ansar al-Sharia, which is affiliated with AQAP, in the area of Rada, including: Sheikh Tariq, Nabil al-Dhab, Abu Osama al-Maribi and Shawqi al-Badani.²⁹



The video banner

- A propaganda video against Houthis in Yemen. The first part of the video included testimony by Yemeni Sunni civilians who spoke of how they had been harmed by the Houthis, and which portrayed the Houthis as allies of the United States. The second part of the video documented two suicide attacks that were carried out in September against Houthi army camps in Sada’a and Ma’rib Provinces.³⁰

²⁸ <http://www.breakingnews.com/item/2014/12/25/al-arabiya-reports-houthis-rebel-group-has-kidnapp/> (English).

²⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³⁰ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).



Computerized simulation of an attack against a Houthi army base in Yemen

- A claim of responsibility for the firing of two Katyusha rockets at a gas production facility in Shabwah Province in Yemen owned by the French company, “Total”. In the framework of the announcement, the organization called on Muslims working at the company to stay away from its facilities since they are considered legitimate targets for attack due to France’s involvement in the “global Crusader attack” against Islam.³¹

Miscellaneous

- The Al-Raya jihadist media institution of the “Army of the Salafist Nation in Jerusalem”, a Palestinian Salafist organization, published a eulogy for Sheikh Muhammad bin Sa’ad Aal Mufrah, Secretary-General of the Al-Umma party and the prominent leader of the opposition to the Saudi regime. According to the organization, Aal Mufrah earned a distinguished reputation thanks to his support for the oppressed and despondent, which he expressed through public diplomacy and financial support. It also stated that Aal Mufrah was forced to travel to Istanbul, Turkey, for medical care but was killed in one of the hospitals there by intelligence agents. In addition, the organization praised the activities of members of the Al-Umma party.³²

Aal Mufrah, a known Saudi businessman, established the Umma party in 2011 together with Saudi academics and religious figures. The party itself seeks to dismantle the Saudi royal regime, resume the process of reforms, involve the nation in the election and supervision of its

³¹ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

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

representatives, and grant pardons to political prisoners, reformists and members of the opposition held in Saudi jails.



Sheikh Muhammad bin Sa'ad Aal Mufrah

Iraq

Western and Arab states continued to send assistance to Iraq in its fight against the IS. The Pentagon decided to send 1,300 additional soldiers to Iraq,³³ Britain and Germany promised to send hundreds of soldiers to train Iraqi and Kurdish forces in the country,³⁴ and Jordan also declared that it would help with similar military training.³⁵ In addition, Turkey announced that it would collaborate with Iraq in its war against the organization. In a joint press conference, the heads of government of both countries promised to share intelligence information and to carry out joint military exercises.³⁶

Iran also addressed events in Iraq and sent threats through official parties. The Iranian Minister of Defense declared that Iran would invade Iraq by air and ground should the IS strike sites in Iraq that are holy to Shi'ites.³⁷

In addition to the promise of assistance, coalition forces continued to carry out dozens of air strikes on a daily basis. The air strikes were carried out in the areas of Sinjar, Tal Afar, Ramadi and

³³ <http://goo.gl/yytx8B>

³⁴ <http://goo.gl/Fo5BB4>

³⁵ <http://goo.gl/gjJ46C>

³⁶ <http://goo.gl/trhcqR>

³⁷ <http://www.elfagr.org/758845>

Mosul, among others, and at the Al-Asad Airbase.³⁸ The IS suffered a heavy blow when its deputy leader, Abu Muslim al-Turkmani, was killed in one of the attacks.³⁹

Meanwhile, Iraqi forces managed to retake control of the city of Dhuluiya, located north of Baghdad. This achievement came while battles continued in the city of Sinjar between Kurdish and Yezidi militias, and IS fighters.⁴⁰ Even in the Al-Baghdadi district of Al-Anbar Province in western Iraq, the army successfully repelled an attack by the IS, according to a security source.⁴¹

The Islamic State

- The Al-I'tisam jihadist media institution, which serves the IS, published a video titled, “The Resistance of the Lions” regarding IS operations in Sinjar, in northwest Iraq, in response to news reports of its retreat from the area. The video documented an operation against bases belonging to Peshmerga and Kurdish PKK forces in the area, which included intelligence-collecting using skimmers, shooting rockets to “soften targets” and using a suicide terrorist in an explosives-laden truck. The second part of the video documented the execution of three Peshmerga fighters who were captured in Sinjar.⁴²



