

Bimonthly Report

Summary of Information on Jihadist Websites The First Half of May 2014

Highlights

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

- Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri exposes a secret correspondence proving that the ISIS used to be an affiliate of Al-Qaeda in Iraq and had sworn allegiance to the organization. According to him, the ISIS began to take an unfortunate turn under the leadership of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi when it decided to defy the dictates of Al-Qaeda's leadership. Al-Zawahiri accuses the ISIS of irresponsible behavior that endangers the continued fight against the Syrian regime by causing a rift among the ranks of the mujahideen in Syria.

Al-Zawahiri's criticism of the ISIS evokes a wave of responses by jihad activists, led by the spokesperson for the ISIS. In their opinion, al-Zawahiri is mistaken in his attitude towards the ISIS, does not speak the truth, and must re-examine his attitude towards the ISIS.

- Sheikh Adam Gadahn, a senior Al-Qaeda official, complains about America's interference in the internal matters of Arab countries, including Egypt, and demands an end to this unacceptable trend. According to him, young Muslims must act against this trend to curb the phenomenon.
- The Shura Council of the Islamic Emirates in Afghanistan announces its intention to carry out a wave of terrorist attacks against various targets in the Afghan government, such as military facilities, diplomatic compounds, etc.
- In light of the riots in Ma'an Jordan, ISIS militants call on the residents of Ma'an to revolt against the Hashemite regime, led by King Abdullah, and promises to assist them if possible. Jordanian military forces must come to their senses and stop defending the borders of Israel, and allow the mujahideen to operate more freely.
- Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) publishes a propaganda video in which it explains the modus operandi that the group used to attack a military facility that operates UAV's in Aden, a city in southern Yemen, in the beginning of April 2014.
- Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram in Nigeria, claims responsibility for the abduction of Christian Nigerian girls from their school. According to him, most of the abducted students have declared their conversion to Islam. In addition, he expresses willingness to release the Christian students who have not converted in exchange for the release of Muslim prisoners in

Nigeria. He also promises to spill Christian blood and fight against democracy.

- A prominent writer on a section of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum dedicated to military issues suggests ways for jihad fighters to deal with the problem of UAV's and how to destroy them.

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New Publications

Ideology

- Sheikh Abu Saad al-Amili, a very prominent writer on jihadist Web forums, published an article titled, “Legal Interpretations for the Destruction of the Idol of Democracy”, in which he provided proof from holy Islamic sources of why democracy is incompatible with Islam.¹
- The Al-Ghuraba jihadist PR group published on its Twitter account a collection of fatwas by Nasir al-Fahd, a Saudi jihadist scholar sitting in prison since 2003.²
- During the first half of May 2014, the Al-Sahab jihadist media institution published the following:
 - A video of a speech given by Adam Gadhan, a senior leader of Al-Qaeda of American origin, titled, “Lessons from the Past and Hope for the Future”. In the video, Gadhan accused the U.S. government of flagrant intervention in the internal affairs of Arab countries in general, and of conspiring with the Egyptian military establishment in particular in order to depose the former President of Egypt, Mohamed Morsi. In this context, Gadhan called on all Egyptian youth to follow the example of Muhammad Atta and the other perpetrators of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and fight against the United States in order to avoid government-sponsored and supported coups.³
 - An announcement regarding the opening of a jihadist Web forum, Al-Fida, to accept visitor questions addressed to Sheik Asim Umar, the head of Al-Qaeda’s Shari’a Council in Pakistan. According to the announcement, Umar’s responses will be published at an undisclosed date in the near future.⁴

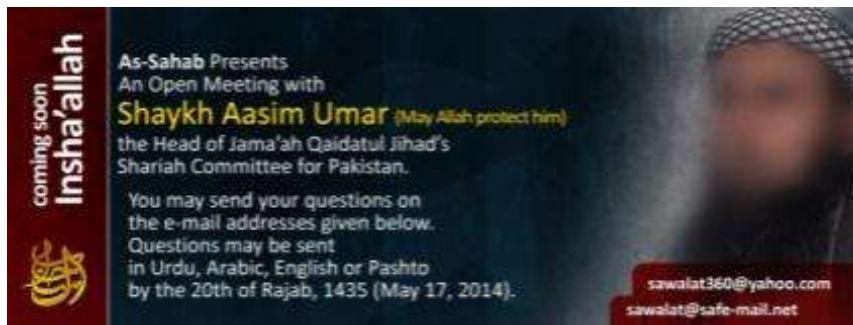
¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic);

https://twitter.com/alghuraba_ar/status/462790720282058752/photo/1

³ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁴ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).



The banner announcing an “open meeting” with Sheikh Asim Umar

- Markaz Aisha, a jihadist media institution focused on Lebanon, published an article titled, “Jihad of an Elite Group or Jihad of the Nation” by Sheikh Muhammad bin Umar Abu Asim al-Lubnani, regarding the importance of establishing a broad popular base of moral, financial and physical support for the mujahideen.⁵

Al-Qaeda’s Internal Rift

- Since April 2013, tensions have been on the rise between the ISIS, and the Al-Nusra Front and Al-Qaeda leadership. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s refusal to adhere to the dictates of Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, his unwillingness to retract the declaration in which he appointed himself Emir of the ISIS, and the organization’s expansion from Iraq to Syria formed the basis for this rift. Since then, various attempts have been made by jihad activists, including Khalid al-Suri, Ayman al-Zawahiri’s emissary, but so far these attempts have not led to compromise or calm.

In light of this internal crisis among jihad circles, a wave of publications continued in support of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the ISIS, on the one hand, and those criticizing this step and supporting Ayman al-Zawahiri on the other hand. The following lines refer to the publications released regarding this rift during the relevant period.

- The Al-Sahab jihadist media institution published an audio clip titled, “Evidence in Support of Preventing the Bloodshed of the Mujahideen in Al-Sham” by Sheikh al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al-Qaeda. In the introduction, al-Zawahiri praised Sheikh Hani al-Sibai’, a Salafi-jihadist sheikh residing in London, for his efforts to reconcile the various

⁵ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

jihadist groups in Syria, especially the Al-Nusra Front and the ISIS. According to al-Zawahiri, he decided to comply with al-Sibai's request to re-address the rift among the mujahideen in Syria in order to put an end to it. In the clip, al-Zawahiri refers to several main issues:

- A. Proof that the ISIS is an affiliate of Al-Qaeda, which proves that the establishment of the ISIS and the oath of allegiance to its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, are contrary to the dictates of the Al-Qaeda leadership. Al-Zawahiri offered several proofs of the relationship [between the two organizations]:
 - The Shura Council of the ISIS, under the leadership of Abu Umar al-Baghdadi, the former leader of the Islamic State of Iraq as it was called prior to changing its name to the ISIS, swore allegiance to the leader of Al-Qaeda, Sheikh Osama bin Laden. This oath of allegiance was not published publicly due to the sensitive political circumstances in Iraq at the time. On the basis of this agreement, members of the Al-Qaeda leadership and members of the Islamic State of Iraq focused on different issues.
- B. A secret exchange of letters that took place over a certain period of time between the Al-Qaeda leadership and members of the Islamic State of Iraq, and the factors that led to the declaration of the ISIS.
 - Ayman al-Zawahiri mentioned a letter of rebuke that was sent by Attiya Allah, a senior Al-Qaeda leader who was killed in 2011 for choosing Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to lead the organization without consulting with, or requesting formal approval from, the Al-Qaeda leadership.
 - Another letter mentioned Attiya Allah's demand that the War Ministry of the Islamic State of Iraq provide Al-Qaeda with information regarding the Islamic State of Iraq's new leadership. In response to the letter, members of the organization's Shura Council stated that they had tried to postpone the date of the declaration of the new leader until they received official approval from the Al-Qaeda leadership after the two former leaders were

killed, but in the end they could not wait to receive approval due to increased pressure on the organization by its enemies in Iraq.

