



**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 March 2015

## Highlights

- **The Islamic State** claims responsibility for an attack on foreign tourists in a museum in Bardo, Tunisia. The organization promises that from now on Tunisia will be besieged with instability and terror, due to actions taken against the Muslim mujahideen.
- Kurdish fighters in the **Islamic State** send a threatening message to their Kurdish brothers in Iran and Syria, warning them not to continue fighting against the organization – otherwise they will pay with their lives. In addition, the organization calls upon the Kurds to turn their backs on their leaders, since the leadership is secular, headed by Talabani and Barzani who collaborate with the Crusaders and the Jews. Furthermore, IS fighters vow to conquer Kurdish areas and thereby expand the areas of Islamic Caliphate control.
- **Islamic State** fighters encourage Muslims living in Saudi Arabia and Jordan to carry out "lone wolf" attacks against western targets in their native regions. According to the fighters, it is easy to derive the components of explosives from food and household products, and bombs can then be assembled using online guides.
- The establishment of a new Islamic umbrella organization called **Jaysh al-Fath** is announced. This organization unites seven military factions, including the Al-Nusra Front, a branch of Al-Qaeda in Syria. The organization's goal is to liberate the Idlib Province, and other cities in Syria. According to the organization, special attention will be allotted to fighting against Iranian forces, Syrian regime forces, and Hezbollah Shia forces. The new organization's first success is the liberation of Idlib from the grip of the Syrian regime.

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## New Publications

### Ideology

#### *The Importance of Fulfilling the Commandments of Jihad*

- The Media Front to Support the Islamic State and the Al-Battar media institutions published an article called “From Eastern Turkistan to the Caliphate Land: Journey by Foot”. The article related the story of a Muslim father from eastern Turkistan, who sent his son to the jihad arena in Iraq in order to carry out a suicide attack against Shia security forces. The article praised the father’s willingness to help IS efforts by fulfilling the jihad commandments.<sup>1</sup>
- The Al-Malahim media institution, operating on behalf of Al-Queda in the Sinai Peninsula, published a book called “The Longing of God’s Servants for the Glory of Jihad”, by Sheikh Hamd bin al-Uthman al Tamimi, with an introduction written by Sheikh Ibrahim al-Rubaysh, the organization’s mufti. The book deals with the importance of fulfilling the commandments of jihad, and is filled with excerpts from traditional Islamic holy texts about the rewards one earns for occupying oneself with jihad.<sup>2</sup>
- The Media Front to Support the Islamic State and the Al-Ghuraba media institution published an article called “Residents of Egypt: Be Careful of Bullets”, written by an author who goes by the name of Ahlam al-Nasr. The author called upon Muslims, specifically from Egypt, to guard their minds from the propaganda and lies defaming jihad, spread by the Egyptian regime. According to the writer, different “Muslim” regimes in Egypt were attempting to brainwash Muslims into forsaking the fulfilment of the commandments of jihad, as was the case in the time of Mohammed Ali at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to al-Nasr, everyone should struggle against and avoid being influenced by the propaganda that depicts jihad as an illness.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>2</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>3</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> , <http://justpaste.it/k1dy> (both in Arabic).

### ***The Rift between Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State***

- Sheikh Abu Mariyya al-Qahtani, a member of the Shura Council of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, posted on his Twitter account several tweets maligning the Islamic State. According to al-Qahtani, the Islamic State's success in Iraq, and the conquest of Mosul made many people happy – but not the members of his organization. That is because it was a Western conspiracy involving both the United States and Iran. Moreover, the Islamic State was infected with thoughts that were foreign and deviant to the authentic Islamic religion, tempting young men to join its ranks under all sorts of pretences, and dividing the ranks of mujahideen with its actions.<sup>4</sup> In another public statement, al-Qahtani called upon the mujahideen in Libya to learn lessons from the jihad arenas in Iraq and Syria, and to not lend a hand to Islamic State fighters – otherwise, the Islamic religion will be distorted and the shari'a will be damaged.<sup>5</sup>
- The Nukhbat al-Fikr media institution published a book called “The Distinguishing Signs Revealing the Apostate Religion: Research Reveals the Truth about the Islamic State – Religious Law and Practical Aspects” (261 pages). The book was written by Sheikh Doctor Madhur al-Uways, the shari'a Chief of Staff and member of the Shura Council of the Mujahideen in eastern Syria. It is worth noting that the book's introduction included comments by several Salafi and jihad thinkers who identify with al-Qaeda, such as Dr. Hani al-Sibai, Abu Qatada al-Filastini, Abu Mariyya al-Qahtani, and others. The book ascribed to the Islamic State characteristics of the Khawarij sect, an ancient Muslim sect that left mainstream Islam during the religion's earliest stages, and used violence to try to force its beliefs on others. Since then, the name “Khawarij” has been a derogatory term used to describe deviant and violent groups. For example, the text compared the Islamic State to the Khawarij sect, due to its tendency to use Takfir [excommunication], to label other Muslims as apostates, and to permit their executions – all to an extreme. According to al-Uways, the Khawarij and the modern version of the sect, in the form of the Islamic State, are a threat to the entire Islam nation and to its unity.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>5</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>6</sup> [https://twitter.com/nukhba\\_alfeker/status/582648450635972608](https://twitter.com/nukhba_alfeker/status/582648450635972608) (Arabic).

## **Miscellaneous**

- The Al-Qabs media institution published an article called “The Shura: Research of Religious Law with Regard to the Law of Shura”, by Abu Hamid al-Jaza’iri. The article examined the role of the Shura, an ancient Islamic institution intended to advise the sovereign ruler.<sup>7</sup>
- The Media Front to Support the Islamic State, the Al-Battar media institution, and the Sariyyat al-Malhama media group published an article categorizing and classifying the different types of heretics in Islam, and the judgement they - as well as the Christians and Jews - deserve.<sup>8</sup>
- Sheikh Abu Basir al-Tartusi, a Salafi jihad thinker of Syrian descent, published a book called “Words Written for the Arab Revoution – Specifically for the Syrian Revolution” (321 pages).<sup>9</sup>

## **Strategy**

- Sheikh Abdallah Muhammad al-Muhaysini, a Saudi scholar of religious law who emigrated to Syria and supports Al-Queda, published ten recommendations for the commanders and the mujahideen active around the Syrian city Idlib. Among the suggestions he offered were: Don’t bomb from within the city targets from which shooting is taking place. But rather use very precise weaponry, and on a small scale. That is because the good people of Idlib were like brothers to them, and they should not be harmed. Only the Alawis bearing weapons, or anyone protecting Asad’s regime should be targeted. When entering homes, do not frighten the inhabitants. Do not destroy the city, its homes, or its property. Regarding the property of Christians – it may be confiscated, and the people themselves can be harmed if they collaborate with the regime. If there exists an agreement whereby they pay tax – Jizyya, then they should not be harmed. Residents of the city of Idlib must stand by the mujahideen and fight with them against Asad’s regime.<sup>10</sup>

## **Lone Wolves**

- The Media Front to Support the Islamic State and the Al-Khilafa media institutions published an

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<sup>7</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>8</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>9</sup> <http://abubaseer.bizland.com/> (Arabic).

<sup>10</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/>; <http://justpaste.it/k265> (both in Arabic).

article called “Lone Wolves in Riyadh and Rabat Amon, a Special Message for Special Forces”, by an author calling himself Hamil al-Bushra – “One who bears of tidings”. The article urged Muslims living in Saudi Arabia and Jordan to carry out individual attacks in their homelands, particularly against American forces and other western forces. According to the author, the internet is meant to be used as a tool to assist them, and is a good source for guidance on how to assemble bombs and other explosive devices – using components found in every household. Also according to the author, if one doesn’t have a pistol, one can take a knife and go out to the street and stab the enemy in his abdomen or slit his throat. “Don’t be sad if the Caliphate doesn’t know about you or another of its soldiers. It is enough that Allah knows about you.” Later in the article, there were operative suggestions for how to prepare for carrying out attacks. For example, the author emphasized that one should not tell relatives or friends about one’s intentions to carry out an attack, etc.

One of the visitors to the site responded to the aforementioned article by posting names and addresses of American soldiers as targets for elimination.<sup>11</sup>



The article banner

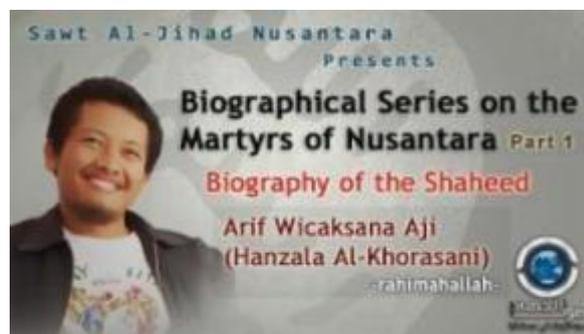
### Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- The Sawt Al-Jihad Nusantara media institution launched a new series of publications in Indonesian and English, called "Biographical Series on the Martyrs of Nusantara". The first biography was dedicated to the figure of Arif Wicaksana Aji AKA Hansala al-Khorasani (1988 – 2014), director of the jihad forum in Indonesia – Al-Busyro Islamic Forum – from 2010 until he joined the mujahideen organization in eastern Indonesia – Mujahideen Indonesia Timur (MIT). In the framework of his activities to promote jihad propaganda, al-Khorasani translated into

<sup>11</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

Indonesian video clips made by the Al-Sahab media institution, which is the official voice of the Al-Qaeda leadership. He also translated a magazine called *Inspire*, which is a guide for making bombs, and more. In addition, he set up a media team to advance jihad content, and was one of the official administrators of the Sawt Al-Jihad Nusantara media institution, considered to be the official media branch of The Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) in south-east Asia. Hansala al-Khorasani was killed in February 2014 following a raid by Indonesian security forces at his home.

