

Bimonthly Report

Summary of Information on Jihadist Websites

The First Half of July 2014

Highlights

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

- Sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State, declares the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate under his leadership and calls on jihad fighters to concentrate their efforts on fighting against the Shi'ites and on continuing the assault on Shi'ite strongholds in Baghdad and southern Iraq. The declaration of the establishment of the caliphate provokes divided reactions among jihad fighters. On the one hand, many jihadist organizations, including Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad in West Africa swear allegiance to al-Baghdadi and to the Islamic Caliphate. On the other hand, many senior and junior jihadists, including Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi (a senior member of the Salafi-jihadist movement in Jordan), criticize the declaration, claiming that it is illegal and that the Islamic Caliphate did not receive a broad consensus in the Muslim Nation. In light of this development, several jihadist organizations, including Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), renew their oath of allegiance to Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda.
- The Islamic State launches a new magazine called *Dabiq* in honor of the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate. The magazine includes apocalyptic messages heralding the end of days and the victory of Muslims in the battlefield against the infidel forces.
- The emir of Al-Nusra Front in Qalamoun threatens to take revenge on members of Lebanese Hezbollah in Shi'ite villages. In addition, the emir vows to release prisoners from Rumiyya Prison in Lebanon and from other prisons.
- Operation 'Protective Edge' in the Gaza Strip leads Palestinian Salafi-jihadist militants in the Gaza Strip to take part in the launch of rockets into Israeli civilian cities. In addition, global jihadists express solidarity with the Palestinian struggle against Israel.

Table of Contents

Highlights	2
New Publications	5
Ideology.....	5
Guidebooks and Instruction Pamphlets.....	20
Promoting the Myth of the Martyr	21
Magazines.....	21
Reports from the Field	23
Afghanistan-Pakistan.....	23
The Arabian Peninsula.....	24
Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.....	25
Iraq.....	25
The Islamic State.....	26
The Islamic State – Nineveh Province	27
The Islamic State – Al-Anbar Province.....	28
The Islamic State – General	29
Al-Sham [The Levant]	30
Syria	31
Al-Nusra Front in Syria.....	31
The Islamic State: Operations in Syria	33
Other Jihadist Organizations	34
General	35
Lebanon.....	35
Abdullah Azzam Brigades	35
General	36
The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip	36
Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis.....	39
The Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem.....	39
Supporters of the Islamic State in Bayt Al-Maqdis.....	39
Other jihadist organizations	40

The Maghreb [North Africa]41
Algeria.....42
Tunisia43
Nigeria43
 Boko Haram43
Somalia43
The Caucasus44
The West.....45
Miscellaneous.....46

New Publications

Ideology

- During the first half of July 2014, the Al-Sahab jihadist media institution published the following:
 - A video titled, “Tidings” from Sheikh Osama bin Laden, the former leader of Al-Qaeda who was killed in May 2011. In the video, bin Laden discussed several issues, including America’s decline in status as a world power; the obligation to join the war of jihad against enemies of Islam; the oath of allegiance to Mullah Omar, Emir of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan; the importance of developing small fronts in the Arabian Peninsula; the liberation of Muslim prisoners; and whether or not it is permissible to cause harm to innocent people during suicide operations, etc.¹
 - A video titled, “Abu Yahya al-Libi and Attiyya Allah: A dialogue between two martyred scholars regarding the Arab revolutions”.²



The video banner

- During the first half of July 2014, the Al-Malahim jihadist media institution, which serves as the voice of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), published the following:
 - An audio file titled, “God has People” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nazari [Muhammad al-Mirshadi], a senior member of the organization.³
 - A video titled, “The Five Decrees: The Group” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nazari [Muhammad al-Mirshadi], a senior member of the organization. In the video, al-Nazari discussed the Muslim tradition regarding the five orders that the Prophet Muhammad commanded, including the obligation to comply with and take part in jihad. He mainly

¹ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

² <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

³ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

discussed the obligation to maintain cohesion and unity among believers.⁴

- A video titled, “But Give Glad Tidings to the Patient” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nazar. The video was the eighth part in a series of publications titled, “Dawah – With the Quran”.⁵
- A video titled, “Responsibility of the Word” by Sheikh Harith bin Ghazi al-Nazari and Sheikh Ibrahim bin Sulayman al-Rubaysh, senior members of the organization.⁶
- The Al-Basira jihadist media institution, which represents Al-Nusra Front in Syria, published a video titled, “Virtues of the Month of Ramadan” by Sheikh Dr. Sami al ‘Uraydi, a member of the organization’s Shura Council.⁷

The Declaration of the Establishment of the Islamic Caliphate

On July 4, 2014 Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State, delivered a Friday sermon at the Great Mosque of Mosul in Iraq, in which he declared the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate under his leadership. The sermon was published in a video distributed by the organization’s jihadist media institution, Al-Furqan. Al-Baghdadi began his speech by praising the virtues of the month of Ramadan as a month of faithful soul-searching. He then quoted verses from the Quran that promised victory to the mujahideen and claimed that the time had come for the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate.

It should be noted that, during his speech, al-Baghdadi was dressed in black clothing, signifying a state of war in Islam. Before the sermon, he can be seen rubbing his teeth with a thin branch that has a crushed edge, known in Arabic as a “Miswak”, an image reminiscent of what the leader Muhammad used to do.⁸

⁴ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁶ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷ https://twitter.com/Albasira_in/status/486262204392828928 (Arabic).

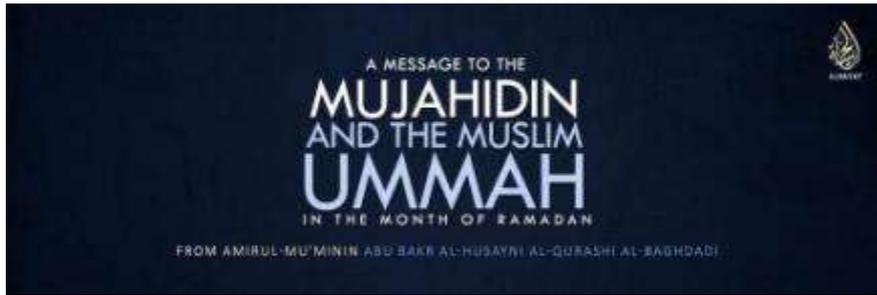
⁸ https://twitter.com/al_e3tisam/status/485410559139909632 (Arabic).



Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi during his sermon at the Great Mosque in Mosul

- On June 30, 2014 Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State, delivered a speech in honor of the month of Ramadan. The speech itself was published by the media institution in a video titled, “A Message to the Mujahideen and the Muslim Nation in the Month of Ramadan”. In the beginning of the speech, al-Baghdadi noted that the struggle between the forces of truth and the forces of falsehood continues to rage. He emphasized that God is on the side of the mujahideen in their struggle against the Shi’ites and Alawites who represent the forces of evil. Al-Baghdadi then expressed support for the Syrian people and stressed that they are being forced to face a number of enemies: Alawites, Jews, Crusaders, rulers of Islamic states and road pirates. He said that Islamic State militants have been sent to help them and are working ceaselessly to guarantee their safety, well-being and property. He went on to address the Iraqi people and praised them for demonstrating resourcefulness and courage in their battle against the Shi’ites: “This is your chance, do not lose it [...] Your war with the Shi’ites is a war of faith [...]”. He then addressed members of the Islamic State fighting in Iraq and called on them to serve as the warhead in the battle against the Shi’ites. “Your masses should advance to Baghdad and the south [of Iraq] in order to enflame the Shi’ites in their strongholds”, he said. Finally, he addressed the United States and emphasized that the war that it is waging through agents in Iraq and Syria will not succeed, and that it would soon be forced to face the Islamic State directly.⁹

⁹ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



The banner of the message addressed to the mujahideen and the Muslim Nation

Responses to the Declaration of the Establishment of the Islamic Caliphate (Support Camp)

- The declaration of the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate, as expressed in a speech by the spokesman for the Islamic State, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, and its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, triggered a wave of supportive reactions among senior and junior members of the Salafi-jihadist movement. This was strongly evident in the wave of oaths of allegiance that were subsequently made to the Caliphate and to al-Baghdadi:
 - An unknown jihadist media institution called Abtal al-Islam published a recorded speech in which Sheikh Abu Yazid Abd al-Qahir al-Khurasani, a former member of the Taliban in Pakistan, along with other militants, expressed support for the Islamic State and swore allegiance to the group and its caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.¹⁰



The banner of al-Khurasani's oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi

- Tehreek-e-Khilafat, a jihadist organization affiliated with the Taliban in Pakistan, declared its allegiance to the leader of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. In the

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/abtalulislam> (Arabic).

framework of the declaration, the organization announced that it would carry the flag of the Islamic State in southern Asia and Khorasan, and expressed hope that jihad would spread to the Indian subcontinent.¹¹

- Sheikh Abu Abdallah Uthman al-Asimi, a qadi (judge) of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in the Al-Wasat region, praised the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate.¹²



Sheikh Abu Abdallah Uthman al-Asimi

- A battalion of jihad fighters from the Maghreb, called Al-Huda, and led by Kamal Abu al-Yaqdhan swore allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the Islamic State.¹³
- Sheikh Hammad bin Muhammad al-Amin al-Shanqiti, a senior member of the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, which operates in northern Mali, and the supervisor of the organization's Shura Council, swore allegiance to the Islamic State.¹⁴



The banner declaring support for the Islamic State by Sheikh Hammad bin Muhammad al-Amin al-Shanqiti

¹¹<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/10955563/Pakistani-terror-group-swears-allegiance-to-Islamic-State.html> (English).

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

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

¹⁴<http://justpaste.it/nusraazawad> (Arabic).

- An unknown jihadist media institution called Al-Nidal published a video titled, “Passengers of Truth”, in which Sheikh Abd al-Rahim Dost al-Afghani swore allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Al-Afghani, 50, a member of the Taliban, spent four years in the Guantanamo Bay detention camp after he was arrested in 2001 for having ties with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Today he remains in Waziristan, in northern Pakistan. In the video, al-Afghani said that while he was interned in Guantanamo, he foresaw the establishment of the Caliphate in a dream. He ended his speech with a call on Muslims around the world to do as he did, swear allegiance to the Caliph, and not heed the clerics who represent the regimes and interpret the holy texts as they please.¹⁵



Sheikh Abd al-Rahim Dost al-Afghani

- The Al-Nidal jihadist media institution published a recorded speech by Abdul Rahim Muslimdost, an Afghani activist and writer who was arrested in 2001 for having ties to Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, was imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay and released in 2005. In the framework of the speech, Muslimdost declared his allegiance, as well as the allegiance of all Afghani mujahideen, to the Caliph of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.¹⁶
- Jaysh al-Sahaba fi Bilad al-Sham, a jihadist organization operating in Syria, published an announcement (no. 4) in which it swore allegiance to the Caliph of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. In the framework of the announcement, the Emir of the organization,

¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/AlnidhalOrg/status/487288800230801408> (Arabic).

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

Abu al-Bara al-Shami, explained that Jaysh al-Sahaba fi Bilad al-Sham, which supports the Islamic State, had officially disbanded and became part of the caliphate.¹⁷

- The Jund al-Rahman Brigade, which operates in east Dayr Al-Zawr, published an announcement in which it declared its support for the Islamic State. In the framework of the announcement, the organization clarified that it has always supported the Islamic State and that it would never harm its fighters.¹⁸
- The Ansar al-Sharia Battalion in Homs (a city in western Syria) announced that it had sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.¹⁹ The announcement was originally posted on the battalion's Twitter account.²⁰
- The leader of the Abu Mohjen Al-Taifi Battalion, an unknown organization operating in Libya, announced that it would heed the call of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and send 50 of its own fighters to the new caliphate in Syria and Iraq, including a petroleum engineer, a doctor and experts on military tactics. As was previously mentioned, when he declared the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate, al-Baghdadi called on Muslims around the world to send professionals to the caliphate who can help in its establishment.²¹
- A very prominent writer on the Al-Fidaa jihadist Web forum named Husayn bin Mahmud published a statement criticizing members of the Islamic State. The author argued that there was a conspiracy plan in the framework of which IS operatives were working in the service of the United States. According to him, IS fighters were doing what the United States was unable to do when it controlled Iraq; namely, divide Iraq into regions of impact where the U.S. would have a foothold, especially in areas with oil wells. In addition to these accusations, the writer emphasized that the Islamic State's Caliphate, as well as the oath of allegiance to it, were null and void since they did not receive a wide consensus among Muslims.²²