- Another letter mentioned Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's assurance to al-Zawahiri that the emirate he declared would be temporary.
- In another letter, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi objected to the oath of allegiance taken by Abu Bakr al-Golani, leader of the Al-Nusra Front (an affiliate of Al-Qaeda in Syria) to the leadership of Al-Qaeda.

C. The dangerous consequences arising from the irresponsible behavior of the ISIS.

- The rift among the ranks of the mujahideen and the deterioration [of the situation] to bloodshed.
- The rift and fighting among the mujahideen serves the [interests of] the Assad regime.
- The ISIS, led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, is considered a rebel group fighting against the leadership of Al-Qaeda and its emir. In light of this, al-Zawahiri called on members of the ISIS to return to Iraq, to obey and remain loyal to the emir of Al-Qaeda, al-Zawahiri. The Al-Nusra Front continues to receive orders from the Al-Qaeda leadership in order to concentrate efforts of fighting against the Alawite regime in Syria.⁶

In an interview with the Lebanese daily, Al-Akhbar, al-Sibai' confessed to his connections with al-Zawahiri and sought to strengthen them. According to him, "Sheikh (al-Zawahiri's) words prove that Sheikh al-Baghdadi and the soldiers of the [Islamic] State [of Iraq and Al-Sham] disobeyed the order of their emir [meaning al-Zawahiri]. They must obey his dictates in order to avoid bloodshed and preserve the reputation of the mujahideen".⁷

Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a senior member of the Salafi-jihadist movement in Jordan, also expressed his support for al-Zawahiri's statements. In a statement published on the jihadist Web

⁶ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁷ <http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/205753> (Arabic).

portal, Minbar al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, al-Maqdisi emphasized that unity among the ranks of the mujahideen must be preserved. In addition, he criticized those who expressed support for the ISIS.⁸ Al-Zawahiri's speech also garnered criticism from the ISIS and its supporters. The jihadist media institution of the ISIS, Al-Furqan, published a recorded speech by the spokesperson for the organization, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani. In the beginning of his speech, al-Adnani referred to Osama bin Laden, Abu Yahya al-Libi and Abu Mus'ab Zarqawi who, in his opinion, accurately reflected the true ideology of Al-Qaeda. Al-Adnani explained that for many years, the ISIS had obeyed Al-Qaeda due to its respect for Al-Qaeda's leaders and had avoided attacks in Iran, Saudi Arabia and other countries that could have harmed Al-Qaeda's interests. Nevertheless, al-Adnani went on to personally address and attack al-Zawahiri while declaring that the ISIS had never been a subordinate branch of Al-Qaeda. He maintained that, had Al-Qaeda been in the realm of the Islamic State, it would have no choice but to swear allegiance to the ISIS. At the end of the speech, al-Adnani made several requests: reject the Al-Nusra Front's oath of allegiance to Al-Qaeda, declare the Shi'ites and the armies of several Arab countries to be infidels, and encourage jihad against those armies, especially the Egyptian army.⁹



The video banner

- The Al-Ghuraba jihadist media institution published a statement titled, “The Shunning of the [Islamic] State [of Iraq and Al-Sham] and al-Adnani as described by Tariq Abd al-Halim and Hani al-Sibai by Sheikh Abu Ubaidah al- Shinqiti, a sage and member of the ISIS. The statement

⁸ <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=05051401> (Arabic).

⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrwvi5vqC_w

condemned the criticism of the ISIS by two Salafi-jihadist sheikhs who support the leadership of Ayman al-Zawahiri.¹⁰



The statement banner

- Markaz Aisha, a jihadist media institution focused on the Sunni population in Lebanon, published a statement in which it called on Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri to re-examine his attitude towards the ISIS as a result of his latest speech. According to the statement, al-Zawahiri defended the Islamic State of Iraq (previously known as the ISIS) against various accusations in the past. Therefore, it questioned why al-Zawahiri's attitude towards the ISIS changed and called on him to once again defend the ISIS and work to create unity among the ranks of the mujahideen.¹¹
- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, also published several items criticizing al-Zawahiri's speech:
 - An article titled, "Evidence in Support of Preventing Bloodshed: Between Hope and Pain" by Abu Khabab al-Iraqi, a writer affiliated with the ISIS. According to al-Iraqi, al-Zawahiri was wrong to blame the ISIS for the bloodshed among the mujahideen in Syria. According to him, it would have been better had he addressed the Al-Nusra Front's erroneous interpretation of the religion and blame it for the rift among jihadist groups.¹²

¹⁰ https://twitter.com/alghuraba_ar (Arabic).

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

¹² https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar (Arabic).

- In another article, Abu Khabab al-Iraq criticized Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a senior member of the Salafi-jihadist movement in Jordan and supporter of Sheikh al-Zawahiri. According to al-Iraqi, al-Maqdisi had the wrong impression of the ISIS, which he claimed made exaggerated use of violence and takfir (the practice of one Muslim declaring another an unbeliever, allowing him to be killed). According to al-Iraqi, the Al-Nusra Front, an affiliate of Al-Qaeda in Syria, is the one inciting attacks against the ISIS. The writer presented al-Maqdisi with proof that ISIS militants were the faithful representatives of the principle of the oneness of Allah and should, therefore, be supported.¹³
- The Al-Arabiya jihadist media institution published the second edition of a pamphlet titled, “Removing Guilt from Islamic State Soldiers” by Sheikh Abu al-Mundhir al-Shinqiti, a Salafi-jihadist sage affiliated with the ISIS. The article was first published in December 2013 and the second edition re-emphasized the religious reasons for why all Muslims and jihad factions must swear allegiance to the ISIS and its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, citing written proof.¹⁴

Strategy

- The jihadist media institution of AQAP, Al-Malahem, published the fourth part in a video series titled, “Repulsion of Aggression”. The beginning of the video showed Yemeni civilians complaining about American drone attacks, which the video narrator described as “brutal aggression”. This introduction was intended to be used as a background and explanation for the operation that its members carried out on April 2, 2014: an attack on a military facility that operates UAV’s in Aden, a city in southern Yemen.¹⁵ According to the video, the operation involved 10 militants who were divided into three groups, and a suicide bomber who drove the explosives-laden vehicle. The video showed the photos taken by the drone, the “modus operandi” of the operation, and the training that the terrorist underwent as well as their recorded wills. According to the video, 80 officers and soldiers were killed in the operation, the offices of the military intelligence headquarters were set on fire, and several military vehicles

¹³ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar (Arabic).