The aforementioned biography also included a final statement, which al-Khorasani wanted to bequeath to the next generation. According to the statement, the administrators of the jihad forum were obligated to continue activity on the forum, and later to relegate the administration positions to his children.<sup>12</sup>



**The front page of the Biography of Hanzala Al-Khorasani**

- The Mahsud media institution, operating on behalf of the Taliban-Pakistan organization, published a eulogy in memory of the *shahid* Bayt Alla Khawari Mahsud, field commander and member of the organization, who was killed by a drone attack in North Waziristan on March 18, 2015. According to the organization, Mahsud participated in several battlefronts in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and demonstrated both leadership abilities and courage.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> [https://justpaste.it/syuhada\\_n1](https://justpaste.it/syuhada_n1) (Arabic).

<sup>13</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).



A banner produced in memory of the *shahid* Mahsud, member of the Taliban-Pakistan organization

- The Ibn Taymiyya organization issued a series of new publications called "The Shari'a's Martyrs: a Series of Documentary Biographies of the Martyrs of God's Oneness in the Environs of Jerusalem environment". The first part of the series was devoted to the biography of a Palestinian *shahid* named Nimr Sabah Abu al-Bara (1975 – 2005), founder and leader of the Mujahideen Council, a Salafi jihad organization in the Gaza Strip. In the past, he was active in the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (the military branch of the Hamas), and served time in a Fatah prison. He was killed in a work accident in 2005, while trying to launch a rocket towards the Israeli town "Kfar Darom".<sup>14</sup>



The publication banner

- The Al-Kataeb media institution, belonging to the Somali Al Sahbaab al-Mujahideen Movement, published two videos called "From Memory". The videos contained interviews with organization fighters before they set out on suicide attack missions.<sup>15</sup>
- The Ahrar al-Sham Movement, a Salafi jihad organization in Syria, issued a eulogy in memory of Abu Hafs al-Misri, a member of the organization's Shari'a Council, who was killed while engaging

<sup>14</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>15</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

in battle against Syrian security forces in Idlib, Syria during a battle on March 27, 2015. In the past, among other positions he held, he served as a counsellor in Al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, the organization issued a eulogy in memory of Sheikh Abu Jamil Qutb, one of the organization's founders, and considered to the second most important person in the organization. Qutb was killed by Syrian security forces in Idlib near the end of March 2015.

In order to preserve the legacy and memories of the *shahids*, supporters of the organization opened a hashtag on Twitter called "Deaths of the Holy Marytrs of the Commander Abu Jamil Qutb" #استشهاد\_القائد\_ابو\_جميل\_قطب and another hashtag called "Deaths of the Holy Martyrs of Abu Hafs al-Misri" #استشهاد\_أبو\_حفص\_المصري<sup>17</sup>



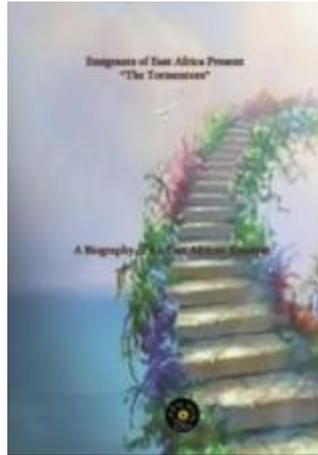
From left to right: Abu Hafs al-Misri; Abu Jamil Qutb

- The Al-Muhajirun organization, affiliated with the Somali Al Sahbaab al-Mujahideen Movement, made up of foreign volunteers from East Africa, launched a series of new publications called "The Tormentors". The series focuses on the biographies of *shahids* who fought for and helped the Al Sahbaab al-Mujahideen Movement. The first part of the series is devoted to a volunteer named Ruta from Tunisia, who emigrated from there to Kenya, where he underwent a radicalization process. Finally, he joined the AL-Sahaab Movement. Since joining the organization, he began training for jihad in Tunisia, Kenya, and other locations, and planned attacks. On March 17, 2013 he was killed in Nairobi, Kenya by Kenyan security forces.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>17</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>18</sup> [https://twitter.com/al\\_muhajiroun/status/579938342722113536](https://twitter.com/al_muhajiroun/status/579938342722113536) (English).



The title page of the biography about the *shahid* Ruta

## Magazines

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published issue #108 of the *Al-Sumud* magazine in Arabic.<sup>19</sup>

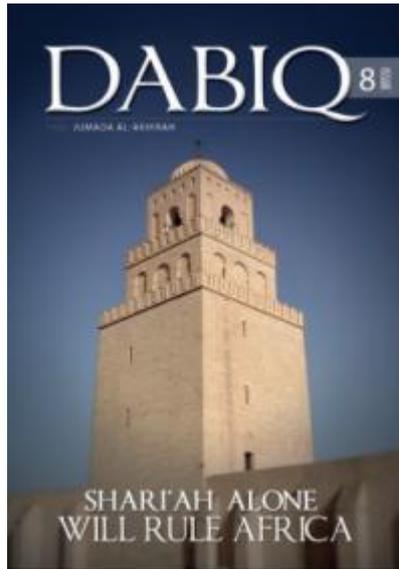


The issue cover

- Issue #8 of the *Dabiq* magazine (68 pages).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>20</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).



The issue cover

- The Islamic State published two issues (#3, #4) of the French magazine Dar al-Islam.<sup>21</sup>



The magazine covers

## Reports from the Field

### Afghanistan-Pakistan

*In the Afghan arena tensions continued between the terror organizations in the country, and the government and army. On March 24 armed fighters opened fire on a bus transporting*

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<sup>21</sup> <http://ansar-alhaqq.net/> (French).

passengers in the Wardak Province, near Kabul, causing the deaths of 13 people. Senior government officials blamed the Taliban for the attack, but the organization denied the accusations.<sup>22</sup> From the opposite side, the Afghan forces reported successes in the struggle against terror organizations. On March 16 the Afghani Department of Defense publicized that its security forces eliminated ten armed terrorists - including a commander named Hafiz Wahidi – who marked their enlistment with the Islamic State by carrying out an army air attack in the southern region of the country. In addition, the army eliminated 59 Taliban fighters throughout the country.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, at the political level, the Afghan President met with the US President in Washington, and the two agreed to delay the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan until after the end of 2015 – this was due to a request by the Afghan President.<sup>24</sup> In response, the Taliban-Afghanistan alliance claimed that keeping American troops in Afghanistan until after the end of 2015 threatened the peace in the country.<sup>25</sup>

In the meantime, in the Pakistani arena battles continued between the Pakistani army and the Taliban-Pakistan alliance (TTP), which lead to dozens of killed, particularly on the side of the TTP.<sup>26</sup> Airplanes belonging to the Afghan forces bombed the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, killing TTP fighters, including the organization's spokesperson, Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the United States eliminated at least 9 TTP fighters in the Nangarhar Province in Afghanistan.<sup>28</sup>

### **The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan**

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published the following:
  - A statement condemning President Obama's announcement that American troops would continue to maintain a presence on Afghan soil for the rest of 2015. The statement indicated that The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan would continue jihad against all forms of occupation in Afghanistan, and would work towards defeating and causing the retreat of the American forces. The United States failed to achieve

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<sup>22</sup> <http://goo.gl/BH9JgX>

<sup>23</sup> <http://goo.gl/m4OauP>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2015/03/delay-troop-pullout-afghanistan-150325021306204.html>

<sup>25</sup> <http://goo.gl/sJKlek>

<sup>26</sup> <http://goo.gl/mpuMUp>

<sup>27</sup> <http://goo.gl/dpgyJJ>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/03/pakistani-fighters-reportedly-killed-afghanistan-150324070301871.html>

its secret goals during the 13 years of occupation, which was manifested in the presence of hundreds of thousands of soldiers on Afghan land, and at an expense of one billion dollars. The Afghan people would continue engaging in legitimate jihad until the end of the occupation, and has proven its determination regarding that matter over the last 13 years. The Afghan government transgressed due to its collaboration with the United States, and its grovelling before the American government reveals its intense fear of the Afghan nation that wants to protect itself from corrupt individuals. In conclusion, the Emirate called upon the American people to take note that the American leadership is playing with their lives as well as their tax dollars, in an unnecessary war in Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup>

- A video documenting the invasion of Bakwa, in the Farah Province, by Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan fighters.<sup>30</sup>

### ***The Taliban-Pakistan Alliance (TTP)***

- The Mehsud media institution, operating on behalf of the TTP, published the following:
  - A video of an interview with Adnan Rashd, senior commander and responsible for the organization's media. In the interview, Rashd denied various rumors about his organization, such as the division of the organization into smaller factions. In addition, he criticized the Pakistan army for its actions against Muslims, and the weakening of the Islamic religion. He emphasized that his organization was obligated to obey Mullah Omar, head of The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, and not Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> <http://shahamat-english.com/english/index.php/paighamoona/53618-statement-of-islamic-emirate-concerning-us-announcement-of-maintaining-troops> (English).