¹⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁸ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

²⁰ <https://twitter.com/Abu3Amar10/status/486467252406194176/photo/1>

²¹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

²² <http://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

- A prominent visitor to the Al-Platform Media jihadist Web forum published a document titled, “All of the evidence from shari’a that allegiance should be sworn to the Caliph, Commander of the Faithful, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (leader of the Islamic State)”. The document quoted many sources from shari’a that, according to the writer, could be interpreted as support for an oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi.²³
- Several declarations of support were recorded in Syria - in southern Damascus,²⁴ Al-Raqqah Province,²⁵ Shuhayl and other cities in Dayr Al-Zawr Province – from Muslim residents in general and from fighter battalions such as the Army of Islam, the Mu'tah Islamic Army and the Al-Ikhlās Brigade.²⁶
- Seven youths in Holland were photographed with the flag of the Islamic State and sent their congratulations on the occasion of the declaration of the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate.²⁷
- A congregation of worshippers at a mosque in Bima, a city in Indonesia, were photographed carrying the flag of the Islamic State and raising their hands in a pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.²⁸
- A group of fighters from the city of Mindanao in the Philippines published a video in which they swore allegiance to the Islamic State and to its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. In the framework of the video, the spokesman for the group called on Muslims in the Philippines and surrounding countries to hurry and swear allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful.²⁹

²³ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

²⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁵ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁶ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁸ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

²⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).



Filipinos swearing allegiance to the Islamic State

- The Khilafah Dawla Islamiyah (KDI) jihadist media institution published a video documenting an oath of allegiance by a group of Indonesian Muslims in South Tangerang to the new Caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, which took place on July 6, 2014. The video showed a group of men (according to the video, the group was composed of 2,000 men) in a closed hall equipped with a projector, while the moderator of the evening led them in the recitation of the traditional wording of an oath, in Arabic and Indonesian.³⁰ One of the administrators of the Al-Platform Media jihadist Web forum published a link to a YouTube video in which Muslims in Indonesia were seen swearing allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in the heart of the capital, Jakarta.³¹



A group oath of allegiance, in Indonesia, to the Islamic State and its new Caliph

- Abu Tamim Al-Ansari, the Chief Sharii of Al-Nusra Front in Dayr Al-Zawr, announced on his Twitter account that he was leaving Al-Nusra Front and joining the ranks of the Islamic State.³²

³⁰ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LsK3tKnKCg>

³¹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

³² <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- A group of Al-Nusra Front fighters operating in Al-Mayadin, in Dayr Al-Zawr Province in eastern Syria, announced that they were leaving Al-Nusra Front and joining the Islamic State. In the video, which was uploaded to YouTube, the leader of the group explained that the decision to defect was made in light of Al-Nusra Front's focus on tribal, rather than religious, conflicts. A representative from the Islamic State who appeared in the video explained that the fighters would be transferred to Al-Shaddadeh, in Al-Hasakah Province, and expressed hope for the collapse of Al-Nusra Front in Al-Mayadin.³³
- The Al-Ghuraba jihadist media institution published a statement by Sheikh Abu Salma al-Shanqiti, a member of the Islamic State, in which he criticized Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. The statement was published as a result of al-Qaradawi's condemnation of the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate. According to al-Qaradawi, members of the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas are considered infidels, and the Muslim Brotherhood caused great harm to the Muslim Nation and weakened it morally and financially over many decades.³⁴
- The Al-Battar jihadist media institution, which publishes material in praise of the Islamic State, published two articles. The first article was titled, "When facts are been faked in order to undermine the Islamic State and its mujahideen", and the second article was titled, "How the facts were twisted and how they play with the minds and feelings of Muslims" by Abu Umar al-Halabi. Both articles criticized the media and religious clerics in the Muslim world who help the authorities wage a propaganda campaign against the mujahideen, especially members of the Islamic State.³⁵

Responses to the Declaration of the Establishment of the Islamic Caliphate (Opposing Camp)

- Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a philosopher in the Salafi-jihadist movement who was released from a Jordanian prison on June 16, 2014, published a statement criticizing the declaration of an Islamic Caliphate. In his statement, al-Maqdisi described the declaration as a conspiracy to create a rift among the ranks of the mujahideen, and criticized the fact that the

³³ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

³⁴ <http://justpaste.it/g5dv>

³⁵ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

Islamic State turned its weapons against fellow Muslims rather than the tyrants and that it was reaping the fruits of jihad waged by other organizations in Syria.³⁶

- Al-Maqdisi published another letter titled, “Part of what I have to say, and not everything”, in which he wrote that he was under a great deal of pressure to retract his previous letter (in which he criticized the Islamic State); al-Maqdisi emphasized that, although the things that were said in the previous letter were not definite, they were based on extensive communication that he had with each side, and that some of his cellmates were Islamic State supporters so it cannot be claimed that he only heard one side. Nevertheless, if some parts of his previous letter would be found to be one-sided, then he would retract those parts immediately. In addition, al-Maqdisi noted that various elements in Syria have tried to pressure him to believe that attacks against the Islamic State were carried out because of his previous letter; he stated that such claims have no place and no effect. Al-Maqdisi referred to the Islamic State’s victory in Iraq (the occupation of Mosul), and explained that each and every Muslim rejoices when Muslims defeat the infidels but that he is concerned by the way that IS militants behave towards the local Muslims. Al-Maqdisi also addressed the declaration of the Islamic Caliphate by the IS; he explained that even though every Muslim looks forward to the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate and the dissolution of borders, the declaration was ahead of its time and he casts doubt as to whether it is a real caliphate that will provide a solution for all Muslims and for the weak.³⁷
- Sheikh Abdullah Muhammad al-Muhaysini, a Saudi preacher belonging to the Salafi-jihadist movement and residing in Syria, published an announcement in which he strongly attacked the declaration of the caliphate and claimed that al-Baghdadi could not present himself as the caliph since many Muslims in and outside Syria do not accept his authority. In the framework of his statement, al-Muhaysini claimed that the declaration would lead to more bloodshed and that it was nothing more than an attempt to eliminate the Islamic State’s rival groups, which do not operate according to its caprice.³⁸

³⁶ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

³⁷ <http://shabakataljahad.com/vb> (Arabic).