¹⁴ https://twitter.com/alghuraba_ar (Arabic).

¹⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/04/02/us-yemen-attack-idUSBREA310I920140402> (English).

were destroyed. The end of the video included a threatening message by Qassim al-Rimi, a prominent commander in the organization, directed at the United States and its collaborators.¹⁶



The action plan of the operation against the Yemeni military headquarters in Aden

- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution published an article titled, “The Islamic State and the Role of its Leadership” by Abu Hamid al-Barqawi in which he lists what he believes are the reasons for the ISIS’s success in achieving the establishment of an Islamic state, including steadfast belief and the intelligent use of Islamic legal terminology. The writer further described how the organization’s extensive PR system and military successes contributed to its reputation.¹⁷
- A visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist media institution published correspondence regarding the fighting strategy of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen militants in Somalia. According to him, the retreat of Al-Shabab militants from several areas in Somalia during March 2014 was a tactical retreat in order to allow enemy forces to enter those areas and then impose a siege on them.¹⁸

Guidebooks and Instruction Pamphlets

- A prominent writer on a section of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum dedicated to military issues, named “Asim al-Sumali”, published links to download a guide for assembling roadside charges using simple homemade materials. In addition to detailed explanations, the guidebook included photos and videos on how to assemble electronic circuits. According to the

¹⁶ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁷ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar (Arabic).

¹⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

writer, the guidebook is useful to whoever wants to wage individual jihad.¹⁹



A photo posted by the writer for illustrative purposes

- A prominent writer on the section of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum dedicated to military issues, named “abdooo6”, suggested several ways for the mujahideen to cope with the problem of drones that are killing them: plant roadside explosive devices, launch rockets towards enemy bases and carry out suicide attacks. In addition, the writer recommended that the mujahideen damage the drones when they are on the ground rather than in the air by launching rockets. In this way, they will be able to destroy dozens of missiles. The writer also recommended the use of psychological warfare by building dummy targets for loading the drones, filming the attacks on the dummy targets and publishing the videos in the media. In this way, the mujahideen will be able to mock the enemy and damage his morale. According to the writer, the mujahideen must destroy the spies’ sense of security by offering money to anyone who provides information on them or turns them in.²⁰
- A visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist media institution posted links to download the Global Mapper software, which serves as a GPS.²¹

¹⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

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

²¹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- The Al-Sahab jihadist media institution, which serves as a platform for publications by Al-Qaeda's leadership, published a video titled, "Days with the Imam [Osama bin Laden]: Part 4" by Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda.²²



The video banner

- Jund al-Aqsa, a jihadist group in Syria, published a video of a eulogy in memory of Abu Musab al-Ansari, the emir of the organization, who was killed on May 1, 2014 by Syrian army fire in Saraqib, Idlib Province, in northern Syria.²³



The banner in memory of Abu Musab al-Ansari

- The ISIS eulogized four of its members in Salah al-Din Province who were killed in various suicide attacks that were carried out against Iraqi security forces²⁴ and in memory of two members who were killed in Al-Anbar Province.²⁵

²² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

²³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



Photos of the four martyrs in Salah al-Din Province



Photos of the martyrs in Al-Anbar Province

- Al-Katiba al-Khadra, a jihadist group in Syria, eulogized Muhammad al-Qafazi (aka Abu Bakr al-Najdi), one of its members who was killed during a raid on a Syrian Air Intelligence branch at the Al-Zuhara Association in Rif, western Aleppo Province.²⁶



Abu Bakr al-Najdi

Magazines

²⁶ https://twitter.com/K_ALkhadraa/status/465393007391690752/photo/1

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published new issues of its jihadist magazines in English and Urdu: Issue No. 63 of the English-language magazine *In Fight* (165 pp.);²⁷ the April-May 2014 issue of the magazine *Nawai Afghan* (71 pp.),²⁸ both of which cover jihad in Afghanistan.



The covers of, from left to right, *In Fight* and *Nawai Afghan*

- The PR department of Ansar al-Shari'a in Libya published the second issue (12 pp.) of its magazine, *Al-Itisam*. The current edition focused on messages addressed to the Libyan people from Ansar al-Shari'a, a review of the organization's operations, advice on education and articles denouncing secularism and democracy.²⁹



From left to right: members of the organization distributing the magazine to residents as part of a propaganda/dawah campaign; the banner of the second edition of *Al-Itisam*

²⁷ [http://www.jhuf.net/showthread.php?21457-Islami-Emirate-Afghanistan-IN-FIGHT-63-\(03-2014\)](http://www.jhuf.net/showthread.php?21457-Islami-Emirate-Afghanistan-IN-FIGHT-63-(03-2014))

²⁸ <http://nawaiafghan.blogspot.co.il/> (Urdu).

²⁹ <https://twitter.com/iahia2013>

- A new edition (no. 52) of the periodical, *Al-Naba*, which is produced by the ISIS in Nineveh Province, was published. The periodical presented all of the operations that were carried out by members of the organization during March 2014 in Iraq, divided by province. According to the report, a total of 1,377 operations were carried out during this period. The provinces in which the greatest number of operations were carried out were Nineveh Province (406 operations) and Al-Anbar Province (328 operations). The report also divided the operations according to type, including: bombings (626 operations), shootings using various weapons (232 operations), sniper attacks targeting Shia (122 operations), suicide attacks using car bombs (11 operations), suicide attacks using explosive belts (8 operations), etc.³⁰



The periodical banner

- A new edition (no. 6) of the jihadist periodical, *Hisad al-Jihad*, which describes terrorist attacks carried out against the Egyptian regime, was published. The current edition focused on terrorist attacks that took place between May 2 and May 9, 2014.³¹
- A new edition (no. 55) of the jihadist periodical, *Al-Waqi*, was published. The current edition (16 pp.) described the history of the term “Khawarij”, the first early Islamic sect that broke off from Islam as a result of differences of opinion regarding the identity of the Prophet Muhammad’s successor, which has since become a derogatory term for Muslims who adhere to a radical interpretation of Islam and embrace violence. The periodical also included a news report regarding the integration of security measures that were designed to detect, among other

³⁰ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

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

things, chemical materials, other dangerous substances and suspicious packages in European airports.³²



The periodical banner

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

Two main events occupied the residents of Afghanistan during the first half of May 2014: the mudslide that claimed the lives of over 2,100 people, and the first democratic elections ever to take place in Afghanistan.