<sup>30</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>31</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).



The interview banner

### ***The Islamic State - Khorasan Province***

- The Islamic State in the Khorasan Province published a video that verified reports on the death of Mullah Abd al-Rauf Khadem, who served as the province’s vice-governor before being killed in an American attack on February 9, 2015. Khadem – who was a prisoner in Guantanamo in the past, as well as a commander in the TTP – pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in January 2015. Aside from images of Khadem using different weapons, the video also included a threatening speech delivered by the Khorasan Province governor, Hafez Said Khan, in which he vowed to avenge Khadem’s death.<sup>32</sup>



The Islamic State threatens to avenge the elimination of the Khorasan Province’s vice-governor

### **The Arabian Peninsula**

*No drone strikes were carried out in the second half of March, but the conflict in Yemen became significantly acute. On March 20, two suicide bombings were carried out at two Shiite mosques in Sanaa. According to Yemen's state-run Saba news agency, the perpetrators of the attacks pretended to be disabled and hid their explosives under casts. At least 137 people were*

<sup>32</sup> <https://archive.org/details/KhadimUrdu>

killed and 357 wounded in the attacks. The Islamic State took responsibility for the attacks.<sup>33</sup> Another explosion in the city of Saada, a Houthi stronghold, killed two people and seriously wounded a third.<sup>34</sup>

On March 22, Houthi rebels seized the central Yemen city of Taiz.<sup>35</sup> On March 24, Houthi rebels made significant advances in southern Yemen and the next day captured the international airport in Aden, hours after President Abdrabbu Mansour Hadi fled the city.<sup>36</sup> On March 25, Saudi Arabia began to launch air strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen. The airstrikes were carried out with the help of other Gulf States, excluding Oman.<sup>37</sup> And on March 31, the United Nations announced that its entire staff had left Yemen.<sup>38</sup>

### **Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula**

- The Al-Malahim media institution, acting on behalf of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, published the following:
  - A notice (#91) denying any connection to the explosion of Houthi mosques in Sanaa on March 20, 2015. In the announcement, the organization emphasized that it adhered to Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri's orders not to attack mosques, markets, or crowded areas, in order to preserve the lives of innocent Muslims, and their related interests.<sup>39</sup>

### **The Islamic State**

- The Islamic State in the Sanaa Province took responsibility for carrying out four suicide attacks in the Sanaa Province against Houthis on March 20, 2015. In addition, the organization emphasized: "The polytheistic Houthis knew that Islamic State soldiers wouldn't leave them in peace and quiet" until they stopped implementing the expansion of

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<sup>33</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/03/20/middleeast/yemen-violence/>

<sup>34</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/03/20/middleeast/yemen-violence/>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-yemen/2690159.html>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/houthi-fighters-seize-key-yemeni-airbase/2693621.html>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-32061632>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/iran-denies-sending-arms-to-rebels-in-yemen/2700880.html>

<sup>39</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

Iran into Yemen.<sup>40</sup>



**The Sanaa Province Ministry of Communication logo**

- The Al-Battar media institution and the The Media Front for Assistance to the Islamic State, which both help spread information about the Islamic State, published a video called “The Attack of the Caliphate Soldiers in Yemen”. The video focused on the attacks carried out by fighters from the organization against Houthi militias in Yemen, and in the justification of those attacks due to the fact that its members commit crimes against the Sunni population in the country. Afterwards, the video reported on an attack carried out by the organization’s fighters against two mosques in Sanaa while Houthis were praying. Later in the video images of the fighters who took part in the attacks are displayed, and images of Houthi officials who were killed as a result of the attacks. The video then describes another suicide attack carried out against the Houthi leadership in Sada – but due to enemy censorship, news of the attack had not been made public.<sup>41</sup>

## Iraq

*On March 16, a Kurdish general repeated the assertion that Islamic State fighters had carried out an attack using chlorine gas in January, and described another instance of Islamic State militants using chlorine gas in December.<sup>42</sup> On March 20, Islamic State terrorists beheaded 3 Kurdish soldiers.<sup>43</sup> On March 25, American warplanes struck Tikrit in the final phase of the operation to retake the city, as*

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<sup>40</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

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

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/islamic-state/11476285/Kurds-report-more-chlorine-attacks-by-Islamic-State-as-Iraq-pauses-Tikrit-offensive.html>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.ibtimes.co.in/isis-beheads-3-kurdish-fighters-new-video-peshmergas-call-newroz-defiance-ahead-new-year-626816>

*Iranian-backed Shiite militias had trouble recapturing the city from the Islamic State.<sup>44</sup> On March 30, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Baghdad and met with the Prime Minister and other leaders, although the agenda of his visit was not released.<sup>45</sup> On March 31, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said that Iraqi forces had reached the center of Tikrit and completed the recapture of the city from the Islamic State, although he acknowledged that “operations were still under way to clean out any remaining insurgents and booby traps.”<sup>46</sup>*

### **The Islamic State**

- The Al-Hayyat media institution, which serves as an official platform for the Islamic State, published a video called "A Message to the People of Kurdistan". At the beginning of the video, an IS fighter named Khatab, speaking in Kurdish, praised Muslims who have immigrated to the Islamic Caliphate and are fighting at its side – for the purpose of, among other things, defending it. Later Khatab emphasized that there is an obligation to oust the secular, heretic Muslim rulers from their positions of leadership, and condemn them for collaborating with the United States, the Jews, and the apostates. Khatab also promised that IS fighters will liberate Jerusalem and Palestinian Land from Israel, just as the Kurd Salah al-Din liberated Jerusalem from the Crusaders.

In addition, he called upon the Kurds to stop battling the Kurdish fighters on the side of the Islamic Caliphate, to abandon the secular Kurdish parties established on principles deviant to Islam, and to join the Caliphate that actively implements God's laws. According to Khatab, IS fighters will continue their efforts to wave the Islamic Caliphate flag over Kurdish territory in Irbil and Sulaymaniya. He even promised to release prisoners from jails in Kurdish territory, just as prisoners were released from jails controlled by the Iraqi regime in Mosul.

Another fighter, named Abu Ishaq, addressed the Kurds, noting that he and other Kurds had decided to emigrate from the Kurdish autonomous region to Islamic Caliphate territory in order to help defend it. He stated that the Kurdish brothers should not be concerned about leaving the secular Kurdish movements lead by Talabani and Barzani, but should simply immigrate to

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-begins-airstrikes-against-islamic-state-militants-in-iraqi-city-of-tikrit-1427317786>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/un-chief-ban-in-baghdad-for-talks/2699526.html>

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/iraqi-security-forces-recapture-tikrit-from-islamic-state-1427812777>

Iraq and take part in fulfilling the commandments of jihad.

Another Kurdish fighter named Ibn Laden expressed his anger over the way Kurds are helping to spread information against the Islamic State. He condemned the Kurdish secular leadership, including PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, and blamed them for the fighting against Muslim civilians. He also called upon the Kurds to get a hold of themselves and to turn their backs on the secular Kurdish leadership, and not to blindly follow the rulings of the Kurdish religious scholars who have been bribed and serve the interests of their Kurdish masters. In addition, the fighter promised to liberate every patch of land and return it to the bosom of Islam. Another fighter named Abu Humam condemned the idea of countries based upon nations, and promised to establish one government under the Islamic flag, while engaging in jihad against the enemies of Islam.

At the end of the video a Kurdish military man was executed by an IS fighter. That was after he called upon the Kurdish leadership to ends its war against the Islamic State. The fighter emphasized that every Kurd who battles against the Islamic State will suffer a similar fate, and pay with his life.<sup>47</sup>



Footage from the video

- A visitor to the jihad forum Shmukh Al-Islam posted a letter calling upon all members of the Islamic State involved in propaganda to publicize more videos, sermons, and lectures by the leaders of the Islamic Caliphate. He added that there was also a need for publishing a section on the forum for dealing with religious rulings.<sup>48</sup>
- The Turjman Al-Aswarti media institution, which identifies with the Islamic State, published a video called “The People of Sunnah: The Anticipated Crusader Alliance”. The video focused on

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<sup>47</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>48</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

the activities of the Shia militias and the coalition forces against the Sunni population in Iraq.<sup>49</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Kirkuk Province***

- The Islamic State in the Kirkuk Province published the following:
  - A video about the support offered by the Kirkuk Province tribes to the Islamic State. In the video, a solidarity march in Hawija was filmed - during which rulers expressed their support of the Kirkuk tribes in the Islamic State. In the background was heard a previous recording of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the organization, in which he praised the tribes for their assistance and support. In the main part of the video, a representative of the Sunni tribes in Hawija was featured admonishing the Arab countries that participated in the coalition forces attack in Iraq, and called on all Muslims in those countries to rise up against their leaders and stop them.<sup>50</sup>



**Sunni tribes in Kirkuk Province march to show their solidarity with the Islamic State**

- A video about a shari'a institute that opened in the province. During informational remarks made by the institute's Emir, it was explained that the institute offers a number of courses about different Islamic topics (faith, biography of the Prophet, reading the Quran, Muslim law, and more), with each course lasting for three months. Alongside theory lessons, the Emir made clear that the institute also invests in the physical health of its students, and therefore offers field classes taught by Hisba activists. Their goal is to fulfil the commandments of Islam, "to promote virtue