Three Peshmerga fighters before their execution

³⁸ <http://goo.gl/WHxE22>

³⁹ <http://goo.gl/cCQ3UG>

⁴⁰ <http://goo.gl/LjpTqP>

⁴¹ <http://onaeg.com/?p=2098540>

⁴² http://minbar-alansar.blogspot.com/2014/12/blog-post_59.html

- A new (unofficial) Web site was created in order to display all of the Islamic State’s videotaped publications. The site is called “Isdarat Tube” and its address is: <https://isdarat-tube.com>.⁴³

The Islamic State – Al-Anbar Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Anbar Province published the following:
 - A filmed review of a raid by IS fighters on two security forces’ positions near the Syrian border, in Al-Rutba in the western part of the province. The video documented the attack on the two positions, their destruction and the plunder of weapons and ammunition. The attack was presented as another step in the destruction of “imaginary borders” between countries.⁴⁴
 - A filmed review of an attack against Iraqi army positions in Al-Baghdadi in the eastern part of the province.⁴⁵
 - A report about an attack that its members carried out near the Jordanian border. The attack caused the infidels to flee from their positions, and then IS fighters blew up the stations and took control of houses in the area.⁴⁶

The Islamic State – Kirkuk Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Kirkuk Province published the following:
 - A video documenting a raid on an Iraqi army post in the province. Following an impassioned speech given by the commander of the operation, fighters attacked the post with gunfire and grenades, and then set alight the bodies of the soldiers who had been killed.⁴⁷
 - A filmed review of dawah activities in villages in the province aimed at raising awareness of the values of Islam and the Muslim faith by distributing pamphlets on the topic.⁴⁸
 - A report on the production of a new rocket called the “Zilzal” (literally: “earthquake”).⁴⁹

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

⁴⁴ <http://alkhlafa.com/?p=249> (Arabic).

⁴⁵ <http://alkhlafa.com/?p=436> (Arabic).

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

⁴⁷ <https://archive.org/details/w.karkuk.eqteham.thakna.original.quality>

⁴⁸ <http://alkhlafa.com/?p=381> (Arabic).



The new “Zilzal” rocket

The Islamic State – Saladin Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Saladin Province published the following:
 - A video titled, “Message from Abd al-Halim al-Shishani”. After a discussion of the background of Muslims in the Caucasus, a fighter of Chechen origin told of his experiences since joining the IS. Among other things, al-Shishani lifted the spirits of the mujahideen, said that 200-300 new fighters arrive each day to one of the IS camps in the border area, and made threats against the “tyrants” and the Shi’ites. Al-Shishani directed his final message to Muslims in the West who he encouraged to carry out attacks in Europe and the United States.⁵⁰



The video banner showing a photo of al-Shishani

- A statement reporting an attack carried out by the martyr, Abdallah Al-Karghizi, who detonated a car bomb laden with one-and-a-half tons of explosives inside the police

⁴⁹ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁰ <https://isdarat.org/?p=1732> (Arabic).

headquarters in Banat Al-Hassan. Dozens of people were killed and injured in the attack.⁵¹

The Islamic State – Diyala Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Diyala Province published the following:
 - A video titled, “Tears of Fire” that showed five IS fighters, four of whom were wearing explosive vests. One of the fighters, known as Ammara, made a speech in which he threatened Shi’ites in general and Iran in particular. At the end, Ammara burst into tears, expressed his loyalty to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and promised that suicide attacks would be carried out against “the enemies of Allah”.⁵²



“Tears of Fire” – threats against Shi’ites from Diyala Province

- A claim of responsibility for the killing of senior Iraqi intelligence official, Qahtan al-Aqidi, who oversaw the intelligence operations of several provinces. The assassination was carried out following continued surveillance of al-Aqidi from Diyala Province to his office in Baghdad on December 18, 2014.⁵³

The Islamic State – Al-Furat Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Furat Province published the following:

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

⁵² <https://isdarat.org/?p=1991> (Arabic).

⁵³ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- A filmed review of the “repentance” of a group of Al-Nusra Front activists who swore allegiance to the IS.⁵⁴

The Islamic State – The Southern Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in the Southern Province published the following:
 - A statement regarding an attack that one of its members carried out against regime officials. The suicide terrorist detonated himself with an explosive vest next to a government office at a time when government officials were waiting in line to receive their salaries.⁵⁵

Al-Sham [The Levant]

Syria

The month of December marked the end of a year in which the IS both gained victories and suffered defeats. According to a report by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), over 1,000 IS fighters have been killed in coalition attacks since the end of September 2014.⁵⁶ On the other hand, the same source reported that the IS had executed approximately 2,000 people in the past six months.⁵⁷

In addition to the reports on damage caused to the organization, the American intelligence agency published an estimate according to which approximately 12,000 foreign fighters from 81 different countries were arriving to take part in the battle in Syria, especially among the ranks of the IS. According to the report, over 1,000 foreign fighters arrive in Syria each month, most of them coming from Tunisia.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, despite the chaos prevailing in the country, Syria expressed its willingness to participate in a “preliminary consultation meeting” in Moscow aimed at renewing peace talks and reaching a solution to the crisis in Syria.⁵⁹ This step was supported by the US, which expressed hope

⁵⁴ <https://isdarat.org/?p=2220>

⁵⁵ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/12/141223_syria_coalition_isis_thousand_killed (Arabic).