On May 14, 2014 it was reported that the publication of the initial election results would be delayed by one day due to concerns of fraud: over 900 complaints were received regarding the proper administration of the election.³³ The results, which were published the next day, were not surprising: none of the candidates received enough votes to win the majority necessary to declare the election results in the first round. Therefore, the elections are moving to the second round, in which Abdullah Abdulla, the former Foreign Minister, and Ashraf Ghani, a former economist at the World Bank, will compete head to head. The second round is expected to take place on June 14, 2014 and the results will be published on July 22, 2014.³⁴

³² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

³³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/14/us-afghanistan-election-idUSBREA4D0GM20140514> (English).

³⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/15/us-afghanistan-election-idUSBREA4E07J20140515> (English).

The Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan (Taliban in Afghanistan)

- The Shura Council of the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan published an announcement regarding the launch of a series of attacks set to take place on May 12, 2014 under the name, “Khaybar” (a reference to attacks that were carried out by the Prophet Muhammad’s followers). The announcement explained that the purpose of the upcoming operation will be to harm foreign occupiers, spies, collaborators, Afghani soldiers and government officials, and that the attacks will target army bases, convoys and diplomatic centers by way of suicide attacks and rocket fire. At the end of the announcement, the Afghani people were asked to cooperate with the mujahideen and help them in their battle against the infidels.³⁵



The banner, which reads “Khaybar terrorist attacks”

- The Taliban in Afghanistan published a claim of responsibility for a suicide attack that was carried out on April 14 at a military center in Boldak, Kandahar Province. According to the announcement, four suicide terrorists took part in the attack, in which they killed the security guards, broke into the compound and detonated a car bomb. The organization claimed that over 40 soldiers and officers were killed in the attack.³⁶

The Arabian Peninsula

Clashes between Yemeni security forces and AQAP militants continued to claim lives on both

³⁵ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

³⁶ <http://shahamat-arabic.com/index.php/news/41655> (Arabic).

sides in light of the former's insistence on increasing their operations against terrorist cells in the country. The President of Yemen, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, emphasized that military forces would continue to pursue AQAP in all the provinces of Yemen.³⁷ In the beginning of May, security forces managed to kill 37 AQAP militants in Abyan and Shabwa.³⁸

On the other hand, AQAP was also credited with some successes. On May 14, 2014 AQAP militants attacked two army posts in Azan and Jul-al-Rida in southern Yemen, killing 23 people. This attack was preceded by an attempted attack on the presidential palace, and a failed assassination attempt on the Yemeni Defense Minister, Mohamed Nasser Ahmad, and two senior security officers. Due to a fear of revenge attacks by AQAP in response to security forces' seizure of Azan, Yemeni security forces deepened their presence in the capital city of Saana.³⁹

Saudi Arabia also recorded successes in the war against terrorism. On May 7, the Saudi authorities announced that they had discovered a Saudi terrorist cell with ties to AQAP and the ISIS, composed of 106 members. According to the authorities, the cell was planning to attack government and foreign institutions within the Saudi kingdom, and assassinate Saudi clerics. It was also reported that 59 members of the terrorist cell were Saudis, three others were Yemeni, Palestinian and Pakistani, and the remaining 44 were located outside of the Saudi kingdom and the request for their capture was transferred to the Interpol police.⁴⁰



Materials plundered from the terrorist cell by Saudi security forces, including computers, cell phones and electronic devices

³⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/15/us-yemen-security-idUSBREA4E0R420140515> (English).

³⁸ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27276363> (English)

³⁹ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/05/al-qaeda-fighters-attack-yemen-army-posts-2014514101931186879.html> (English).

⁴⁰ <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=1&issueno=12944&article=770998>

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- During the first half of May 2014, the jihadist media institution of AQAP, Al-Malahem, published the following:
 - An announcement (no. 77) in response to a speech given by the President of Yemen, Abd Rabbuh Mansur al-Hadi, to police academy graduates. In the speech, al-Hadi noted that 70% of AQAP members were foreigners and, therefore, did not care if the country is destroyed. As proof of this fact, he explained that the bodies of terrorists stored in the refrigerators of hospital morgues go unclaimed by their home countries, including Brazil, Holland, Australia, France and other countries around the world. In response, AQAP denied the allegation and noted that the Yemeni army itself includes foreign soldiers from the U.S. Marines who are positioned in Saana and other cities in Yemen. The organization also criticized the Yemeni army's recent operations against AQAP members and Sunni tribes in Shabwa and Abyan. According to AQAP, the army was wrong to ignore the danger posed by the Houthis, a Shi'ite minority in Yemen supported by Iran. In addition, it criticized al-Hadi's claim that AQAP presented an obstacle to investments in the country. According to the organization, the blame for this lies with al-Hadi's policies, which enable the Crusader enemy to steal Yemen's resources. The announcement further accused al-Hadi of a series of mistakes and lies. For example, the organization accused him of sabotaging the ceasefire agreement that was reached between the two sides through mediation by Yemeni clerics.⁴¹
 - The first video in a new series of publications titled, "From the Field". The video focused on an interview with Jalal Balid al-Marqishi, a senior AQAP commander. According to al-Marqashi, AQAP had gained a series of victories over Yemeni military forces in Abyan and Shabwa. He added that this was the first time that tribesman had fought alongside Al-Qaeda militants in light of the Yemeni government's use of drones in the area and due to the lack of development in the region. He noted that the start of the operation in Abyan and Shabwa was tied to the Yemeni Defense Minister's visit to the United States and the Gulf States, and that it was a Crusader war initiated by the latter two regions. He

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

emphasized that Al-Qaeda had lately become stronger and had the ability to damage drones. He also said that the number of lives lost in these drone attacks has been reduced.⁴²

- The second video in a series of publications titled, “From the Field” in which residents of Yafaa, in Shabwa Province, were interviewed about their opinions and experiences regarding the Yemeni military attack in the area.⁴³



From left to right: Jalal Balid al-Marqishi; the video introduction

- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution published an informational video titled, “The Arabian Peninsula Complains”. The video criticized Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the United States for their use of drones above the skies of Yemen and accused them of killing innocent civilians.⁴⁴
- The Ansar al-Sharia jihadist organization in Yemen published photos of military plunder obtained by members of the organization in A-Sa’id.⁴⁵



Photos of the military plunder

⁴² <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁴ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar/status/461949018382540800/photo/1

⁴⁵ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

Iraq

Despite the fact that over 1,000 people were killed in Iraq during the month of April 2014, and despite the many dangers involved in getting to the polls,⁴⁶ Iraq recorded a relatively high voter turnout: over 60%.⁴⁷ The voting itself resulted in the election of Nouri al-Maliki to another term as Prime Minister and leader of the State of Law Coalition.⁴⁸ In his first speech following the election, al-Maliki spoke of the need for dialogue for the sake of Iraq's future on the one hand, but continued his aggressive line against the ISIS on the other hand when he stated his intention to continue to battle against the organization.⁴⁹ Al-Maliki's declaration came against the backdrop of the Iraqi army's extensive military operation in Fallujah, which began on May 9 and in which the army claimed to have liberated southern parts of the city.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, even if the Iraqi army enjoyed some success in Fallujah, violence continued to increase in other parts of Iraq, killing dozens of civilians and soldiers every week. For instance, 22 people were killed in a series of car bomb explosions in Baghdad,⁵¹ and 20 soldiers were killed south of Mosul in an attack on an army base that was responsible for guarding an oil pipeline site.⁵² In addition, ten police officers and civilians were killed in a failed attempt by three suicide terrorists and an explosives-ridden vehicle to break into a courthouse in central Baghdad.⁵³

Al-Maliki was at least able to find a glimmer of hope in the war against terrorism in the large, one-billion dollar arms deal that was recently reached between Iraq and the United States. Among other things, the deal included 24 lightweight fighter jets, armored vehicles and observation balloons.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, Italy agreed to pay Iraq 300 million dollars as part of a compensation

⁴⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140504_iraq_daily_life_heroism.shtml (Arabic).