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

<sup>50</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7885> (Arabic).

and prevent vice”. At the end of the video, two students were featured talking about their educational experiences at the institute.<sup>51</sup>



**A class in the Islamic State’s Shari’a Institute in Kirkuk Province**

- A photo report about combat opposite the Popular Mobilization Forces and the Iraqi Army, near the Allas oil field. In the report, images from a night attack were featured, during which the Islamic State forces used 60 mm mortar bombs, RPG-7, and light weapons.<sup>52</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Al-Janub Province***

- The Islamic State in the Al-Janub Province published the following:
  - A video responding to the Boko Haram pledge of allegiance in Nigeria to the Islamic State. A number of IS fighters were featured slaughtering sheep “in honor of the joyful tidings”. At the end of his statement, the speaker in the video made threats against the “enemies of Allah” – including the Jews, the Christians, the Iranians, the Shi’ites, and anyone who assists them. He promised that they all would suffer “a flood of bullets and beheadings”. The video ended with images of the province residents listening to the recording of Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, pledging allegiance.<sup>53</sup>
  - A photo report about training a new group of fighters. In the footage, masked fighters were seen undergoing training exercises, and listening to a very encouraging

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<sup>51</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7900> (Arabic).

<sup>52</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8086> (Arabic).

<sup>53</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8166> (Arabic).

speech by one of the fighters, as well as the pledge of allegiance to the leader of Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.<sup>54</sup>



**A new group of fighters in the Al-Janub Province**

### ***The Islamic State – Dijla Province***

- The Islamic State in the Dijla Province published the following:
  - A video documenting a thief having his hand chopped off, in accordance with shari’a law.<sup>55</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Salah al-Din Province***

- The Islamic State in the Salah al-Din Province published the following:
  - A video about members of the organization breaking into the police station in the city of Samara.<sup>56</sup>
  - A photo report on the subject of battles in the province. In the photographs, images of weapons and other equipment used by the organization in the province against the Iraqi Army and Shia militias were featured. Such as: Tanks, mortar shells, a Zilzal cannon, Katyusha and Faruq rockets, machine guns, light weapons, and sharpshooter rifles.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8137> (Arabic).

<sup>55</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>56</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>57</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8082> (Arabic).



**An Islamic State tank in the Salah al-Din Province**

- A video called “The Bearers of their Nation’s Wounds – Part 3”. In the video an IS fighter expressed his obligation to the Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi Caliphate, and the willingness of the organization’s fighters to sacrifice their lives and fulfil the commandments of jihad for the sake of God.<sup>58</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Nineveh Province***

- The Islamic State in the Nineveh Province published the following:
  - A photo report called “Shattering the Crosses and Doing Away with the Polytheistic Manifestations”, which documented the destruction of the statues and crosses in a church in the Nineveh Province, and replacing them with Islamic State flags.<sup>59</sup>



**Shattering the Saint George statue in a church in the Nineveh Province**

- A video documenting the beheadings of three fighters from the Kurdish Peshmerga militia. The video began with footage depicting civilians who were injured as a result of rocket or mortar fire attributed to the Peshmerga forces. The second part of the

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<sup>58</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>59</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7765> (Arabic).

video showed three captured Peshmerga soldiers, and their names, places of residence, the tribes they belong to, and duties in the militia were revealed. Before being executed, the three transmitted messages in Kurdish – mainly threats against the Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani; accusations against the Peshmerga, saying they had murdered women and children under Crusador orders; and a call on the Muslim Kurds not to take a side in the war between the Islamic State and the coalition forces.<sup>60</sup>

- A video called “The Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice #1”, which dealt with the efforts of the Hisbah Office - an Islamic body responsible for maintaining public order – to fight against the phenomenon of smoking by locating, confiscating, and destroying cigarettes. The video explained that such measures would also be taken against merchants – they would be arrested, and would be forced to take courses about Islam forbidding smoking, and the health risks smoking poses.<sup>61</sup>



**The Hisbah Office destroying cigarettes in the Nineveh Province**

- A video called “A Message to the Soldiers of Islam al Murabiteen in the Media Field”. The video opened with media items about the US Central Command Twitter and Youtube accounts having been hacked in January 2014, by activists who identifies with the Islamic State. The rest of the video featured mostly interviews in the Nineveh Province with fighters who praised those taking an active part in “electronic jihad”, and calling upon them to protect the Islamic State in terms of information decimation - promising they would earn rewards for the acts they carried out for the good of Islam and the Muslims. This video was full of encouragement for the

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<sup>60</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7910> (Arabic).

<sup>61</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7915> (Arabic).

organization's supporters around the world to carry out spontaneous electronic attacks, while at the same time earlier videos called for the implementation of "lone wolf" attacks.<sup>62</sup>

- A photo report on the subject of launching Grad rockets, Katyushas, and mortar shells against Kurdish Peshmerga militias in the province. Some of the launches were carried out in the Bashiqa area, which is in the Mosul District.<sup>63</sup>
- A video documenting a compensation payment to a civilian who was unintentionally shot and injured during an exchange of gunfire between the IS and Shia security forces. The compensation funds were presented in framework of an agreement formulated by the organization's "Claims Office" – an office that processes civilian claims related to deprivation. During the video, the Kadi and the civilian were interviewed about the event that made him eligible for the compensation payment. At the end of the video another civilian was interviewed about receiving compensation money from the "Claims Office".<sup>64</sup>
- A photo report about repairing roads in the city of Mosul, as an initiative of the "Services Office", including cleaning and paving roads, and planting trees.<sup>65</sup> The report also dealt with the distribution of food to the needed, in the framework of work done by the Zakat and Alms Office.<sup>66</sup>
- A photo report about the new pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State by several tribes in the Nineveh Province. During a ceremony held in honor of the event, an IS fighter read the names of tribes that swore allegiance to the Islamic State. According to another fighter, the tribes play an important role in rebelling and fighting against the enemies of Islam. The ceremony also included speeches made by representatives from some of the province tribes, praising their alliance with the Islamic State.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80xSx5aMO8Q>

<sup>63</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8016>; <https://isdarat.org/8139> (both in Arabic).

<sup>64</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>65</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8202> (Arabic).

<sup>66</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8233> (Arabic).

<sup>67</sup> <https://archive.org/details/ashayr>



The publication banner

### ***The Islamic State – Al-Fallujah Province***

- The Islamic State in Al-Fallujah Province published the following:
  - A video about an Islamic State raid on Iraqi Army bases in Amiriyat Fallujah, on March 8, 2015. The stages of attack included artillery fire on the army bases, storming the target, taking control of weapons and ammunition, blocking the supply route, and burning the camps. The video concluded with images of burnt bodies, the booty seized, and a victory parade in the city, all accompanied by parts of speeches made by the organization spokesperson Abu Muhammad al-Adnani.<sup>68</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Diyala Province***

- The Islamic State in Diyala Province published the following:
  - A video documenting the execution of a man named Abd al-Muttableb, who was accused of belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces – a Shia militia coalition that operated under the auspices of the Iraqi government. In response to a question asked by his interrogator, Abd al-Muttableb answered that in the framework of his job, he entered the homes of Sunni families and killed them, with women and children among his victims (in the background images were displayed of a massacre committed by the Iraqi Army in Barwanah). In response to additional questions, Abd al-Muttableb: related that the Iranian commanders oversaw the artillery corps in the base where he served, discussed the details of his imprisonment, and called upon the soldiers he served with to desert their posts. Abd al-Muttableb was executed by

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<sup>68</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7891> (Arabic).

sword, but not before his executer sent a threatening message to Hadi al-Ameri, head of the Shia Badr Organization.<sup>69</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Al-Anbar Province***

- The Islamic State in Al-Anbar Province published the following:
  - A video about an IS attack in the Sajjariyya region, near Ramadi. In the video, explosions caused by two suicide bombers are documented. They used a tractor and an armoured vehicle full of explosives. After the road was opened by the bombers, more fighters entered the urban area and shot and killed the military forces there. It should be noted that a large portion of the footage of the gunfire was filmed by one of the shooters – creating a sense that the viewer is watching a computer game. At the end of the video, images of dead bodies and the executions of captives were shown.<sup>70</sup>



**Footage of the IS attack in Sajjariyya in the style of "first person shooter"**

- A photo report about decorating the city of Rutba with Islamic State flags and billboards, for the purpose of Dawah and spreading information. The signs included slogans praising prayer and jihad, alongside messages condemning the "Crusador attacks against the Islamic State". The campaign covered demonstrates the Islamic State's attempts to deviate from the cypernetic realm and to also shape civilian awareness in the public realm, targeting the local civilians who are not exposed to the internet.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8145>; [https://archive.org/details/fs\\_di](https://archive.org/details/fs_di)

<sup>70</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8281> (Arabic).

<sup>71</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7814> (Arabic).