⁵⁷ <http://goo.gl/5e9J8d>

⁵⁸ <http://goo.gl/Z2lF3J>

⁵⁹ <http://almasdaronline.com/article/65858> (Arabic).

for Russia's active involvement in the attempt to reach a political solution.⁶⁰ Despite its declaration, the Syrian regime continued to carry out air strikes using explosive barrels. According to reports by members of the opposition, dozens of people were killed and injured in attacks in Deir Ezzor, Idlib and Homs.⁶¹

The plight of civilians in Syria continued to be of concern to the international community. With the civil war in Syria reaching its fourth year, a Syrian human rights organization published data according to which approximately 40,000 people were killed in Syria in 2014.⁶² According to UN estimates, almost nine billion dollars will be needed in order to help the 18 million people in Syria in 2015.⁶³

The Al-Nusra Front in Syria

- During the second half of December 2014, the jihadist media institution of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manara Al-Bayda, published the following:
 - A speech by one of the organization's sheikhs, Abu Abdullah al-Shami, in honor of the "liberation of the Wadi al-Dayf camp", a strategic army base in Reef Idlib that was captured by the Al-Nusra Front on December 15, 2014. In a short speech that he gave with his face blurred, al-Shami blessed the mujahideen and Muslims in Idlib Province on their "mighty victory" and eulogized Al-Nusra Front fighters who were killed in battle.⁶⁴
 - A speech against the Hazzm Movement, a group of Syrian rebels that it accused of having relations with the US. Among other things, the Al-Nusra Front denied accusations according to which it had attacked Hazzm Movement barriers but it vowed to continue its attacks against Alawites and their allies.⁶⁵
 - A statement concerning recent events in Daraa. According to the statement, members of the "Yarmouk Martyrs' Brigade" kidnapped a woman and three men from the Al-Nusra Front and even swore allegiance to the IS. The statement referred to the IS as Khawarej

⁶⁰ <http://goo.gl/Ytp6TL>

⁶¹ <http://m.skynewsarabia.com/#!/web/article/709895>

⁶² <http://goo.gl/3vQx6R>

⁶³ <http://goo.gl/QgFW1A>

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

⁶⁵ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

– a derogatory term for Muslims who deviated from the correct path and are, therefore, condemned by Islam. Since the kidnappers refused to resolve the conflict in a shari’a court, the Al-Nusra Front was forced to fight back and is obligated by any decision made by the shari’a court.⁶⁶

- The wording of the proposed initiative between the organization and the “Yarmouk Martyrs’ Brigade”. The proposal included reciprocal prisoner exchanges between the organizations, the establishment of a shari’a council to find a long-term solution to the conflicts, and the placement of a barrier in the area between the two organizations.⁶⁷
- An announcement stating that various organizations interested in hindering its Islamic plans were continuously trying to harm members of the organization, and recently even succeeded in kidnapping several members of the Al-Nusra Front’s medical team in the Urum al-Kubra village in northwest Syria. Therefore, the Al-Nusra Front clarified that it would not allow anyone to attack its members, and would chase them down and bring them to justice. The organization’s fighters should know that they have support and will not be abandoned.⁶⁸
- A claim of responsibility for an attack that its members carried out in Yarmouk against the Syrian regime after the latter blocked the supply of food to the province. Al-Nusra Front fighters attacked two regime strongholds using small-arms and even managed to return from the battle unscathed.⁶⁹
- The Du’ah al-Jihad Center (“Center for Callers of Jihad”), which is affiliated with the Al-Nusra Front, announced the opening of the fifth cycle of jihad training for children. In the framework of the training, the children were taught Islamic law, small-arms and heavy weaponry use, protection for their leaders and themselves, and more.⁷⁰ In addition, the center announced the opening of the al-Izz bin ‘Abd al-Salam Institute for shari’a instruction.⁷¹

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

⁶⁷ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁸ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁹ <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁰ https://twitter.com/al3aren_3/status/549165938676088833 (Arabic).

⁷¹ https://justpaste.it/mujahed_lens1 (Arabic).