⁴⁷ <http://www.dailysabah.com/mideast/2014/05/01/60-voter-turnout-in-iraq-elections>

⁴⁸ <http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-iraq-elections-2014-vote-count-under-way-as-pm-nuri-al-maliki-certain-of-victory-1983964>

⁴⁹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140501_iraq_maliki_election.shtml (Arabic).

⁵⁰ <http://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2014/05/12/iraq-clashes-sunni-anbar;>

<http://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2014/05/09/iraq-violence>

⁵¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140513_iraq_baghdad_blasts.shtml (Arabic).

⁵² http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140511_iraq_attackonarmy_mousl.shtml (Arabic).

⁵³ <http://assawsana.com/portal/pages.php?newsid=176558>

⁵⁴ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140514_iraq_us_arm_deal.shtml (Arabic).

arrangement for an old arms deal that was not implemented.⁵⁵

The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham

- The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham (ISIS) in Al-Anbar Province published a claim of responsibility for a suicide attack that was carried out using a booby-trapped Hummer in Al-Ramadi on a street where troops were gathered. According to the announcement, over 40 people were killed in the attack, which included an exchange of light and medium weapon fire after the explosion.⁵⁶



The perpetrator of the attack, Abu Ayyub al-Maghribi

- The ISIS published photos from an attack that its members carried out at an Iraqi military barracks in southern Iraq.⁵⁷



⁵⁵ <http://www.alsumaria.tv/news/100529/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%8A%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%B5%D9%84-300-%D9%85%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7/ar>

⁵⁶ https://twitter.com/Alanbar_news/status/461956795700088832; <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁷ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

A photo from the ISIS attack

- The ISIS in southern Iraq published a report on its military operations in the province. Major operations included an attack against army and police officers, as well as an attack on a judge.⁵⁸
- The ISIS in Nineveh Province published a report on its military operations in the province. The report focused on an attack against individuals connected to the elections in Iraq and Iraqi soldiers.⁵⁹
- The ISIS in Salah a-Din Province published a report on its military operations in the province. The report focused on an attack against Iraqi security forces.⁶⁰
- The ISIS in Nineveh Province published an announcement regarding a raid that its members carried out on a strategic axis of the province. The announcement stated that on May 5, 2014 ISIS militants took control of the headquarters of an Iraqi army company on the strategic axis of the province, causing the soldiers to flee as well as the security forces who had arrived as reinforcements.⁶¹
- The ISIS in Baghdad announced the beginning of a military operation in the province. According to the announcement, the operation will begin on May 14, 2014 and will target the headquarters of the infidel government and its security forces in response to their aggression against Muslims in Fallujah.⁶²

Other jihadist organizations

- An organization called the “Military Council in Fallujah” published an announcement in which it hurled several accusations at the ISIS in Iraq. The beginning of the announcement explained that, in light of the fact that the Iraqi police force is a common enemy of both groups, the organization has so far turned a blind eye to the ISIS’s mistakes but that the situation has become intolerable. The announcement went on to accuse the ISIS of attacking members of the Military Council in Fallujah and stealing weapons, and warned that if it did not stop the Council

⁵⁸ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁰ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶¹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁶² <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

would be forced to take preventative steps to protect its people and expose the truth.⁶³

- Jabhat al-Murabitin fi al-Iraq published an announcement in which it declared its collaboration with jihad fighters from other organizations in the framework of attacks against the Iraqi army in Fallujah, Al-Anbar Province.⁶⁴

Al-Sham [The Levant]

May began with further evidence of the Syrian regime's endurance. At the start of the month, the regime announced the first cease-fire agreement of its kind, which allowed for militants in Homs to withdraw from Christian areas of the city to areas under the control of opposition forces.⁶⁵ Indeed, the agreement was implemented on May 8 when hundreds of fighters and civilians boarded a bus provided by the regime and left the old city of Homs.⁶⁶ The militants' retreat enabled residents of the city, who had left the area due to the battles, to return to their homes.⁶⁷

The resignation of Lakhdar Brahimi, a UN envoy and Arab League representative who served as mediator between the opposition and the regime in Syria, served as additional proof that the political solution in Syria had reached a dead end and that the regime has the upper hand.⁶⁸ All of these developments took place against the backdrop of the Syrian regime's insistence on holding presidential elections at the start of June.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, the regime continued to carry out air strikes against civilians in what has become a routine event. On May 1, at least 33 people were killed in the bombing of a market in Aleppo, one day after 18 people were killed in the bombing of a school in the southern part of the city.⁷⁰ In addition, many civilians were killed in attacks by terrorist organizations, such as two car bomb explosions that took place on May 2 in Hama in which 18 people, including 11 children, were killed.⁷¹

⁶³ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶⁵ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140502_syria_homs_truce.shtml (Arabic).

⁶⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140508_syria_homs_evacuation_complete.shtml (Arabic).

⁶⁷ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140509_syria_homs_residents_return.shtml (Arabic).

⁶⁸ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/interactivity/2014/05/140514_syria_ibrahimi_comments.shtml (Arabic).

⁶⁹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140510_syria_assad_campaign.shtml (Arabic).

⁷⁰ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140501_syria_aleppo_airstrike.shtml (Arabic).

⁷¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140502_syria_violence.shtml (Arabic).

At the same time, clashes continued between the ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front, which took a heavy toll on civilians. According to reports by members of the opposition, approximately 60,000 people were uprooted from Dayr al-Zour in eastern Syria as a result of the fighting.⁷² Meanwhile, it seems that the ISIS has the upper hand in this province, especially in light of the organization's takeover of a crucial crossing in the city.⁷³

The Al-Nusra Front in Syria

- During the first half of May 2014, the jihadist media institution of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manarah Al-Bayda, published the following:
 - A video documenting the April 19 invasion of the Jubb al-Jandali neighborhood in Homs. The operation included a suicide attack using a car bomb, the transfer of fighters through a tunnel, and an exchange of fire with regime forces after the explosion. The video included words of encouragement for fighters before they embarked on their mission, a video of the loading of gas cylinders and explosive material into the car to be driven by the suicide bomber, the suicide bomber's last will and testament, and documentation of parts of the operation itself.⁷⁴
 - An announcement regarding the battle against the ISIS in Syria stating that, despite the Al-Nusra Front's attempts to avoid conflict, the ISIS had attacked its members in Dayr al-Zour and Al-Hasaka Provinces. The ISIS refused all attempts at reconciliation by the Al-Nusra Front and, instead, intensified its war against the latter in a manner that benefits the Alawite regime. At the end of the announcement, the Al-Nusra Front declared that it would comply with al-Zawahiri's requests as they were stated in one of his recent speeches:
 1. Avoid initiating attacks against the ISIS.
 2. Respond to the proposal for independent courts to serve as arbitrators in disputes.
 3. End the mutual accusations between the organizations in the media and on

⁷² http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/05/140503_syria_inter_jihadist_battle.shtml (Arabic).