³⁸ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

- Sheikh Abu Qatada al-Filastini, who is imprisoned in a Jordanian jail, published an article titled, “The Attire of the Caliph” in which he attacked Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State, and the declaration of the Caliphate, which he claims to be invalid. In the framework of the article, Abu Qatada claimed that the Islamic State was not authorized to demand that all Muslims swear allegiance to the organization and criticized it for accusing anyone who disagrees with it of heresy.³⁹



“The Attire of the Caliph”, an article by Abu Qatada in condemnation of the Islamic State

- Sheikh Hani al-Sibai, a Salafi activist in Britain with close ties to Salafi-jihadist circles and manager of the AlMaqreze Center for Historical Studies, tweeted that the Islamic Caliphate established by the Islamic State has no legitimate basis. He sarcastically commented that if the caliphate were to succeed in conquering Andalus (formerly Spain), China, Russia and the rest of the world, there still would be no justification for its existence since it did not receive a broad consensus. According to him, the declaration of a caliphate at this stage does more harm than good and, therefore, the propaganda campaign against it must be intensified.⁴⁰



The banner including al-Sibai’s reaction to the declaration of the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate

³⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁰ <http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

- Dr. Tariq Abd al-Halim, a Salafi activist in Canada and a colleague of al-Sibai, agreed with the latter's position and described members of the Islamic State in callous terms such as "dog tails" and "men from hell". According to al-Halim, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Sheikh al-Adnani are sprinkling sand in the eyes of their followers and are only interested in petroleum and power.⁴¹
- Sheikh Abu Basir al-Tartusi, a prominent Syrian Salafi-jihadist cleric and leader of the Al-Fajr jihadist faction fighting in Syria, issued a fatwa that an oath of allegiance to the Islamic State is neither legal nor valid. According to him, all members of the IS are more dangerous than the Khawarij group, the first sect in Islam to rebel against the central Islamic authority following disagreements over the identity of the caliph in Islam. Since then, the name has become a derogatory term for Muslims who rebel against the existing order and act on their own volition.⁴²
- Abu Abd al-Malik, Head of the Shari'a Council of the Islamic Front, which operates in Syria, published a recorded speech in which he criticized the declaration of the Caliphate and claimed that it was not valid. In his speech, al-Malik referred to historical examples of declaring false caliphates, called members of the IS "Kharijites" and quoted Islamic sources that explain why the IS was not the first to declare an Islamic Caliphate. At the end of his speech, al-Malik explained that he views the declaration of the caliphate as a strong blow to the Sunnis in the area, who will be weakened by it, and that it provides an excuse to "enemies of the religion" to wage war against the Muslim People and divide their countries.⁴³
- The Al-Andalus jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), published a statement in which it referred to the declaration of the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate by Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, Spokesman for the Islamic State. In the framework of the statement, he claimed that despite the fact that every Muslim longs for the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate, one must object to the fact that the declaration of the Caliphate was made without consulting mujahideen leaders such as Mullah

⁴¹ <https://twitter.com/tariqhaleem/status/484857721837989888> (Arabic).

⁴² <http://abubaseer.bizland.com> (Arabic).

⁴³ <http://www.hanein.info/vb>(Arabic);
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=121624691281703&story_fbid=567459036698264

Omar, the spiritual leader of the Taliban; Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al-Qaeda; leaders of the Caucasus Emirate; and other jihad figures. The statement ended with a call on leaders of jihadist organizations to demonstrate unity and a request from Al-Nusra Front to stop fighting against the Islamic State.⁴⁴

In light of this development, AQIM announced that it was renewing its vow of allegiance to Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda. The announcement, which was published by the Al-Andalus jihadist media institution, stated that the organization had been following recent events in Syria and had avoided reacting so as not to add fuel to the fire. However, recently things had reached the point where there was no choice but to specifically address the events in Syria. The organization clarified that the establishment of the real Islamic Caliphate is the goal of every jihadist organization and it goes without saying that this is an undisputed truth. However, an extreme step like declaring an Islamic Caliphate can only be taken after consulting with the relevant religious authorities and leaders of Al-Qaeda around the world, and therefore the Islamic State's establishment of the Caliphate was a very negative step. In addition, the organization called on the IS and Al-Nusra Front to stop fighting one another and to reach reconciliation.⁴⁵

- Nine shari'a authorities operating in Syria (some of which are affiliated with known jihadist organizations) published a statement regarding the declaration of al-Baghdadi's Caliphate. In the framework of the statement, the authorities attacked the declaration and denounced the Caliphate based on the following reasons:
 1. The conditions necessary to establish a caliphate do not exist today in the world in general and in the Islamic State in particular.
 2. The declaration was intended to stir emotion and attract Muslims to join the Islamic State in order to serve as a distraction from the carnage being carried out by the organization.
 3. The declaration encourages division among Muslim states and the expulsion of Sunnis to designated provinces.

⁴⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

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

4. The declaration is liable to lead to Western interference in Muslim countries and bolsters Arab dictators, like Bashar al-Assad.
5. The declaration will lead to additional bloodshed of innocent Muslims.
6. The Islamic State cannot expect other Islamic groups and organizations to disband at a time when they are defending Muslims in certain countries from being attacked.
7. All Muslims and jihadist factions must be careful not to squander the [Muslim] Nation's strengths.