**From left to right: shari'a studies being taught at the al-Izz bin 'Abd al-Salam Institute;
a flyer about the opening of the fifth cycle of jihad training for children**

- The administration of the 'Arin al-Mujahideen ("Lion's Den) jihadist Web forum, which serves as a platform for the Al-Nusra Front's official publications, published a video containing an interview with members of the Al-Nusra Front in Al-Sahil in Syria on the topic of PR in the world of jihad titled, "The Jihadist Media: Its Challenges and the Importance of its Development". In the beginning of the video, the interviewer explained the importance of PR, which he presented as a weapon of no less importance than material weapons in light of the media campaign being waged against Islam.

Later in the video, permission to speak was given to one of the representatives of the 'Arin al-Mujahideen forum who reviewed the history of jihadist PR since the year 2000. According to the representative, in 2001, influenced by the events of September 11, the Internet started to serve as the central arena for jihadist PR and media, and saw the growth of jihadist Web forums that greatly influenced Muslim youth. Nevertheless, these forums began to undergo a fundamental change with the occupation of Iraq as jihadist organizations in Iraq, and especially Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, began to use these forums as a central tool for publicizing their official statements and announcements. The speaker explained that the use of these forums for the distribution of official publications drew the attention of various intelligence agencies, governments and media agencies around the world. When they realized that repeated attempts to bring down jihadist Web forums were unsuccessful, these agencies intervened and initiated a change in these forums: forums were no longer open to all Muslims but rather they became closed forums in which one needed a recommendation in order to become a member and view their content. In this way, those agencies managed to alienate Muslims from jihad, and turned

Western and Arab media outlets into the only source of information about jihad and the mujahideen for the average Muslim civilian. According to the forum representative, the years 2001-2005 were the “Golden Age” for jihadist PR during which jihadist thought was spread among all Muslims.

Another problem addressed by the speaker in the context of jihad in the electronic arena is the directing of curses and accusations against well-known sheikhs and other jihad figures by anonymous online figures claiming – sometimes falsely – to belong to certain groups, thereby fanning the flames of conflict among mujahideen factions. The speaker concluded that PR and the media are a double-edged sword, the misuse of which can be harmful to the mujahideen.

In the last part of the video, the speaker listed several rules to enable the proper management of jihadist PR on the Internet:

1. The forum should be left open for all Muslims to enter and subscribe to whenever they wish.
2. Forums should be used as a tool for transmitting publications and statements among members, but the forum must not be used as the official mouthpiece of any one jihadist organization.
3. Encryption software should be installed in order to protect the forum’s users, they should not be required to enter a valid email address (which could cause them to be tracked), and the storage of personal or confidential information on the site should be avoided so that important information will not be revealed if the site is breached.

The speaker concluded with the hope that jihadist PR will succeed in influencing each and every Muslim around the world.⁷²

⁷² https://twitter.com/al3aren_3/status/546409774020296704 (Arabic).



Representatives of the ‘Arin al-Mujahideen jihadist Web forum and members of the Al-Nusra Front

- The administration of the ‘Arin al-Mujahideen (“Lion’s Den) jihadist Web forum, which serves as a platform for the Al-Nusra Front’s official publications, welcomed the joining of the “Mujahideen Army”, a Salafi-jihadist organization in Iraq, to the forum.⁷³



The logo of the “Mujahideen Army”

The Islamic State – Aleppo

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Aleppo published the following:
 - A filmed review of dozens of operatives from Jaysh al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar and the Green Brigade who swore allegiance to the IS.⁷⁴

⁷³ https://twitter.com/al3aren_3/status/540153302743527424 (Arabic).

⁷⁴ <http://alkhlafa.com/?p=533> (Arabic).



Oath of allegiance to the IS

- A document titled, “Declaration of Punishments” regarding the punishment for various transgressions. For example, a person who curses the Prophet Muhammad is executed even if he retracts it; the punishment for adultery is death by stoning; the punishment for theft is having one’s hand cut off; the punishment for drinking wine is 80 lashes; and the punishment for spying for the infidels is execution.⁷⁵
- A statement regarding attacks that were carried out by its members in the province. According to the statement, in response to the mass slaughter of Muslims being carried out by the infidel regime in Aleppo, aided by aerial forces, members of the organization had attacked the homes of officers in the province using Grad rockets and mortar bombs. In addition, IS fighters invaded the city of Al-Subaihiyya, which is considered to be a stronghold of the Shabiha and Assad supporters, killing many of them and plundering their military supplies.⁷⁶

The Islamic State - Al-Raqqah Province

- The media wing of the Islamic State in Al-Raqqah Province published the following:
 - A. A report of the successful downing of a Jordanian plane and the capture of its pilot, Moath al-Kasasbeh. In an interview given by the captive Jordanian pilot to *Dabiq* magazine, which is produced by the IS, he discussed the offensive campaign waged by coalition fighter planes against the IS and the US support to Arab countries in these attacks. For example, he noted that Arab countries participating in the offensive,