## ***The Islamic State – Al-Furat Province***

- The Islamic State in Al-Furat Province published the following:
  - A video in honor of the Boko Haram pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State in Nigeria. In the course of the video, IS fighters were interviewed and blessed the pledge of allegiance, and noted that the Islamic State's territory had grown significantly as a result of the allegiance.<sup>72</sup>

## **Al-Sham [The Levant]**

### **Syria**

*On March 17, the United States lost contact with a drone being flown over Syria and the Syrian government claimed that it had shot the drone in question down.<sup>73</sup> On March 20, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, two car bombs were detonated by Islamic State militants in the mainly Kurdish city of Hassaka in northeastern Syria, killing at least 20 people.<sup>74</sup> On March 23, a Syrian opposition group claimed that the Islamic State had shot down a Sukhoi Su-24 plane.<sup>75</sup> On March 25, a coalition of Syrian rebels captured the city of Busra Sham, a town in southern Syria classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and just a couple of miles from the Jordanian border.<sup>76</sup> On March 26, Britain announced that it would send about 75 military personnel to join an American program to train moderate Syrian rebels.<sup>77</sup> On March 28, Syrian rebels, including the Ahrar al-Sham, Jund al-Aqsa and Nusra Front groups, captured the city of Idlib, a strategically located city of over 100,000.<sup>78</sup> On March 29, Islamic State terrorists beheaded eight Shiite Muslims in the Hama Governate of Syria.<sup>79</sup> On March 31, the United States imposed sanctions on Batoul Rida, an official of the Central Bank of Syria, and on one Syria-based company and two companies in Lebanon for working with the Syrian weapons agency, the Scientific Studies and*

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<sup>72</sup> <https://isdat.org/7874> (Arabic).

<sup>73</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/03/17/middleeast/syria-us-drone/>

<sup>74</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/20/us-mideast-crisis-syria-blast-idUSKBN0MG29320150320>

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/isis-syrian-regime-sukhoi-su-24-warplane-shot-down-near-homs-by-islamic-state-militants-1493165>

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/25/world/middleeast/ap-ml-syria.html>

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/reu-britain-to-help-train-rebels-to-fight-islamic-state/2695564.html>

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32100644>

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/03/29/islamic-state-beheads-eight-men/70635014/>

Research Center, which the Treasury said had connections to Syria's chemical weapons program.<sup>80</sup> That same day, a United Nations donor conference in Kuwait succeeded in garnering \$3.8 billion dollars in pledges from governments around the world to aid victims of the Syrian Civil War.<sup>81</sup> Finally, an annual security assessment presented to the U.S. Senate by James Clapper, the director of National Intelligence, excluded Iran and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah from its list of terror threats to U.S. interests.<sup>82</sup>

### **Al-Nusra Front**

- The jihadist media institution of Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manarah al-Bayda, published the following:
  - An expression of solidarity with the people of the city of Duma, for their strong stamina opposite Syrian Army attacks. According to the Al-Nusra Front, the Syrian regime will soon suffer its downfall, and the Mujahideen will be triumphant.<sup>83</sup>
  - Various videos about the liberation of Idlib, such as: tank fire by the IS at a Syrian Army post on the outskirts of Idlib;<sup>84</sup> documentation of the destruction of a Syrian Army tank at the al-Kansrawa checkpoint, by TOW rocket fire;<sup>85</sup> documentation of the Al-Nusra Front shooting at a Syrian plane;<sup>86</sup> documentation of Al-Nusra Front fighters patrolling north of the city of Idlib after its liberation;<sup>87</sup> an interview with Sheikh Abd al-Razzaq al-Mahdi in Idlib - at the height of battle to take the city - regarding the importance of fulfilling the commandments of jihad;<sup>88</sup> documentation of the liberation of the College of Education in Idlib.<sup>89</sup> Documentation of the joy of Idlib residents after the city was liberated,<sup>90</sup> etc.
  - A statement by the Shari'a Council of the Al-Nusra Front about making reforms in the

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<sup>80</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/31/us-usa-syria-sanctions-idUSKBN0MR1TZ20150331>

<sup>81</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32128048>

<sup>82</sup> <http://europe.newsweek.com/iran-and-hezbollah-omitted-us-terror-threat-list-amid-nuclear-talks-314073>

<sup>83</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>84</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>85</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>86</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>87</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>88</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>89</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>90</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

judicial system. For example, one of the clauses in the reform states that the armed factions may not sign any cease-fire agreements or agreements with the Syrian regime unless shari'a based permission is provided through the judicial system.<sup>91</sup>

### **Jaysh al-Fath**

- On March 24, 2015 seven Islamite rebel factions announced the establishment of an umbrella group called "Jaysh al-Fath for the Liberation of Idlib Province". According to the new organization, "The need for liberating Idlib, Aleppo, and the other Syrian cities, including Damescus, requires an increase in efforts to eliminate Iranian forces, forces from Asad's regime, and the Hezbollah Shi'ite militias." The members of the umbrella group include: the Al-Nusrah Front, Ahrar al-Sham, Jund al-Aqsa, Faylak al-Sham, Liwa al-Haqq, Jaysh al-Sunna, and Ajnad al-Sham. The organization celebrated the liberation of Idlib from control by Asad's regime. One of the fighters published a list names of 73 *shahids* who were killed during the liberation. In honor of Idlib's liberation the organization produced a video together with all the member groups which documented the liberation of the city.<sup>92</sup>



From left to right: A video produced in honor of Idlib's liberation;  
the logo for the umbrella organization "Jaysh al-Fath"

### **The Islamic State – Raqqa Province**

- The Islamic State in Raqqa Province published the following:
  - A video called "Messages for the Caliphate Soldiers in Libya". The video featured fighters in the province sending messages of support to the IS fighters in Libya, as they called upon the fighters to stand strong opposite the militias battling against

<sup>91</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>92</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/m.ali.alkhatib/posts/842233132516742> (Arabic).

them. In addition, the fighters in Syria wished for victory for their brothers in Libya, which would lead to a revolution in Megrab – territory which was in total control of the Islamic State.<sup>93</sup>

- Photo reports on civilian subjects, including: a report about the activities of the flour mills and bakeries in the Tall Abyad region,<sup>94</sup> a report about the cleaning and repairing of Raqqa city roads by the "Center for Services",<sup>95</sup> a report about archaeological sites in the city of Raqqa,<sup>96</sup> and a report about the arrival of spring in Raqqa Province – in order to portray life in the province as pastoral.<sup>97</sup>
- A photo report about removing structures built over graves, since that practice is forbidden in Islam, according to the Islamic State's interpretation of religious law.<sup>98</sup>
- A photo report on the topic of launching mortar rockets towards the Kobane [Ayn al-Arab]<sup>99</sup> militias, and on the topic of artillery fire from tanks towards apostates west of Ras al-Ayn, a town near the Syrian border with Turkey.<sup>100</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Aleppo Province***

- The Islamic State in Aleppo Province published the following:
  - A video documenting the reactions of civilians in the province to the announcement of Boko Haram's leader's pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State. Aside from blessings in honor of the pledge of allegiance, IS fighters in Aleppo called on fighters from all over Africa to join the Caliphate.<sup>101</sup>
  - A photo report on the topic of shooting at Syrian Army posts in Tallet Tayyara, and a gas factory, using mortars.<sup>102</sup> Another report documented rocket launchings and mortar explosions targeting Syrian Army air defence units.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7903> (Arabic).

<sup>94</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8013> (Arabic).

<sup>95</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8133> (Arabic).

<sup>96</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8135> (Arabic).

<sup>97</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8084> (Arabic).

<sup>98</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8237> (Arabic).

<sup>99</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8141> (Arabic).

<sup>100</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8219> (Arabic).

<sup>101</sup> [https://archive.org/details/fr\\_hl](https://archive.org/details/fr_hl)

<sup>102</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7702> (Arabic).

<sup>103</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7888> (Arabic).

- A photo report on the subject of a military parade through the streets of Manbaj, in honor of completing a military course in one of the training camps in the province. IS fighters armed with rifles were featured in the pictures, marching through the city's streets in the rain.<sup>104</sup>



**A military parade in the town of Manbaj**

- A photo report about daily life in the city of Al-Rai, which presented images of agricultural, business, and construction activities in the city. A copy of an official permit to go out of the borders of the Islamic State, for the purpose of medical treatment, was also featured in the video. The document proves that the Islamic State operates a well organized bureaucratic system, that regularizes entries and exits from areas under IS control.<sup>105</sup>
- A photo report about the construction of mosques in Manbaj, and the repair of roads in Al-Bab.<sup>106</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Homs Province***

- The Islamic State in Homs Province published the following:
  - A video about the battles waged by the organization against the Syrian Army and Shabiha forces in the Sha'er and Al-Sukhnah areas. In the course of the attack – which included a suicide bomber from Jordan detonating himself – the organization took over two checkpoints and bombed the Furqlus Gas Pipeline. At the end of the

<sup>104</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7760> (Arabic).