The document was signed by the following parties: the Mujahideen Shura Council in al-Sharqiyya, the Shari'a Authority of Jaysh al-Mujahideen, the Shari'a Authority of the Islamic Union, the Shari'a Authority in Aleppo, the General Authority of Muslim Clerics in Syria, the Central Regional Shari'a Authority, the Shari'a Council of the Islamic Front, the Islamic Authority in idlib and the Shari'a Authority in the Coastal Region.⁴⁶



The symbols of the Shari'a Authorities that signed the declaration

- An organization called the Association of Muslim Scholars in Iraq published a statement in response to the Islamic State's declaration of the Caliphate. According to the statement, the declaration of a state or a caliphate under the current circumstances in Iraq is detrimental to the country and its well-being. The statement ended with a clarification that an oath of allegiance to the Caliphate is not binding since the IS cannot provide the minimal infrastructure necessary for the maintenance of a state.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

- The Hanein jihadist Web forum published an official announcement regarding the declaration of an Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria. The announcement presented the Hanein forum as a neutral body representing all of the mujahideen from the various factions, and called for an end to the fighting among the various jihadist groups fighting in Syria. Regarding the declaration of the Caliphate, the administrators of the forum made the following points and recommendations: It resists the notion of a particular faction attributing victory only to itself, it rejects of the “Charter of the City” (a document ascribed to the Islamic State listing the rules and regulations to be imposed on the residents of Mosul after its occupation), it calls on the people of Iraq and Syria to be treated properly, and it recommends the establishment of civilian institutions and a Shura Institute made up of several factions, as well as a constitution to help integrate the Islamic Project.⁴⁸
- A visitor to the Hanein jihadist Web forum raised a discussion regarding the appointment of al-Baghdadi as Caliph, and questioned why the names were not published of the other candidates for the caliphate’s leadership or of those who voted for him. One of the visitors responded that the names of the voters were not published on the Internet due to fear of American surveillance. Another visitor referred to the oath of allegiance and claimed, using excerpts from the Hadith, that the oath could be valid even if not all Muslims in the world swore allegiance to the Caliph. It should be noted that some of the visitors to the forum harshly criticized the Islamic State, with one of the claims being that the group is slaughtering Muslims with one hand while forcing them to swear allegiance to it with the other hand.⁴⁹

Guidebooks and Instruction Pamphlets

- A visitor to the Shumukh al-Islam jihadist Web forum, named Abu Umar al-Falastini, published several videos that explained how to activate an explosive charge remotely using Center Lock, a device for locking and opening cars and motorcycles.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁴⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁰ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).



Photos posted by a forum visitor

- A visitor to the Al-Jihad Al-Alami jihadist Web forum published a link on the forum’s military section to a blog in Arabic that contained military information about tanks and use of weapons, among other things.⁵¹
- A visitor to the Al-Jihad Al-Alami jihadist Web forum published a book titled, “The Military and Organizational Theory of Global Islamic Resistance”. The book included great detail about the various principles behind waging a war of jihad in a military and organizational framework.⁵²

Promoting the Myth of the Martyr

- Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAO) published a message of condolence over the death of Ali Bin Lakra al-Kazimi al-Awlaki. The message, which was published by the Al-Fajr jihadist media institution, stated that al-Awlaki had been a prominent leader and commander in the organization, and it expressed its condolences to the entire Muslim Nation over his death in an American aircraft bombing.⁵³

Magazines

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published issue no. 99 (44 pp.) of *Al-Somood* magazine⁵⁴ and issue no. 65 (71 pp.) of *Nawai Afghan Jihad* magazine.⁵⁵

⁵¹ <http://shabakataljahad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵² <http://shabakataljahad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵³ <http://shabakataljahad.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁴ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁵ <http://nawiafghan.blogspot.co.il> (Arabic).



From left to right: the banner page of *Al-Somood* and *Nawai Afghan Jihad* magazines

- The Islamic Caliphate published a new periodical called *Dabiq* (26 pp.),⁵⁶ which included articles on the following topics:
 - The establishment of the Islamic Caliphate led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.
 - Apocalyptic messages regarding the future War of Armageddon in the Dabiq region in northern Syria. According to Muslim tradition, Muslim armies are going to confront and defeat the infidel armies in this region. Dabiq will lead the way to the capture of Palestine and the liberation of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.
 - A discussion regarding the strategic stages of the establishment of the Caliphate.
 - The Islamic State's achievements in the battlefield.

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



The magazine banner and one of its inside pages

- Issues no. 11 and 12 of the jihadist magazine, *Hasad al-Jihad*, were published. The magazine is composed of publications and claims of responsibility for attacks carried out by jihadist organizations in Egypt against Egyptian security forces, as well as central events related to Egypt.⁵⁷

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

On July 7, 2014 Afghanistan's first democratic elections resulted in the election of Ashraf Ghani, a former economist at the World Bank, who won 56% of the votes. His opponent, Abdullah, already announced his intention to appeal the results.⁵⁸

On July 2, 2014 a suicide bomber blew himself up on a bus that was carrying soldiers in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. Eight people were killed in the attack and 13 others were injured. The explosion took place in a secure area when the elections were still underway in the country.⁵⁹

On July 5, 2014 the Taliban in Afghanistan set alight 200 oil tankers designated for NATO; according to estimates in the country, the fire was started by launching missiles towards the tankers that,

⁵⁷ <https://shamikh1.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁵⁸ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/07/afghanistans-ghani-wins-afghanistan-election_n_5563986.html (English).