⁷⁵ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁶ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

including Jordan, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Amman, are provided with F-15 and F-16 fighter planes. He also noted that there are American bases in Qatar that are considered the planning center for aerial strikes. In addition, he told how he was captured by members of the IS.⁷⁷



Photos published by the IS in Al-Raqqah of the Jordanian pilot captured by its fighters

- A video regarding the exposure of a radical cell that was planning a coup against the IS in Syria. The video showed four Russian and Turkish speaking activists who apparently confessed to accusing the IS, and Muslims in general, of heresy and to planning to assassinate emirs, sheikhs and security officials belonging to the organization. The fate of the four men was not mentioned but it the end of the video hinted that they were executed.⁷⁸



A group of activists accused of planning a coup against the IS

⁷⁷ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb>; <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (both in Arabic).

⁷⁸ <https://isdarat.org/?p=1965> (Arabic).

- A video documenting the activities of Hisba (an Islamic body responsible for maintaining public order) officials, including the destruction of cigarettes, drugs, alcohol and expired products.⁷⁹

The Islamic State – Al-Baraka (Al-Hasaka) Province

- The media wing of the IS in Al-Hasaka Province (referred to by the organization as Al-Baraka Province) published the following:
 - A filmed review of the organization taking control of the southern entrance to the city of Qamishli near the border with Turkey. According to the filmed review, IS fighters managed to conquer two villages south of the city, kill many fighters from the Kurdish PKK and YPG militias, and plunder weapons and vehicles.⁸⁰

The Islamic State – Damascus

- The media wing of the IS in Damascus published the following:
 - A filmed review of restoration and rehabilitation activities in southern Damascus. In the filmed review, members of the organization were shown erasing graffiti from walls, fixing buildings damaged in regime bombings, trimming trees and providing water to residents in the area.⁸¹

Other jihadist organizations

- The Ansar al-Din Front, an umbrella organization that was established in July 2014 and merges several small jihadist organizations operating in Syria, published a statement addressed to the Muslim Nation. According to the statement, the Syrian army – aided by Iranian elements – has recently carried out severe attacks against Muslims in the city of Aleppo while the world watches and remains silent. The statement emphasized that Aleppo faces real danger and that the Ansar al-Din Front will do everything in its power in order to protect Muslims in the city.⁸²

⁷⁹ <http://goo.gl/kAAuL7>

⁸⁰ <http://alkhlafa.com/?p=306> (Arabic).

⁸¹ <http://alkhlafa.com/?p=352> (Arabic).

⁸² <http://www.shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

- On December 25, 2014 the establishment of a new umbrella organization called “Al-Jabha al-Shamiyya” was announced. Most of the factions in the organization fight against the Syrian security forces in northern Aleppo and against the IS in its northern outskirts. The new umbrella organization includes the following factions:
 - A. Nur al-Din Zanki – an Islamic group, which was founded eight months after the start of the Syrian revolution. The group took part in the freeing of Aleppo.
 - B. The Mujahideen Army – led by a former Syrian commander named Muhammad Bakur Jum‘a , which strives to topple the Syrian regime.
 - C. Tajamu Istiqam Kama Kulta – one of the largest groups fighting against the Syrian regime in Aleppo.
 - D. The Islamic Front in Aleppo - one of the largest groups fighting against the Syrian regime in Aleppo, which is composed of six factions: Liwa al-Tawhid, Ahrar al-Sham, the Army of Islam, Liwa Suqur al-Sham, Liwa al-Haqq, Ansar al-Sham and the Islamic Kurdish Front.
 - E. Al-Asala wal-Tanmih – composed of several divisions, the most important of which being Bashair al-Nasr.
 - F. The Al-Nur Movement – a group of Islamists operating in Aleppo.

According to the joint announcement, all of the factions declared unity under one banner and the leadership of the Al-Sham Front, headed by ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Salama (aka Abu Jum‘a). It also stated that all of the factions are committed to defending the residents of Syria and liberating the country.



From left to right: a video showing representatives of the factions as they announced the merger; the logo of the Al-Sham Front

The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

The Sinai arena continued to be replete with incidents as security forces and terrorist organizations continued to exchange blows.