⁷³ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/multimedia/2014/05/140511_syria_field.shtml (Arabic).

⁷⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

social networks.

The Al-Nusra Front even called for an end to the media war between jihadist organizations.⁷⁵

- The Al-Basira jihadist media organization, which produces publications concerning the Al-Nusra Front, published a video titled, “Photos from a Shari’a course that was given by the Al-Nusra Front for all Muslims and soldiers fighting in Eastern Ghouta – Damascus”.⁷⁶
- During the first half of May 2014, the jihadist news agency, Hemm, which tracks developments in Syria in general, and members of the Al-Nusra Front in particular, published the following:
 - A video (no. 79) documenting the distribution of flour by members of the Al-Nusra Front in Eastern Ghouta.⁷⁷
 - A video (no. 80) documenting a ceremony in honor of Quran recitation that was held by the Al-Nusra Front in Dayr al-Zour.⁷⁸
- The “Ubuwa Laseqa” Twitter account, which publishes news items about the world of jihad,⁷⁹ published a leaked document that allegedly indicated collaboration between the Al-Nusra Front and the Syrian army. In the document, which was sent on January 17, 2014 from Salim Omar Idris, the General Chief of Staff, to commanders of military councils in the eastern region, he stated that the ammunitions to be sent from the headquarters should be divided as follows: two-thirds should go to Al-Nusra Front commanders, and one-third should be equally divided among the military councils and the revolutionary council, in order to fight against the ISIS.⁸⁰

The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham: Operations in Syria

- The ISIS in Al-Raqqah Province began to take on a more distinct political character. Other ISIS publications showed that, among other thing, the organization began to involve itself in road

⁷⁵ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁶ https://twitter.com/Albasira_in (Arabic).

⁷⁷ https://twitter.com/Hemm_Agency/status/466345095101702144 (Arabic).

⁷⁸ https://twitter.com/Hemm_Agency/status/466345095101702144 (Arabic).

⁷⁹ <https://twitter.com/3bwaLaseqa> (Arabic).

⁸⁰ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic);

<https://twitter.com/3bwaLaseqa/status/464113009116590080/photo/1/large> (Arabic).

repair and infrastructure maintenance,⁸¹ and to establish various bodies such as: a bureau for orphan affairs,⁸² a traffic police force,⁸³ an Islamic police force,⁸⁴ an Islamic court⁸⁵ and a consumer protection agency.⁸⁶

- The ISIS continued to implement shari'a in areas under its rule. In Aleppo, the organization published photographs from a ceremony that was held in the city of Manbij, in which four people accused of theft had their hands cut off.⁸⁷



ISIS militants preparing to cut off the hands of thieves in Aleppo

- The ISIS published an announcement intended for the organization's fighters in Dayr al-Zour. The announcement stated that the ISIS had received word of a threat by the Al-Nusra Front, which claimed that the ISIS was planning to cut off its supply line to fighters in Dayr al-Zour. The ISIS emphasized that even if Dayr al-Zour were to fall into enemy hands, it does not intend to fight those who do not stand against it nor does it intend to cut off supply lines to its people.⁸⁸
- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, published a propaganda video titled, "The Islamic Front is Selling the Capital of the Revolution", in which it criticized the Islamic Front, an umbrella organization composed of several jihadist groups in Syria, for the ceasefire agreement that it reached with the Syrian regime in Homs.⁸⁹

⁸¹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁸² <https://twitter.com/raqqa98/status/465938058505121793> (Arabic).

⁸³ <https://twitter.com/raqqa98/status/465937685061054464> (Arabic).

⁸⁴ <https://twitter.com/raqqa98/status/465939074961121281> (Arabic).

⁸⁵ <https://twitter.com/raqqa98/status/462278643436097537> (Arabic).

⁸⁶ <https://twitter.com/raqqa98/status/460842675537588224> (Arabic).

⁸⁷ https://twitter.com/Wilaiat_Halab/status/462266053762875392 (Arabic).

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

⁸⁹ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar (Arabic).

- The ISIS in Al-Raqqah Province in Syria published photos from the “Kawasir al-Anbar” training camp operated by the organization in the eastern part of Al-Raqqah Province.⁹⁰



Photos of the “Kawasir al-Anbar” training camp in Al-Raqqah Province

Other Jihadist Organizations

- The “Army of Immigrants and Al-Ansar”, a jihadist organization in Syria partly composed of foreign immigrants, used its Twitter account to call on Muslims in Syria to join the ranks of its fighters. In addition, the organization asked for financial donations by contacting the Twitter account of a jihad fighter named Abu Azzam al-Najdi, @aboazaam123.⁹¹

Jordan

- As a result of the riots that took place at the end April in the city of Ma’an in southern Jordan,⁹² the Al-Itisam jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the ISIS, published a new video titled, “A Message to our Brothers in Ma’an”. In the video, an ISIS militant of Jordanian origin living in Syria and known as Al-Gharib al-Urdunni, called on residents of Ma’an in particular and on the Jordanian people in general to rise up against the “criminal and heretical regime” in the kingdom. Al-Urdunni promised that the ISIS would help the residents of Ma’an in every way possible and urged them to continue rioting in the hopes that Ma’an would serve as the gateway to change for all of Jordan. In addition, al-Urdunni addressed soldiers in the Jordanian army and called on them to repent for safeguarding the borders of the Jews and for preventing

⁹⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹¹ <https://twitter.com/almohagreen0> (Arabic).

⁹² <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

militants from waging jihad there. The transcription of the video was made by the Fursan al-Balagh jihadist media institution.⁹³



A clip from the video: Al-Gharib al-Urdunni

The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

As elections approached in Egypt, jihadist terrorist organizations increased their operations in the country, especially in the Sinai Peninsula. Recently, there has been an escalation of the situation in Sinai while the situation in the Arabian Peninsula has been stable for some time thanks to Egyptian military operations there.

On May 2, 2014 two suicide attacks took place in the southern Sinai Peninsula. One soldier was killed in the attacks and at least eight people were wounded, including three police officers. The attacks were carried out in Sharm E-Sheikh with the main goal of injuring Egyptian security forces.⁹⁴ Two days later, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdas, a jihadist organization mostly operating in the Sinai Peninsula, claimed responsibility for the attacks.⁹⁵

Ansar Bayt al-Maqdas

- During the first half of May 2014, the Ansar Bayt al-Maqdas jihadist organization published the following:

⁹³ www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/04/jordan-reels-from-week-violence-maan-20144281256437277.html (English).