⁵⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/02/us-afghanistan-violence-idUSKBN0F708A20140702>

according to the Taliban, were designated for foreign military forces in the country.⁶⁰

On July 15, 2014 a suicide attack was carried out at a market in eastern Afghanistan, the largest one in recent months, which claimed the lives of at least 89 people. The terrorist entered the market in an SUV and detonated the bomb that he was carrying. To date, no organization has claimed responsibility for the attack but the Taliban stated that it was not behind the attack.⁶¹

The Arabian Peninsula

The Yemeni army continued to battle on two fronts; against AQAP and the Houthis, a Shi'ite minority in Yemen supported by Iran. In the beginning of July, AQAP militants managed to carry out an attack over the border in the Al-Wadia area between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. According to Saudi Arabia, four of its soldiers were killed in the attack, including the border patrol commander.⁶²

The battle against the Houthis has become an acute struggle and increasingly dangerous to the stability of the Yemeni regime as well as to the security of Saudi Arabia, in light of the Houthis' victories against Yemeni army forces in the battlefield. During the first half of July, Houthi armed militias seized the city of Amran in northern Sana'a as well as several nearby army bases. It is evident that the Houthis intend to advance beyond the capital city of Sana'a. This concerning development led the President of Yemen, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, to call on the Houthis to withdraw from Amran and lay down their weapons. He hinted that Iran was the one pulling the strings and was behind Houthi attacks on government institutions.⁶³

It should be noted that Amran is considered a stronghold of the Banu al-Ahmar tribe, one of the most powerful Sunni tribes in Yemen. Many members of this tribe fill leadership roles in the Al-Islah Party (the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Yemen), in the armed forces and in the government. The fall of Amran to the Houthis raises difficult questions regarding the reasons for its fall and the power of the Yemeni regime to contend with this threat.

⁶⁰<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/Taliban-set-200-fuel-trucks-on-fire-in-Kabul/articleshow/37844479.cms> (English).

⁶¹<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/15/us-afghanistan-attacks-idUSKBN0FK18L20140715> (English).

⁶²<http://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/a360a4ca-f9d0-4084-9df0-0bb91b0a1581>

⁶³<http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/2014/07/11/-الرئيس-اليمني-عازمون-على-استعادة-عمران-من-الحوثيين.html> (Arabic).

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

- Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) published an announcement regarding the Yemeni government's lies concerning its recent battles. According to the announcement, which was published by the organization's jihadist media institution, Al-Malahim, the Yemeni government published false claims of victory in its battles against the mujahideen in the tribal areas of Abyan, Shabwa and Al-Baydha; these were media lies that stemmed from the frustration and despair of the Yemeni government over its failure to achieve its goals, especially since these areas were not even under the control of the mujahideen.⁶⁴
- Members of AQAP published a series of photos on social media that were taken from a video distributed by the organization's jihadist media institution, Al-Malahim, titled, "The Invasion of Revenge by [Female] Prisoners". The video seemed to refer to Muslim female prisoners imprisoned in Saudi jails for having ties with Al-Qaeda. The photos themselves showed the bombardment of the Al-Wadi'ah crossing next to the border with Saudi Arabia.⁶⁵



One of the photos posted on Twitter

Iraq

The first week of July was marked by an especially significant event: the leader of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, appeared dressed in black and delivered a 20-minute long speech at a mosque in Mosul.⁶⁶ According to commentators, this appearance by al-Baghdadi was unavoidable since, without it, he would not have been able to ask Muslims around the world to swear allegiance

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

⁶⁵ <http://justpaste.it/g4cm>

⁶⁶ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/06/abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-isis> (English).

to his organization and to himself as the new Caliph.⁶⁷ The fate of those who refuse to swear allegiance is not surprising: several news items were reported in which members of the Islamic State in Fallujah were accused of abducting former officers from Saddam Hussein's army who refused to swear allegiance to the Caliph.⁶⁸

In the field, power continued to change hands between the Iraqi regime and the Islamic State. On July 15, the Iraqi regime announced that it had re-taken control over the city of Tikrit in northern Baghdad.⁶⁹ In contrast, the Islamic State announced that it had seized control over the city of Duloaiya in Salah-al-Din Province.⁷⁰ In light of the escalation of the situation in Iraq, there were additional signs indicating the Kurds' desire to disengage from Iraq and establish an autonomous political entity. In an interview held with the President of Iraqi Kurdistan, Masoud Barzani, he stated his intention to hold a referendum in the coming days regarding the declaration of Kurdistan's independence and its disengagement from Iraq.⁷¹ This declaration further testified to the concern expressed by several senior Iraqi officials (including the former Prime Minister of Iraq, Ayad Allawi), over the dismantling of Iraq and its division into several sub-countries.⁷²

The Islamic State

- During the first half of July 2013, the Al-Hayat jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the Islamic State, published the following:
 - Two videos (parts 4 and 5) in a series titled, "Mujatweets", which focused on the daily

⁶⁷ <http://islamion.com/news/15689/%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B0%D8%A7-%D8%B8%D9%87%D8%B1-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A8%D9%83%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%BA%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A7-%D9%87%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%9F>

⁶⁸ <http://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2014/07/16/iraq-new-update-isis>

⁶⁹ <http://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2014/07/15/iraq-isis-saudi-spy-tikrit>

⁷⁰ <http://www1.youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=1773115#.U8fhMeOSx1E>

⁷¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2014/07/140701_iraq_kurds_barzani_interview.shtml (Arabic).

⁷² <http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/today-interview/2014/7/15/%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%AF%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%86%D9%81%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%85>

routine of IS militants.⁷³

- A propaganda video in English titled, "Al-Ghurabā': The Chosen Few of Different Lands: Abu Muslim from Canada". The video was part of the organization's propaganda campaign to recruit volunteers to its ranks. The video focused on a Canadian convert to Islam who joined the ranks of the organization, and praised its activities and the importance of undertaking the commandment of jihad.⁷⁴



The video banner

The Islamic State – Nineveh Province

- The Islamic State published a report regarding the destruction of Shi'ite holy graves and houses of worship in Nineveh Province. The report included photos in which a member of the IS explained the obligation according to Islam to destroy holy graves, as well as photos that documented the destruction of such sites in Mosul and Tal Afar.⁷⁵



⁷³ <https://joindiaspora.com/posts/4432731>; <https://twitter.com/E3tsm/status/488102816284569600> (Arabic).

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

⁷⁵ https://twitter.com/Nynwa_news/status/485087161297825792 (Arabic).