On December 19, 2014 the Ajnad Misr jihadist organization, which operates in Sinai, published a reaction to the US decision to designate it as a terrorist organization. The organization claimed that this step by the US only proves the righteousness of its path and it emphasized that the US has no right to rule in Egypt or to invade its territory.⁸³

On December 20, 2014 six militants were killed and 25 others were arrested in an operation carried out by the Egyptian government in the cities of Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid in northern Sinai. Counter-terrorism forces pursued the militants and an exchange of fire broke out between the two sides. Meanwhile, two members of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis were killed in Rafah in a failed attempt to ambush security forces.⁸⁴

On December 26, 2014 one soldier was killed and an Egyptian army officer was wounded when their armored vehicle was struck by an explosive device in northern Sinai. The Egyptian army began searching the area for the attackers.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:
 - An announcement (no. 2) listing all of the terrorist attacks carried out by the organization in November 2014. For example, it claimed responsibility for attacking military vehicles, including transport trucks in Al-Arish, killing senior Egyptian police officers and security forces, and more. The report itself mentioned a military unit

⁸³<http://www.thecairopost.com/news/131184/news/ajnad-misr-slams-its-us-designation-as-a-terrorist-organization> (English).

⁸⁴<http://www.thecairopost.com/news/131237/news/6-alleged-militants-killed-25-arrested-in-north-sinai> (English).

⁸⁵<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/12/26/Egyptian-soldier-killed-officer-wounded-in-Sinai-attack.html> (English).

General Khalifa Haftar's forces.⁸⁸

In the diplomatic arena, the increasing chaos in Libya led the Sahel countries (Chad, Mali, Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso) to call on the UN to establish an international force to fight against armed groups in Libya and to help establish stable, democratic institutions in the country.⁸⁹ In addition, Bernardino León, the head of the UN delegation to Libya, declared that the various parties involved in the conflict in Libya had agreed on a "roadmap" to serve as the basis for a future political solution to the situation.⁹⁰

In light of events, Morocco and Tunisia increased their counter-terrorism efforts. On December 27, 2014 Moroccan authorities announced the arrest of ten individuals who were involved in recruiting young people to fight in Iraq and Syria.⁹¹ In addition, Morocco hosted an international conference on the topic of "foreign fighters" recruited to terrorist organizations. The conference included representatives from 40 countries, the UN and the EU.⁹²

Tunisian authorities announced the establishment of a new security and legal mechanism to help in the fight against terrorism, both in the short-term and long-term.⁹³ Meanwhile, authorities dismantled a terrorist cell that was planning to attack army and security forces in the country. According to an announcement by a spokesman for the Tunisian Interior Ministry, the six-member cell was discovered after the army monitored threats made by the organization on social networks.⁹⁴

Tunisia

- During the second half of December 2014, the Ifriqya jihadist media institution published the following:
 - A statement, video and collection of photos titled, "Hinshir Hill: Revenge of Fire and Iron for the people of Monotheism" by 'Uqba bin Nafi, a Salafi-jihadist group in Algeria that

⁸⁸ <http://goo.gl/QaOPjM>

⁸⁹ <http://goo.gl/E7Ljd3>

⁹⁰ <http://goo.gl/mztrwt>

⁹¹ <http://goo.gl/i6o9Z4>

⁹² <http://www.al-tagheer.com/news74596.html> (Arabic).

⁹³ <http://goo.gl/UbhN8F>

⁹⁴ <http://goo.gl/cZ0hG9>

swore allegiance to the IS. In the announcement, members of Uqba bin Nafi claimed responsibility for the takeover of several Tunisian army bases in Hinshir, Libya, in revenge for the persecution and killing of Muslims by the Tunisian regime. The video and photo collection also showed weapons that were plundered by the organization.⁹⁵



A photo of the plundered weapons

- An announcement reporting the death of five mujahideen from Uqba bin Nafi in Tunisia. According to the announcement, the five mujahideen attacked a Tunisian army patrol and were killed during an exchange of fire. The other militants who were with them managed to cause a lot of damage to the army and escape to sanctuary.⁹⁶
- A statement that included the following points:
 - A. The Ifriqya jihadist media institution was the first to offer PR services to the mujahideen in Tunisia and to promote their activities.
 - B. The media institution cooperates with a large number of jihadist organizations and groups in the Maghreb, the African Sahel, European countries and IS territories.
 - C. The publication concerning the death of the five mujahideen and their exposure on Facebook shows irresponsibility and foolishness in not following Internet security rules that could lead to imprisonment.