⁹⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/02/us-egypt-violence-idUSBREA4104E20140502> (English).

⁹⁵ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/05/04/uk-egypt-violence-idUKKBN0DK09V20140504> (English).

- An audio clip titled, “This is Our Belief and This is Our Way” by Abu Usama al-Masri, a member of the organization.⁹⁶
- A claim of responsibility for two attacks that were carried out in the southern Sinai Peninsula on May 2 at a security checkpoint and a tour bus, in which one soldier was killed and several others were injured. The announcement stated that the attacks were a message to the Egyptian army that is damaging the dignity and property of Muslims, and it called on the Egyptian people to revolt against the regime rather than settle for a non-violent protest.⁹⁷

The Maghreb [North Africa]

Increasing tensions were noted between the leaders of the two leading jihadist organizations in the Maghreb: Mokhtar Belmokhtar, an Algerian terrorist operating in Libya, and Abdelmalek Droukdel, the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).⁹⁸ One day after Belmokhtar renewed his oath of allegiance to Ayman al-Zawahiri,⁹⁹ the head of Al-Qaeda, Droukdel published a claim of responsibility for an attack in Iboudrarene that was carried out at the end of April in which 11 Algerian soldiers were killed.¹⁰⁰ The juxtaposition between the declarations seemed to indicate a veiled competition between the two to represent Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb.

Libya began showing the beginnings of a popular protest against Ansar al-Sharia, which some civilians maintain is carrying out violent attacks in the name of Islam.¹⁰¹ The response came on the heels of, among other things, the killing of several soldiers and forces in Benghazi on May 2, 2014.¹⁰²

The Algerian authorities carried out several counter-terrorist operations: they intercepted a military convoy near the border with Niger and Libya, and killed ten terrorists near the border with

⁹⁶ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁸ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/reportage/2014/05/09/reportage-01 (English).

⁹⁹ <http://akhbar.alaan.tv/news/post/30871/belmokhtar-renew-loyalty-qaeda-leader> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁰ http://www.elkhabar.com/ar/autres/dernieres_nouvelles/398997.html (Arabic).

¹⁰¹ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/05/13/feature-01 (English).

¹⁰² <http://www.alanba.com.kw/ar/arabic-international-news/465517/03-05-2014> (Arabic).

Mali.¹⁰³ Despite success in the military arena, Algeria was criticized for the poor performance of the banks and financial institutions in the country in the battle against the financing of terrorism and money laundering.¹⁰⁴

President of Tunisia, Moncef Marzouk, suggested incorporating a different method in the fight against terrorism: namely, pardon militants in jihadist organizations on the condition that they were not charged with murder. Even though the suggestion received support from human rights activists, several security experts opposed the idea, claiming that it would be impossible to implement in the field since it is not possible to track the history of militants returning from Syria.¹⁰⁵

Meanwhile, Morocco won praise for its counter-terrorism operations, both from the U.S. government¹⁰⁶ and from the Belgian Minister of Interior who described Morocco as a major partner in the fight against terrorism.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, among the countries of the Maghreb, Morocco is the leader in terms of innovation in this field. Evidence of this can be found in the country's proposal of a bill that would protect electronic services from terrorist elements.¹⁰⁸

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

- A prominent visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum published photos of AQIM militants in the Sahara titled, "Photos – the Days of the Mujahideen - Jihad and Adherence to God's Work in the Mosque".¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/05/07/feature-01 (English).

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.echoroukonline.com/ara/articles/204182.html> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁵ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/05/09/feature-02 (English).

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.alriyadh.com/932421> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.almaghribia.ma/News/Article.asp?idr=7&id=185554> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.hespress.com/societe/207461.html> (Arabic).

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



The caption: “A vehicle belonging to the [Al-Andalus] jihadist media institution”

Libya

Ansar Al-Sharia

- Ansar al-Sharia in Sirt, Libya, organized a well-attended rally during which five Filipinos declared their conversion to Islam.¹¹⁰



A photo showing a member of Ansar al-Sharia welcoming a Filipino into the religion of Islam

Tunisia

- A visitor to the Hanein jihadist Web forum issued a reminder to the other visitors about the annual festivities set to take place at the Ghriba Synagogue on Djerba Island in Tunisia. One visitor expressed his hope that his brothers in Tunisia will “chop off the heads of those infidels”.

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

Another visitor, who wondered if [those participating in the festivities] were going to be heretical Jews and fighters from Israel or Jews from other countries, was told that Jews were coming from Israel and from other countries but that in any case one must hope for a repeat of the attack that took place in 2002.¹¹¹

Egypt

- The Fata al-Ma'arik jihadist media institution published a video in support of jihad fighters in Egypt. The video showed Egyptian government forces harming women, civilians and worshippers. The video incorporated texts calling on the Egyptian people to understand that their country is under occupation by foreign forces, and to realize that army and police officers are infidels designed to protect the tyrants and so it is permissible to fight against them.¹¹²

Somalia

Al Shabab Al-Mujahideen, a prominent jihadist organization in Somalia, began to raise its head and attempted to return to the public's consciousness by carrying out individual sophisticated attacks.

*On May 12, 2014 a car bomb exploded in Baidoa in southern Somalia; at least 12 people were killed in the attack, including Somali soldiers and civilians. The attack took place next to a café in the city and so far no organization has claimed responsibility for the attack. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Baidoa was previously an Al-Shabab stronghold until Ethiopian soldiers drove them out of the area in 2012.*¹¹³

- During the first half of May 2014, the Al-Kataib jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen, published the following:
 - A video including a speech by Moktar Ali Zubayr titled, "Muslims of Bangui and Mombasa: A Tale of Tragedy". The speech focused on the difficult situation of Muslims in the Central African Republic and in Kenya. In his speech, Zubayr warned the government of Kenya not to harm the country's Muslims and added that the Kenyan

¹¹¹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹² <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹³ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/05/12/uk-somalia-blast-idUKKBN0DS13J20140512> (English).

authorities should not rely on aid from the Jews or from the West. At the end of the speech, Zubayr addressed jihad fighters in Syria, and called on them to unite and avoid inter-organizational clashes.¹¹⁴



A clip from the video

- The fifth chapter in a video series titled, “Mujahideen Moments”. In the short video, a member of the organization delivered a message in English urging young people in the West to make “hijra” (migrate) and join the ranks of the organization, under the slogan “Next flight to Mogadishu – the only one missing is *you*”.¹¹⁵



From left to right: the video banner; a clip from the video calling on viewers to join the ranks of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen in Somalia

- The Al-Zayla'i jihadist media institution and the jihadist Web forum, “Islamic World Issues Study

¹¹⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁵ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