The destruction of a Shiite house of worship in Mosul

- The trend of “repentance” continued to increase among members of the military, the police force and the Awakening Councils in Iraq who opposed the Islamic State or who were considered “apostates” by the organization. The IS published photos from repentance ceremonies that were conducted in Diyala⁷⁶ and Nineveh⁷⁷ Provinces. In some cases, hundreds of people came to the IS headquarters in order to submit forms in which they declared their “repentance”.



“Repentance” of hundreds of people at the IS headquarters in Nineveh Province

The Islamic State – Al-Anbar Province

- The Islamic State in Al-Anbar Province published photos from the destruction of a convoy of Iraqi military armored vehicles, east of Ramadi. The photos showed the vehicles being shot at and burned, and weapons being plundered.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁷⁸ https://twitter.com/minbar_k/status/487627275584544768; <http://justpaste.it/g6hp> (Arabic).



The destruction of a convoy of military vehicles by IS militants near Ramadi

The Islamic State – General

- The Islamic State announced the opening of the Al-Bayan radio station. According to the announcement published by the organization, the radio station would broadcast verses from the Quran, excerpts from the Hadith and sermons on the topic of morality.⁷⁹



“Al-Bayan” – the Islamic State’s new radio station

- A prominent visitor to the Al-Platform Media jihadist Web forum, considered to be reliable by forum members, reported that the invitation extended by the mukhtar (a government official appointed by the government and loyal to them) of the Shourin region in Diyala Province to the mujahideen to break the fast was a trap intended to draw them to the location and then bomb them from the air.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

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

Al-Sham [The Levant]

*The death count in Syria continued to rise. According to a report that was published by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), over 170,000 people have been killed in Syria as of July 8, 2014. Approximately 56,495 civilians were killed, including 9,092 children.*⁸¹

*Another SOHR report testified to the expansion of the Islamic State within Syria. According to the report, the organization currently controls territory five times the size of Lebanon, including eastern Dayr Al-Zawr as well as areas spreading from Al-Bukamal on the Syria-Iraq border to Aleppo.*⁸² *In addition to forceful takeovers, the Islamic State continued its operations to neutralize the organizations that are hostile to it. One such step taken by the organization in Dayr al-Zawr Province was to distribute “repentance” forms to those interested in ending their battle against the Islamic State.*⁸³

*While the Islamic State was gaining power, Al-Nusra Front was growing weaker. In the beginning of July, Al-Nusra Front militants retreated from several strongholds in eastern Syria,*⁸⁴ *while other members decided to swear allegiance to the IS.*⁸⁵

*The retreat of Al-Nusra Front militants from Dayr al-Zawr Province coincided with the killing of the organization’s emir in this region, Safwan al-Hanat.*⁸⁶

*Meanwhile, foreign fighters continued to flow into Syria, from Western countries as well. According to a report by the Spanish government, there are approximately 5,000 foreign fighters in Syria today; 450-700 of them hold European passports.*⁸⁷ *The foreign fighters are not only coming to reinforce the Islamic State and other jihadist groups in Syria; according to the SOHR, hundreds of*

⁸¹ http://al-shorfa.com/en_GB/articles/meii/newsbriefs/2014/07/11/newsbrief-10

⁸² <http://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2014/07/03/syria-isis-tawheed>

⁸³ http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/multimedia/2014/07/140711_syria_fighting.shtml (Arabic).

⁸⁴ <http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=03072014&id=fd6212d3-661a-479b-8086-75c631da9919> (Arabic).

⁸⁵ <http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=03072014&id=fd6212d3-661a-479b-8086-75c631da9919> (Arabic).

⁸⁶ <http://www.alwafd.org/%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%80%D9%8A/709320-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7> (Arabic).

⁸⁷ <http://www.almasyalyoum.com/news/details/475165> (Arabic).

*Kurdish fighters came to Syria from Turkey in order to join the battle against the IS for the city of Ayn al-Arab, one of the largest Kurdish cities in Syria.*⁸⁸

Syria

Al-Nusra Front in Syria

- During the first half of July 2014, the jihadist media institution of Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Manarah Al-Bayda, published the following:
 - An announcement titled, “Al-Nusra Front’s Announcement of the Establishment of the Islamic Emirate”, in which it stated that from the day Al-Nusra Front was created, its goal has always been to restore the rule of God and shari’a. Al-Nusra Front works towards establishing an Islamic Emirate according to the spirit of shari’a; it has not yet announced the establishment of the emirate and will only do so when the conditions are ripe and when the mujahideen create a situation that will enable it. Al-Nusra Front plans to support Muslims and provide them with all essential services, and will not allow anyone to reap the fruits of the jihad war. The forces must be united in the battle against the infidel regime and against other heretical organizations.⁸⁹
 - An announcement (no. 496) regarding the liberation of a village called Rahjan in Hama on July 10, 2014. According to the announcement, not only was Rahjan the village of the Syrian Minister of Defense, but that it had strategic importance due to its location along the regime’s only supply line in Aleppo. In addition, the announcement detailed the operation’s modus operandi (the explosion of an armored BMP via suicide driver, followed by the combing of a village with machine guns) and its results (the death of over 50 *shabiha* that support the regime, the imprisonment of ten soldiers and the plunder of many weapons).⁹⁰

⁸⁸<http://www.france24.com/ar/20140715-%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A3%D9%83%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86/>

⁸⁹<http://al3aren.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁰<http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

- A video titled, “Sit and Wait for Them in Every Place of Ambush – Part 6”, in which it documented the organization’s operations against Syrian security forces.⁹¹
- A publication titled, “The Monthly Harvest” (26 pp.), which compiled all of the operations that were carried out by members of Al-Nusra Front during June 2014.⁹²



From left to right: the banner page of the publication, “The Monthly Harvest”; an inside page

- During the first half of July 2014, the jihadist news agency, Hemm, which tracks developments in Syria in general, and members of Al-Nusra Front in particular, published the following:
 - A video (no. 86) documenting a dawah conference in Kansafra, on the outskirts of Hamah.⁹³
 - A video (no. 87) documenting a vaccination campaign against polio for children in the village region of Quneitra.⁹⁴
 - A video (no. 88) documenting the breaking of the Ramadan fast in northern Hamat.⁹⁵
- A recording attributed to Abu Muhammad al-Golani, leader of Al-Nusra Front, was leaked on several jihadist Web forums. In the recording, al-Golani delivered a speech to his followers and announced the establishment of an Islamic Emirate in the Levant, and claimed that the

⁹¹ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

⁹² <https://twitter.com/JabhtAnNusrah/status/484288662717595648> (Arabic).