⁹⁵ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁶ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- D. Anyone who wishes to respond to, or express an opinion about, items published by the Ifriqya media institution, or to get advice regarding safe surfing on the Internet, is welcome to contact the media institution, which will be sure to provide a secure channel of communication for each request.
- E. The oath of allegiance made by the Ifriqya media institution to the caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, as well as the assistance that the institution provides to the IS, does not demonstrate hostility to other jihadist institutions in the Islamic Maghreb and the African Sahel. If one jihadist group is not interested in having us distribute its publications due to our oath of allegiance to the caliph, then that is their problem. “We advise them to see a psychiatrist to cure their disease [...]”.
- F. Uqba bin Nafi provides assistance, first and foremost, to the IS and encourages leaders of jihadist groups to swear allegiance to the IS.
- G. Members of the Shura Council and leaders of AQIM, and the emir of Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia, need to know that PR advocates among the mujahideen who are continuously involved on the Internet are more knowledgeable about events taking place in the Levant. In contrast, opponents of the IS are involved in distributing disinformation and publishing lies about the IS. The time has come to put an end to this and end the rift.
- H. We only publish news about the mujahideen after verifying their accuracy.
- I. Anyone who follows our publications is welcome to help us.⁹⁷
- The Al I’tisam jihadist media institution of the IS published a video titled, “A Message to the Tunisian Nation”. The video showed several Tunisian fighters who made threats against the Tunisian leadership and army, tried to dissuade the Tunisian people from participating in elections that it described as “heresy and polytheism”, and called for the implementation of shari’a in Tunisia. In addition, most of the video included claims of responsibility for the assassination of two left-wing activists, Shukri Bel’id and Muhammad al-Barahimi, in 2013.⁹⁸

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

⁹⁸ <https://isdarat.org/?p=1735> (Arabic).



A threatening message from the IS against Tunisia

Libya

The Islamic State – Barqa Province

- The media institution of the IS in Barqa Province in eastern Libya published the following:
 - A claim of responsibility for an operation that was carried out by two militants at the Al-Abraq military airport, which included the destruction of an ammunition depot and two fighter jets, and the killing and wounding of several soldiers. During the operation, seven Grad rockets were launched at the airport.⁹⁹
 - A filmed review of the operations carried out by the mujahideen in Al-Laythi District in the city of Benghazi, which included setting fire to the houses and vehicles of “apostates”.¹⁰⁰

Egypt

Ajnad Misr

- During the second half of December 2014, the Al-Kinana jihadist media institution, which serves as a platform for Ajnad Misr, published the following:
 - Questions posted by visitors to the general supervisor of the above-mentioned organization. According to Al-Kinana, the supervisor’s answers will be published in a video after a certain period of time.¹⁰¹
 - Condemnation and criticism of those who view Ajnad Misr as a terrorist organization.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ <http://alkhlafa.com/?p=412> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁰ <https://isdarat.org/?p=2206> (Arabic).

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

¹⁰² https://twitter.com/ajnad_misr_am/status/545909688811151360; <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

Nigeria

Boko Haram continued its acts of aggression against the civilian population. During the second half of December 2014, Boko Haram militants invaded the village of Gumsuri, kidnapped 185 women and children, and killed 32 residents of the village. However, it is apparent that the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon are investing efforts in fighting against the organization and are even succeeding in causing casualties to the other side. The organization suffered a strong blow when 116 of its members were killed in north Cameroon, near the border with northeast Nigeria, by the Cameroon army.¹⁰³ Towards the end of the month, Cameroon carried out its first air strikes, killing 41 militants. According to the Cameroon Minister of Information, the simultaneous attacks carried out by the organization demonstrate that it has adopted a new strategy aimed at “distracting Cameroonian troops on different fronts, making them more vulnerable in the face of the mobility and unpredictability of their attacks”.¹⁰⁴

Somalia

Clashes continued in the Somali arena between Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen (the jihadist organization operating in Somalia), and security forces and foreign forces.

On December 25, 2014 Al-Shabab militants attacked an African Union base in Somalia. Eight Al-Shabab militants invaded the base and killed four people present. Al-Shabab’s military spokesman announced that the organization had attacked Christian enemies as they celebrated Christmas.¹⁰⁵

On December 27, 2014 Zakariya Ismail Ahmed Hersi, the leader of Al-Shabab, turned himself in to Somali police. There was a three million bounty out on Hersi; it is possible that he turned himself in due to internal disagreements within Al-Shabab.¹⁰⁶

On December 30, 2014 senior Al-Shabab operative, Tahliil Abdishakur, was killed in a US air

¹⁰³ <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/12/18/world/africa/nigeria-boko-haram-kidnapping> (English).

¹⁰⁴ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/12/29/cameroon-launches-first-airstrikes-against-boko-haram> (English).

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/25/us-somalia-security-idUSKBN0K30ES20141225> (English).

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/al-shabaab-leader-zakariya-ismail-ahmed-hersi-surrenders-1.2884740> (English).

strike. Somali and American intelligence agencies issued a joint announcement regarding the incident.