<sup>105</sup> <http://goo.gl/fSZEWR>

<sup>106</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7705> (Arabic).

video the weapons seized after the attack were displayed.<sup>107</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Hama Province***

- The Islamic State in Hama Province published the following:
  - A video called "Strike their Necks". In the video, an IS fighter threatened to take revenge on the Alawites for their crimes against the Sunni population. Later in the video there was footage of IS fighters slitting the throats of Syrian regime Alawi security forces.<sup>108</sup>



**The video banner**

### ***The Islamic State – Al-Hasaka Province***

- The Islamic State in Al-Hasaka Province, also known as the Al-Baraka Province among IS fighters, published the following:
  - A video about how satisfied the civilians and IS fighters are in Al-Baraka Province, regarding the pledge of allegiance made by the mujahideen in Nigeria to the Islamic Caliphate. The video began with footage of the pledge of allegiance being broadcast on huge screens for the province residents as they sat on chairs in the street. Afterwards, the residents and IS fighters were interviewed about the subject, and they blessed the pledge of allegiance and called for the trend to continue in other parts of the world.<sup>109</sup>
  - A video documenting a Concourse rocket hitting a Hammer belonging to Kurdish PPK

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<sup>107</sup> <https://archive.org/details/seeralmaark2>

<sup>108</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>109</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

fighters.<sup>110</sup>

- A video called “From Darkness to Light – The Islamization of one of the Christian Assyrian Prisoners”. The video featured a Christian man who became a Muslim, received shari’a training, and changed his Assyrian name to the Arabic name Abu Umar. In the video a message was transmitted to Christian population, encouraging them to choose the correct religion and become Muslims.<sup>111</sup> A transcript of the video was published by The Media Front for the Support of the Islamic State, and the Al-Battar media institution.<sup>112</sup>

### ***The Islamic State – Deir Ezzor Province***

- The Islamic State in Deir Ezzor Province, also known as Al-Khayr Province among IS fighters, published photo reports about the end of training of a new group of fighters in the province<sup>113</sup>, and about the city maintenance activities in the southern part of province, under the supervision of the “Services Office”.<sup>114</sup>

### ***Other organizations***

- The Aharar al-Sham movement, a Salafi jihad organization in Syria, and other organizations in Syria like the “Islamic Army”, expressed support for Operation Decisive Storm lead by the coalition of Arab countries, and headed by Saudi Arabia, against the Houthi control of Yemen. According to these groups, the coalition is an expression of their common desire to stop Iran’s expansion plan in Yemen, which threatens the Islamic identity and support among the Yemenite people. The movement added that the Iranian expansion was similar to what was happening throughout Syria for the last four years, as the mujahideen focused their efforts on stopping Iran. Therefore, they deserved help and support.<sup>115</sup>
- The Al-Ramah media institution, operating on behalf of the Aharar Al-Sham movement, published a video called “You Shall Not Pass”. The video featured interviews with fighters

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<sup>110</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>111</sup> [https://archive.org/details/es\\_ba](https://archive.org/details/es_ba)

<sup>112</sup> [al-battar-media-foundation.blogspot.com/2015/03/blog-post\\_29.html](http://al-battar-media-foundation.blogspot.com/2015/03/blog-post_29.html)

<sup>113</sup> [http://khilapha.blogspot.co.il/2015/03/blog-post\\_30.html](http://khilapha.blogspot.co.il/2015/03/blog-post_30.html)

<sup>114</sup> <http://goo.gl/D7JWZj>

<sup>115</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

from the organization talking about the battles in Idlib.<sup>116</sup>

## The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

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

- The Islamic State in Sinai Province published the following:
  - A proclamation (#5) listing all of the terror attacks carried out by the organization's fighters between February 19 and March 20, 2015, including: the assassination of an Egyptian officer in the village of Al-Kharafin in South Rafah, by a sharpshooter; an attack on a military patrol as a result of the detonation of an explosive device in the Al-`Ubaydat area in western Sheikh Zuweid; taking responsibility for an act of terror against an Egyptian Army armored vehicle in eastern Al-Qaria., in which all passengers in the vehicle were killed and injured; a suicide bombing against the Al-Arish army camp, in which dozens were killed; and more.<sup>117</sup>



The publication banner

- A documentation of plundering the motor from a 60M Egyptian tank, which was captured after an ambush by fighters from the organization.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>116</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.mnbr.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>118</sup> <https://isdarat.org/7762> (Arabic).



**The plundered tank motor**

- A collection of pastoral images documenting spring in the Sinai desert.<sup>119</sup>



**The banner publication**

## Africa

### **The Maghreb**

*On March 18, terrorists wielding assault rifles and dressed in military-style uniforms stormed the Bardo Museum in Tunis and killed 19 people, most of them foreign tourists, and wounded at least 44. The terrorists were killed in a firefight with security forces, although a manhunt began for two or three accomplices.<sup>120</sup> Radical Islamist groups, including the Islamic State, claimed responsibility for the attack. Tunisian authorities accused anywhere from nine to 20 people of helping the terrorists carry out the attack.<sup>121</sup> Another suspected accomplice was arrested in Milan, Italy on March 20.<sup>122</sup> On March 28, Tunisia's state news agency TAP said Abou Sakhr Lokman was killed, along with eight others, late Saturday during an anti-terrorist operation in the Gafsa region near the Algerian border. According to the Tunisian government, Lokman's group, Okba Ibn Nafaa, perpetrated the attack on the Bardo Museum.<sup>123</sup>*

<sup>119</sup> <https://isdarat.org/8222> (Arabic).

<sup>120</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/03/18/world/middleeast/ap-ml-tunisia-attack.html>

<sup>121</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/20/world/africa/militants-isis-included-claim-tunisia-museum-attack.html>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/21/us-tunisia-security-idUSKBN0MHOC620150321>

<sup>122</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/21/world/europe/national-bardo-museum-attack-suspect-arrested-in-italy.html>

<sup>123</sup> <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/03/29/tunisia-terror-suspects-killed/70625606/>

*On March 16, Reuters reported that many people were fleeing the Libyan coastal city of Sirte because of clashes between Islamic State militants and the Islamist government in Tripoli.<sup>124</sup> Two days later, Islamic State Militants killed 10 fighters of the Islamist government in Sirte.<sup>125</sup> On March 22, it was announced that peace talks between the rival Libyan governments would continue for an extra two days.<sup>126</sup> On March 24, Islamic State militants claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing at an army checkpoint in Benghazi that killed seven people, five soldiers and two civilians.<sup>127</sup>*

*On March 22, Moroccan authorities claimed to have dismantled an Islamic State terror cell that was planning attacks against security personnel and public officials. Thirteen men were arrested, and weapons and computers were confiscated.<sup>128</sup>*

*On March 16, a coalition of Tuareg rebel groups rejected a peace plan with Mali and demanded further negotiations.<sup>129</sup> The next day the coalition of rebels agreed to more negotiations with the Malian government.<sup>130</sup> On March 18, the Malian government said that it would not participate in any more talks with the rebel groups.<sup>131</sup>*

### **Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)**

- Ajnad al-Sahel and Liwaa al-Furqan, two groups affiliated with Al-Queda in Islamic Maghreb, published statements of support for the Islamic State titled “Reaching Out a Hand of Support for the Islamic State and for Caliph Al-Baghdadi”. In the statement, Abu al-Hareth al-Tindufi, an Algerian militant who heads both groups,<sup>132</sup> explained that his people share his hope that the Islamic State will re-establish the Islamic Caliphate and therefore they support its battles against enemies of the Muslim nation.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/16/us-libya-security-idUSKBN0MC1KJ20150316>

<sup>125</sup> <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/03/18/uk-libya-security-idUKKBN0ME2OR20150318>

<sup>126</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/un-says-libya-peace-talks-extended/2690509.html>

<sup>127</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/25/us-libya-security-blast-idUSKBN0MK2CE20150325>

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/morocco-claims-dismantling-of-is-linked-terror-cell/2693572.html>

<sup>129</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/16/us-mali-talks-idUSKBN0MC0WD20150316>

<sup>130</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/reu-mali-rebels-agree-on-further-talks-with-mediators/2684249.html>

<sup>131</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/18/us-mali-talks-idUSKBN0ME2NC20150318>

<sup>132</sup> [http://www.ahapress.info/2015/03/blog-post\\_2503.html](http://www.ahapress.info/2015/03/blog-post_2503.html)

<sup>133</sup> [http://www.twitlonger.com/show/n\\_1slal0q](http://www.twitlonger.com/show/n_1slal0q)

## Algeria

### *The Islamic State – Al-Jazair Province*

- The Islamic State in Al-Jazair Province published the following:
  - A claim of responsibility for a shooting attack by two militants on two soldiers near a coffee house in the town of Al-Ajiba, and a claim of responsibility for an attack on a convey of soldiers traveling in 80 vehicles on the outskirts of Al-Ajiba. As a result of the second attack, seven soldiers were killed. According to the statement, two days after the attack, security forces returned to the area in order to level the land near the location of the attacks. In the course of that work, the security forces detonated two mines buried by the mujahideen in the ground. The organization also claimed responsibility for shooting at a police car, killing one police officer, in Tabalat.<sup>134</sup>

## Libya

### *The Islamic State*

- During the “Benghazi Caliphate Newscast”, a statement was published about the pledge of allegiance of Abu Abdullah al-Libi, a senior religious scholar in the Ansar al-Sharia organization, to the leader of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.<sup>135</sup> In addition, al-Libi published a document in which he called upon the residents of Libya to unite around the mujahideen under the Caliphate flag, while belittling the Libyan National Congress and General Khalifa Hiftar, accusing them of collaborating with the west.<sup>136</sup>

### *The Islamic State - Tripoli Province*

- The Islamic State in Tripoli Province published the following:
  - A video about the destruction of the graves of holy men, because they symbolize polytheism.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>135</sup> <http://www.alarab.co.uk/?id=48724> (Arabic).