Center”, which focus on the arena of jihad in Somalia, published a letter written by Sheikh Abu Yusuf al-Gharib, a senior jihad leader in Somalia, to Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al-Qaeda. In the letter, al-Gharib criticized the trend of rapprochement towards the ISIS taken by Abu al-Zabir, the leader of Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen. According to him, al-Zabir was wrong to not heed Ayman al-Zawahiri’s instructions and, for this and other reasons, he is responsible for the rift among the mujahideen in Somalia. According to him, al-Zabir is giving Al-Qaeda a bad name, hiding information from Al-Shabab members regarding al-Zawahiri’s orders and acting on its own volition, thereby harming jihad in Somalia. In light of this unacceptable phenomenon, al-Gharib emphasized that he and his people were going to remain loyal to Al-Qaeda and its leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and warned the mujahideen in Somalia about al-Zabir.¹¹⁶

Nigeria

- Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram in Nigeria, claimed responsibility for a video that was published by the organization regarding the abduction of Christian Nigerian girls from school. On April 15, 2014 the organization kidnapped 234 schoolgirls, ages 15-18, from Chibok village in northeast Nigeria. In the clip, Shekau emphasized that his organization sanctifies war against Christians, democracy and the constitution, and that it intends to drown Nigeria in Christian blood. In addition, he criticized Muslim leaders in Nigeria who accept the current form of government.¹¹⁷

In another video that was published later, Shekau announced that most of the kidnapped students had declared their conversion to Islam. Regarding the rest of the Christian students who did not convert to Islam, Shekau expressed willingness to release them in exchange for the release of Muslim prisoners in Nigeria.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ <http://iwisc.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic); http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrfWS_vL0D4

¹¹⁸ <http://www.dawaalhaq.com/?p=12847> (Arabic).



Clips from both videos

The abduction of the schoolgirls sparked a wave of condemnation from various jihad supporters. A prominent writer on jihadist Web forums named Abdallah Muhammad Mahmud expressed solidarity with the struggle of Boko Haram militants against the Nigerian regime but emphasized that the kidnapping of the schoolgirls gave way to worse treatment of Muslim women and gave the religion of Islam a bad name. According to him, Islamic law contains a set of rules of war that must be respected. He then called for the release of the girls.¹¹⁹

- On May 1, 2014 Boko Haram published another video documenting its raid on Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno State in northeast Nigeria.¹²⁰

The West

- Sheikh Anjem Choudary, a radical Islamic preacher in England, announced on his Twitter account the launch of a new venture designed to promote the implementation of shari'a in southern Europe, meaning Spain and Portugal. According to the Web site that was launched for the initiative under the name, "Shariah4Andalus", it stated:

"Shariah4Andalus is a platform dedicated to promoting the establishment of Shariah law in southern Europe. Indeed, this area has a rich Islamic history, and for many years led the world in fields such as science, literature and mathematics. One of the first pioneers of this great campaign to bring Islam to the West, was the noble Tariq bin Ziyad (may Allah have mercy on him) who conquered present day Spain at the tender age of seventeen.

Sadly, the region has returned to the days of ignorance with the implementation of man-made laws, and it is through this project that we hope to return this land back to its golden

¹¹⁹ <http://www.dawaalhaq.com/?p=12804>; <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

period when it was ruled by Shariah and where Muslims, Jews and Christians lives peacefully with each other under its justice .

To kick start the campaign we have an upcoming debate between two prominent speakers, namely, Anjem Choudary and Alan Craig on the role of Islam and Christianity in Britain, which can be observed in the video trailer below. We also have many project lined up which we hope will accelerate Europe's journey to Islamic governance".¹²¹



The home page of Shariah4Andalus

Choudary also criticized the Indian government for the election results in India that brought a Hindi government to power, led by Modi. According to Choudary, Muslims living on the Indian subcontinent will never experience justice under the infidel Hindu regime. Therefore, they must unite and implement shari'a in order to change the situation. In addition, Choudary called on Muslims in India to hold popular protests in order to demand the implementation of shari'a. Choudary also posted photos from a protest that he held along with his supporters in front of the Indian Embassy in England against the Hindi oppression of Muslims.¹²²

¹²¹ <http://www.shariah4andalus.com/about.html> (English).

¹²² <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary> (English).



From left to right: a photo from a protest held in front of the Indian Embassy in England; remarks posted on Choudary's Twitter account

Choudary founded the al-Muhajiroun extremist group with the militant leader Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad. That group was banned in 2004, but has re-emerged under different names and in various guises. He also established the radical Islamist group Islam4Uk, which was banned in 2010.

Miscellaneous

- The Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum announced on May 3, 2014 that it was renewing its activities after a three-week hiatus.¹²³



The banner heralding the resumption of activities by the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum

¹²³ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

- The administration of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum announced that it was opening registration to new users for three days. According to the administration, the process for registering new users was conditional upon the recommendation of a registered user and required that an email be sent to the “Complaints and Suggestions Department”. It also stated that the registered user will be responsible for the new user if he threatens the security of forum members. If the new user violates the forum rules and threatens the security of its registered members, the registered user that recommended him will be responsible for kicking out the new member.¹²⁴
- The administration of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum announced an online contest on the topic of reconciliation between various jihadist factions. According to the administration, the reason for the launch of the contest was due to the desire for unity among the ranks of the mujahideen so that they will be better able to serve the religion, jihad and the Muslim Nation. Users who send in the best photo, song, design and idea for reconciliation will win the contest. It also stated that the mujahideen will bring prizes for the winners from the battlefield, which cannot yet be revealed.¹²⁵



The banner produced by the administration of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum with the caption, “Reconciliation is Good”

- The administration of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum expressed appreciation and thanks to three members of the forum for their many activities during the first week of May

¹²⁴ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

2014. According to the administration, its initiative to commend registered users was designed to encourage other users to expand the discussions on the forum.¹²⁶

- The Culture Committee of the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum announced the third online contest for illustrations on the topic of jihad. According to the committee, the illustration that received the greatest number of likes will have his illustration placed on the forum's home page for three days.¹²⁷
- A virtual jihadist workshop called Shumukh al-Islam launched an online campaign in praise of the mujahideen in Yemen and in condemnation of U.S. operations against the mujahideen in the country. The campaign included banners and video on the subject.¹²⁸



A banner criticizing the use of drones in Yemen

- The Fursan al-Balagh jihadist media institution published an index that included all of the jihadist materials that were published by various jihadist organizations and institutions during February 2014.¹²⁹
- The administrator of the Al-Platform Media jihadist Web forum published an announcement in which he reported that, going forward, the name of the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham would be “Dawlat Al-Khilafa” (literally: “State of the Caliphate”). The administrator even changed the name of the department in which the Islamic State’s

¹²⁶ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁸ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

official announcements are published to “The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham – State of the Caliphate”. The announcement was met with rave reviews from forum users.¹³⁰

- A poll was published on the Hanein jihadist Web forum under the title, “Do you consider Sheikh Osama bin Laden, Dr. al-Zawahiri and the sheikhs of the Salafi-jihadist movement to be heretics?” Of the dozens of participants who took part in the survey, 90% answered “no” (only 2% answered “yes” and 3% answered that they “do not know”).¹³¹

¹³⁰ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹³¹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

ABOUT THE ICT

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