The Caucasus

- During the second half of December 2014, the media wing of the Dagestan Province of the Islamic Caucasus Emirate published the following:
 - A video by Sheikh Muhammad Abu Uthman al- Ghimarawi, the kadi (judge) appointed to Dagestan Province. In the video, he criticized the oath of allegiance taken by the former emir of Dagestan, Ali Abu Muhammad al-Dagestani, to the caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the IS, towards the end of December 2014. According to him, the trend of swearing allegiance to al-Baghdadi sows separation among the mujahideen. Moreover, al-Baghdadi’s caliphate has no legal or legitimate basis since it was declared without wide popular support and without consultation. He added that the former emir of Dagestan had acted irresponsibly and of his own accord.¹⁰⁷



The video banner

- A video by a group of activists in Buynaksk, in Dagestan, who spoke out against an activist known as “Abu Jihad” who defected from the group and swore allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the IS. In the framework of the video, one of the activists accused Abu Jihad of escaping to the “caliphate” instead of staying in the Caucasus and defending his people. The video demonstrated the tension between jihadists in the

¹⁰⁷ <http://vdagestan.com/ar/archives/17068> (Arabic).

Caucasus who chose to continue operating in their land and those who ran to join the IS.¹⁰⁸

Indonesia

- On December 9, 2014 the media wing of the Mujahideen in Eastern Indonesia, a Salafi-jihadist organization in Timor, published a statement (no. 9) in which it declared that the organization was continuing its jihad activities against the enemies of Islam and making efforts to implement shari'a.¹⁰⁹

The West

- The media institution of the IS in Al-Baraka Province in Iraq published a video in French with Arabic subtitles titled, "My People, a Message for You". In the video, an IS fighter appealed to Muslims, in French, to leave their lands in order to fulfil the commandment of jihad. According to him, one should sanctify war against infidel regimes if they are preventing them from emigrating in order to fulfil this commandment. In addition, he called on Muslims living in France to attack French targets and sow fear among the French people, as did Mohammed Merah. Merah was a young Muslim who went on a killing spree in Toulouse against French soldiers and Jewish civilians in 2012 in response to their hostile treatment of Muslims and Islam, which was expressed in, among other things, the prohibition on wearing a veil. In addition, the fighter called on the mujahideen to swear allegiance to the caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁹ <https://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁰ <https://dawlaislamiyyah.wordpress.com/2014/12/20/sebuah-pesan-untuk-anda-wahai-orang-orang-sebangsaku-1/>



The video banner

- On December 20, 2014 a stabbing attack took place at a police station in the city of Joue-les-Tours. Bertrand Nzohabonayo, a young Catholic born in Burundi who had converted to Islam, burst into the station and stabbed a female officer in the face, along with two other officers, before he was shot and killed. At the entrance to the station he shouted “Allahu Akbar”. He had posted the flag of the IS on his Facebook profile. In response to the attack, IS supporters on social networks praised the terrorist and called on Muslims in France to emulate him.¹¹¹

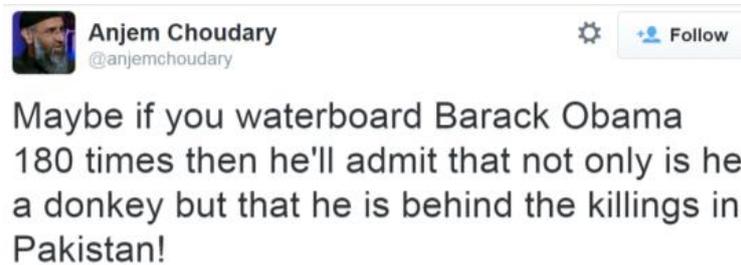


A photo of the terrorist known as “Bilal al-Faransi” that was posted to social networks

- Sheikh Anjem Choudary, a radical Islamic preacher in England, continued to publish controversial correspondence on his Twitter account. During the second half of December 2014, Choudary posted several tweets (see examples below) in which he accused Pakistan and its partner, the United States, of the slaughter and torture of Muslims – women, the elderly, and children – in Pakistan, and called on Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Christians and Jews to repent and

¹¹¹ إستشهاد_صاحب_غزوة_فرنسا#

accept Islam. In addition, he criticized the adornment of Christmas symbols, noting that it goes against Islam.¹¹²



A tweet posted by Anjem Choudary

Miscellaneous

- A visitor to the Al-Minbar al-'Ilami jihadist Web forum passed along a report according to which Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the IS, and the organization's official spokesman had visited the read the forum, and were very satisfied and happy with what they saw. Many visitors expressed joy over the report.¹¹³

¹¹² <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary> (English).

¹¹³ <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

ABOUT THE ICT

Founded in 1996, the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) is one of the leading academic institutes for counter-terrorism in the world, facilitating international cooperation in the global struggle against terrorism. ICT is an independent think tank providing expertise in terrorism, counter-terrorism, homeland security, threat vulnerability and risk assessment, intelligence analysis and national security and defense policy. ICT is a non-profit organization located at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, Israel which relies exclusively on private donations and revenue from events, projects and programs.

ABOUT THE JIHADI MONITORING GROUP

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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