<sup>136</sup> <http://justpaste.it/YaAhlaLibya> (Arabic).

<sup>137</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

## ***The Islamic State - Barqa Province***

- The Islamic State in Barqa Province published the following:
  - A video about a suicide attack against military forces in the Al-Laythi district of Benghazi. The suicide bomber, named Khattab al-Ansari, recorded a final statement calling upon members of the other jihad organizations in Libya to desert those organizations and join the Islamic State. He also threatened the country's security forces. In the video, use of a drone was demonstrated, in order to be able to monitor gathering places of the apostates before an attack, and in order to film the explosion itself. No information was provided about the number of killed or injured in the attack.<sup>138</sup>



### **The Islamic State in the Barqa Province – using drones to collect intelligence before the attack**

- A photo report about the explosion of a building used as the headquarters for Brigade 166, a militia loyal to the Libya Dawn forces. The Brigade had soldiers posted in Sirte in order to supplant IS forces from the area.<sup>139</sup>
- Reports about the destruction of hookah pipes and other “forbidden objects” that were confiscated from coffee houses by members of the Hisba Office (an Islamic body responsible for preservation of the public morality and order),<sup>140</sup> and about the destruction of charms and cards used for witchcraft that were found in the home of a witch who harmed Muslims.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> [https://archive.org/details/3m\\_br](https://archive.org/details/3m_br)

<sup>139</sup> <http://www.alamatonline.net/13.php?id=139116>

<sup>140</sup> <http://goo.gl/K6jMzt>

<sup>141</sup> <http://goo.gl/j4XxhR>

- A statement was published about the death of Muhammad al-Arebi in a battle against the Hiftar Caliphate forces. Al-Arebi was the commander of the Libya Sheild 2 forces, and held a senior position in the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries.<sup>142</sup>

### ***Ansar al-Sharia in Libya***

- The Al-Raya media institution, operating on behalf of the Ansar al-Sharia organization in Libya, published the following:
  - A series of photographs documenting the end of course for graduating fighters, who underwent training for enforcing shari'a in Benghazi.<sup>143</sup>



**Course graduates**

- A photo report about the end of a training course for a group of fighters in the training camps around Benghazi. The footage featured the fighters engaging in physical training, undergoing weapon training, and learning theory in the classroom.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>142</sup> <http://goo.gl/BesFZY>

<sup>143</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>144</sup> <https://www.mnbr.info/vb/> (Arabic).



**Ansar al-Shari'a training session**

## Tunisia

- The Media Front to Support the Islamic State and the Al-Battar media institutions, assisting in disseminating information for the Islamic State, published an audio recording that was uploaded to media sites by the organization fighters. In the recording, the organization takes responsibility for an attack against foreign tourists near the Bardo Museum – in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia. On March 18, 2015, two terrorists dressed in military uniforms carried out a terror attack on a tourist bus near the Bardo Museum and the Tunisian Parliament, and afterwards broke into the compound and took hostages.

According to the audio clip, two members of the organization - called Abu Zakariyya and Abu Anas al-Tunisi – carried out the attack, armed with Kalashnikov rifles and hand grenades, targeting the Bardo Museum in Tunisia's capital. Aside from praise given to the two terrorists for their courage and steadfastness in opposing the security forces, the organization sent a threatening message to the Tunisian regime, saying that Tunisians will not enjoy stable security and that there will be more terror attacks in the country.<sup>145</sup>

According to the Africa al-Aalam media institution, this attack and future attacks in Tunisia are in revenge for the elimination of several of the organization's field commanders in Tunisia by the Tunisian security forces.

<sup>145</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).



**A banner produced in memory of some of the Tunisian commanders who identified with the Islamic State, and who were killed by Tunisian security forces.**

In the same context, the Alalam Africa media institution, which identifies with the Islamic State, published an article called “A Normal Day – Commentary on the Blessed Bardo Attack”, which covered the attack at the Bardo National Museum in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia. The attack, which was carried out on March 18, 2015, killing 22 people and injuring about 50 – was considered one of the most devastating terror attacks in Tunisian history.

The publication professed to describe the terror incidents as they truly occurred, and not as they were described by Tunisian media, and by the spokesperson for the Tunisian Interior Ministry, Muhammad al-Urwi. The chain of events was thus described: Two terrorists got off the metro opposite the Bardo police station, and opposite the Army Intelligence headquarters. They left a bag containing a weapon and hand grenades at the bus station, and went out to survey the area. They went back to collect their bag, and then entered the Bardo museum. According to the document, despite the fact that the terrorists were carrying weapons in the open, the police forces and presidential guard didn’t shoot even one bullet when the two terrorists killed the “original apostates” (European tourists) and the security guards protecting them. The two terrorists proceeded towards the Parliament headquarters, but then distanced themselves from the site because of heavy gunfire in their direction.

At that stage, the plan changed, and instead of entering the Parliament, a decision was made to eliminate all of the “classic heretics” and the “apostate police force” inside the museum. The two terrorists entered the museum, surveyed the area, captured all of the apostates and took them to one of the halls. The terrorists permitted Tunisians who worked in the museum to escape, and they

also released the children and directed them towards the exit.

One of the two terrorists stayed with the captives and interrogated them, while the other went outside to battle with the security forces – the counter-terrorism unit (called in Tunisia “The Counter-Islam Unit”), the Presidential Guard, and the army. That terrorist managed to injure some of the security forces, throwing a grenade at them and then retreating back into the museum in order to take part in killing the captives. The two terrorists were eventually killed by the security forces, and – according to the document – achieved what they had hoped for above all: “Death as martyrs for Allah, after killing and slaughtering enemies of Allah, and terrorizing them and their allies”.

The results of the attack were detailed in the publication as follows:

1. Elimination of 20 “classic heretics”, two “apostates”, and one police officer. Injury of 42 “classic heretics” and six “apostates”.
2. It was clarified that the military and police forces were incompetent, cowardly, and unsuccessful. This was proven by the fact that two people alone, with no military experience, were easily able to kill numerous heretics, despite the training, new equipment, and weapons possessed by the enemy.
3. It was clarified that it was easy to enter the most fortified and guarded place in all of Tunisia: the Parliament headquarters - which was surrounded by three army bases, and the Military Intelligence headquarters, in the heart of the capital city of Tunisia. It took no more than ten minutes to survey the site, and bringing weapons and ammunition into the capital was very simple.
4. It was clarified that no complicated plan or financing was needed to destroy the “country of apostates”. In order to carry out the attack, all that was needed were two Kalashnikov rifles, four hand grenades, and a small amount of ammunition (according to the publication, the terrorists were not wearing explosive belts, as claimed by the spokesperson from the Interior Ministry). The author advised Muslims in Tunisia to purchase weapons and carry out attacks in the country, instead of investing their money in searching for martyrs’ deaths in Libya.
5. Confusion among media sites and within the police force was revealed, as “many lies” were publicized by them, such as: a Tunisian museum employee was killed, three participants in

the attack were captured, and the terrorists wore military uniforms and arrived at the attack site in a vehicle (they were in fact wearing civilian clothing and arrived at the site by public transportation).

6. A number of Islamic religious leaders who claimed to help Muslims were revealed as being in fact apostates and disbelievers.
7. There was a sharp drop in the Tunisian stock exchange after the simple attack carried out by only two individuals. The author wondered what would happen to the Tunisian stock exchange in the event of a well-organized, attack on several military and tourist targets at the same time.
8. Tourism, one of Tunisia's main sources of income, suffered a blow. The attack caused many countries to caution their civilians against traveling to Tunisia, and to call upon those already there to return home.
9. It was clarified that many elements claiming to be Muslims are in fact apostates who expressed their sorrow over the deaths of the Christians and "idol worshipers", i.e. supporters of the nation-states.
10. It turned out that the Muslim Brotherhood were "despicable people", who shirk their responsibility to the Muslims and the Quran, and try to find favor in the eyes of the secular population.
11. It was revealed that the new rulers of Tunisia are French agents who maintain the status of Tunisia as a French colony. Proof of that can be found in the denunciations and threats issued by French officials shortly after the attack.
12. The masks of hypocrisy were removed from the faces of the journalists, politicians, and police officers, who want to distort Islam.
13. The morale of the Tunisian apostates, and in particular of the police and the military, has been severely damaged.

After dispensing words of praise for the terrorists, Yasin al-Abidi and Saber al-Khasnawi, the document presented two messages – one message for the Muslims in Tunisia, and one to the "tyrants". In the message to the Muslims, the author emphasized that shedding the blood of heretics and apostates is permissible, and therefore killing them is obligatory. The author calls upon

Muslims in Tunisia to hunt tourists, and especially the French, American, British, and Israeli nationals, and suggests a variety of ways of killing them: running over them with vehicles, enticing them on the road or in clubs and then slaughtering them on the beach or drowning them in the sea, poisoning them, crushing their skulls with a stone or smothering them with pillows in their rooms. In addition, the author offers some words of caution, such as: avoid being photographed by security cameras, avoid leaving fingerprints, don't use cell phones, don't use your real names, and don't leave weapons behind at the scene of an attack.

Regarding the message to the "tyrants", the author clarified that the Muslims have become accustomed to prisons, torture, and arrests, and that it has all become in their eyes a form of enjoyment that makes it possible for them to grow closer to God. In addition, the author warned that there were jihadist cells active in Tunisia, and that further attacks were to be expected.

With regard to who claimed responsibility for the attacks, or to which organization the two terrorists belonged, the author chose not to provide any information. The document ended with the author's recommendation that politicians and journalists flee Tunisia, and a call upon spies and informers to repent before it's too late.<sup>146</sup> The Shumukh Al-Islam website, for example, called upon its visitors to continue the trend and attack government representatives in Tunisia.<sup>147</sup>



**The publication banner**

- The Alalam Africa media institution also published two other publications:
  - An announcement about the death of Ahmad al-Ruwaysi, known as Abu Zakariyya al-Tunisi, commander of the Ansar Al-Sharia organization in Syria, in a battle in Sirte in

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<sup>146</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>147</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

western Libya. The announcement praised al-Tunisi for his participation in the elimination of Tunisian politicians, Chokri Belaid and Mohamed Brahmi; for his assisting the mujahideen in acquiring weapons; and for establishing training camps.<sup>148</sup> Al-Ruwaysi's death was also confirmed by a Tunisian Interior Ministry statement.<sup>149</sup>

- An article about the efforts of the Caliphate soldiers in Tunisia and the supporters of the Islamic State to set up a province in Tunisia that will be subject to the Islamic Caliphate. The article urges Muslims to contribute to this effort and help the jihad take action against the heretic Tunisian leadership. The article ridicules the Tunisian government because Islamic State fighters were able to carry out an attack in Bardo, in spite of efforts to maintain security in the country, a network of spies spread across the country, and the suppression the people's wishes.<sup>150</sup>

## Egypt

### *Ajnad Misr*

- The organization claimed responsibility for an attack that killed at least four officers, severely injured one man, and injured many others. According to the organization, Egyptian security forces authorized that a senior officer named Mustafa Shamis was killed in the attack, and eight other officers and soldiers were injured. The organization emphasized that it acted solely against the Egyptian security forces and anyone assisting them, and that it would continue to attack them as revenge for crimes against and the oppression of the Sunni population.<sup>151</sup>

## Nigeria

*On March 16, the Nigerian government announced that it had recaptured the town of Bama, in Borno State, from Boko Haram.<sup>152</sup> The next day the Nigerian government claimed that Boko Haram controlled only three local government districts in the northeast, down from around 20 local*

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<sup>148</sup> <https://twitter.com/SsssM72011372/status/577563098229297152?lang=en>

<sup>149</sup> <http://www.assakina.com/news/news2/65745.html>

<sup>150</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>151</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>152</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/nigerian-military-says-it-retook-key-town/2682720.html>

government areas (a territory the size of Belgium) at the beginning of the year.<sup>153</sup> On March 25, there were reports that Boko Haram had kidnapped hundreds of civilians in northeast Nigeria, including schoolchildren.<sup>154</sup> On March 28, Nigerians went to the polls to vote in a presidential election that was initially postponed, purportedly due to violence related to Boko Haram.<sup>155</sup> Voting was extended one day because of technical difficulties.<sup>156</sup> On March 31, the Nigerian Electoral Commission declared opposition leader and former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari to be the winner of the election.<sup>157</sup>

## **Somalia**

*Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahideen, the prominent jihad organization in Somalia, continued to clash with the government and the security forces. On March 27 Al-Shabaab fighters attacked the Maka al-Mukarama hotel in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. At least 14 people were killed, including the Somali ambassador in Switzerland. The Al-Shabaab organization claimed responsibility for the attack, due to the hotel hosting government officials.<sup>158</sup> The hotels in Mogadishu are one of the targets for Al-Shabaab fighters, who were exiled from the city several years ago but still control the southern village areas of Somalia.<sup>159</sup>*

*Meanwhile, the Islamic State, that set its sights on East Africa, addressed the head of Al-Shabbab, Abu Uabaidah, and tried to convince him to pledge allegiance to the Islamic State. This was in an effort to cause Al-Shabaab to split from Al-Qaeda, as it seemed that the organization was losing control on areas in Somalia due to attacks by the African Union Mission in the country. This suggestion from the Islamic State created internal tensions in Al-Shabaab between those who wanted to remain loyal to Al-Queda, and those who were interested in pledging allegiance to the Islamic State.<sup>160</sup>*

## **Al-Sahbaab al-Mujahideen Movement**

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<sup>153</sup> <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/03/17/uk-nigeria-violence-idUKKBN0MD25W20150317>

<sup>154</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/reports-say-boko-haram-kidnaps-hundreds-in-northeastern-nigeria/2694266.html>

<sup>155</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/content/nigerian-leader-urges-peaceful-vote-amid-electoral-violence/2696575.html>

<sup>156</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/03/28/africa/nigeria-election/>

<sup>157</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/04/01/africa/nigeria-presidential-election/>

<sup>158</sup> <http://goo.gl/k1hlSh>

<sup>159</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32099329>

<sup>160</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/03/isil-eyes-east-africa-foments-division-150322130940108.html>

- Al-Kataeb media institution, which serves as the media wing for Al-Sahbaab al-Mujahideen movement, published the following:
  - Two videos with a title inspired by the Quran: "They are the Enemy, so Warn Them" (parts 5 and 6).<sup>161</sup>
  - A video called "From the Glorious Fortified Strongholds – Part 2", depicting the daily lives of members of the organization on the front lines.<sup>162</sup>



The video banner

- The organization claimed responsibility for an attack in the Mecca Hotel in Mogadishu, in which several diplomats and senior Somali government officials were killed.<sup>163</sup>
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### Kenya

- Visitors to the jihad forum Shumukh al-Islam expressed their grievance towards the Kenyan authorities for arresting Sheikh Hasan Husayn Adam al-Sumali and several of his students, who had expressed their support of the Islamic State, the mujahideen, and jihad.<sup>164</sup>



The banner praising Adam's actions

<sup>161</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>162</sup> <https://alfidaa.info/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>163</sup> <https://al-fidaa.com/vb/> (Arabic).

<sup>164</sup> <https://shamikh1.info/vb/> (Arabic).

## 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 March 2015, Choudary published various tweets, such as: an interview with a Spanish newspaper about the new and expected conquest of Spain by the Islamic State; the election of Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister, which will hasten the liberation of Palestine; the fulfilment of the Muslim prophecy about the liberation of Jerusalem; praise for the induction of shari'a law in Britain; and the start of a campaign in social media networks, which is intended to convince Muslims on the European continent – particularly in Britain – not to participate in the democratic elections.<sup>165</sup>

It is worth mentioning that in the framework of the campaign to boycott the elections, Choudary's followers conducted a debate on social media networks called "Stay Muslim – Don't Vote". The social media networks and the Salafi site *slafimediauk.com* – which identifies with Choudary's supporters – uploaded videos and publications on the topic. For example, a video by a Salafi Sheikh named Abu Waleed was uploaded, providing a detailed explanation relying on holy Islamic texts, why participating in democratic elections is considered to be a sin and against the ways of Islam.<sup>166</sup> Choudary's supporters also distributed a booklet on the topic.<sup>167</sup>

It seems that this campaign was not accepted with much enthusiasm by most of the Muslim British citizens, and some of them tweeted that in order to help Muslims solve their problems in the country they should in fact take part in the elections.<sup>168</sup>



Tweets from Choudary's Twitter account<sup>169</sup>

<sup>165</sup> <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/>

<sup>166</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7180mLBAkBE>

<sup>167</sup> <http://www.slideshare.net/Abuhafiza1/stay-muslim-dont-vote-46699387>

<sup>168</sup> #StayMuslimDontVote

<sup>169</sup> <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/status/578437996338348033;>

<https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/status/578804423515844608> (both in English).



**The video of Sheikh Abu Waleed, which was uploaded to social media sites, denouncing Muslims who participated in democratic elections**

## Miscellaneous

*The jihad forum, Aren al-Muhjaideen, published an announcement on March 24 about the confiscation of its domain addresses - al3aren.com and al3aren.net – by ICANN, a company responsible for managing internet domain addresses, based on recommendations of the UN. The forum writers also added that enemies of Allah want the source of jihad ideology and the only jihad organization to be the Islamic State, which is distorting the religion and is self-serving. Therefore, despite the fact that they occasionally halt their activities, the Islamic State websites continue to work efficiently. At the end of the announcement, the forum writers noted that what happened only strengthens the site of the Aren al-Mujahideen forum, which will never give up and will not stop fighting against the enemies of Allah.*

*It should be emphasized that in the image accompanying the announcement, which features the announcement and the confiscation by ICAAN, it is written that the confiscation was implemented because the forum was involved in extreme actions and the name of Sheikh Abu Maria Al-Qatani was displayed on the forum. His name appears on the Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee list published by the United States.<sup>170</sup>*

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<sup>170</sup> <https://al-aren.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 (JWVG) is a specialized research and analysis team at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). Composed of researchers fluent in Arabic, the JWVG monitors websites that support and serve the Global Jihad organizations. The unique characteristic of JWVG publications is the team's integration of diverse materials from a wide variety of Arabic sources. JWVG connects each source to larger trends, providing a complete understanding of events on both a local and a global scale.

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