⁹³ https://twitter.com/Hemm_Agency/status/484426669982507008 (Arabic).

⁹⁴ https://twitter.com/Hemm_Agency/status/500760767126601728 (Arabic).

⁹⁵ https://twitter.com/Hemm_Agency/status/488624853277097985 (Arabic).

Caliphate declared by al-Baghdadi was invalid.⁹⁶ The Al-Manara al-Baydaa jihadist media institution was quick to publish a statement in which it clarified that Al-Nusra Front had not yet officially declared the establishment of an Islamic Emirate and that it would only do so when the mujahideen and religious scholars agreed to it.⁹⁷

- The Emir of Al-Nusra Front in Qalamoun, known as Abu Malik al-Shami, published a speech concerning Al-Nusra Front's attitude towards Hezbollah and Shi'ites in general. In the framework of the speech, al-Shami threatened to exact revenge on Hezbollah fighters in Shi'ite villages – and not only those in the mountains and near the border – and vowed to release prisoners from Rumiyya Prison and other jails. Al-Shami ended his speech with a call on Sunnis in Lebanon to collaborate with his organization and act “as one body” against the Shi'ites.⁹⁸

The Islamic State: Operations in Syria

- The Islamic State in Aleppo published a copied report documenting the raid on the village of Zor Maghar, near the border with Turkey, which was a stronghold for the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). In the raid, which was carried out on June 30, 2014, at least 20 Islamic State militants were killed and many weapons were plundered.⁹⁹
- The Islamic State published a claim of responsibility for an attack that was carried out using a truck bomb against YPG (People's Protection Units) forces, the military branch of the Kurdish Supreme Committee, the ruling party in Syrian Kurdistan. The attack was carried out in the small town of Tal Tamr, in Raqqah Province in northern Syria, killing four YPG members and injuring many more civilians. The attack was another event in a chain of friction between members of the Islamic State and Kurdish forces in northern Syria.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic); <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/20698>

⁹⁷ <https://twitter.com/JabhtAnNusrah/status/488053102155923456> (Arabic).

⁹⁸ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

⁹⁹ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic); <http://www.all4syria.info/Archive/157214>



The terrorist who carried out the truck bombing against Kurdish forces in northern Syria

- The jihadist media institution of the Islamic State in Al-Ghouta Al-Sharqiyya Province in Damascus published an announcement regarding the smear campaign being waged against the organization. The announcement stated that many parties were trying to demonize the IS and accuse it of various acts against Muslims. The IS denied all of the accusations and explained that it is only fighting against the Alawite regime, but warned that anyone who plans to make false accusations against the IS and attack the organization will be dealt with accordingly.¹⁰¹
- The IS leadership in Al-Kheir Province (previously Dir E-Zour) in Syria published an announcement in which it stated that anyone who wishes to repent and leave the organizations fighting against the IS in the province is welcomed to do so and the IS will accept his repentance. The announcement included guidelines describing how the process should be carried out.¹⁰²

Other Jihadist Organizations

- Jaysh al-Islam and Jund Dimashq published a video titled, “Battle of Shattering Walls”, which documented an operation that was carried out on June 13, 2014 in which a building in Damascus was blown up with a large number of regime forces inside. The video followed the excavation of the tunnel, the placing of explosives inside the tunnel, the action plan on a map and the explosion of the building after which forces entered nearby buildings.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁰² <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹⁰³ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).



The explosion of a building containing Assad’s forces, carried out by Jaysh al-Islam and Jund Dimashq

General

- Jaysh Ansar al-Sharia in Al-Sham, a Salafi-jihadist organization in Syria launched a media institution named Al-Fawaris.¹⁰⁴



The logo of Al-Fawaris

Lebanon

Abdullah Azzam Brigades

- The Al-Awzai Media jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the Abdullah Azzam Brigades operating in Lebanon, published a video in which it claimed responsibility for a number of rocket launchings into Israel. The video, which was dedicated to “brothers in Palestine” and to the mujahideen fighting against the Zionists, the Crusaders and the Shi’ites, presented a photo anthology of preparations for the launch as well as the launch of rockets into Israel. In the

¹⁰⁴ <https://twitter.com/alfwaris1/status/488482473278701568/photo/1>

background, selected excerpts can be heard from a speech by Majid al-Majid, the former leader of the organization who died in Beirut in January 2014.¹⁰⁵

General

- During the first half of July 2014, the Markaz Aisha jihadist media institution, which focuses mainly on the Sunni population in Lebanon, published the following:
 - A video titled, “Rumiyya Prison Captives”, which focused on the importance of releasing Muslim prisoners from the Rumiyya Prison in Lebanon.¹⁰⁶
 - A statement criticizing the discriminatory policies of the Lebanese government and army towards the Sunni population in Lebanon. For example, the Lebanese government was accused of collaborating with Israel on the arrest of a Sunni sheikh who launched rockets at Israel. The media institution then demanded the release of the sheikh as well as the release of a female Muslim prisoner named Jumana Hamida. It then called on Sunnis in Tripoli, Sidon and other cities in Lebanon to go out and protest the injustices suffered by Sunnis in the country.¹⁰⁷

The Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip

The War in Gaza

During the first half of July 2014, the IDF launched Operation ‘Protective Edge’ against terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip in response to Hamas rocket fire directed at Israeli communities. The operation sparked a lively dialogue among Salafi-jihadist militants who, alongside Hamas, took part in firing rockets into Israel from the Gaza Strip and even from the Sinai Peninsula. On July 12, 2014 Ansar Bayt Al-Maqdis published a video showing its fighters launching five rockets at Bnei Netzarim in southern Israel. In the video, it was written that the rockets were launched “in order to support our people in Gaza”.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.hanein.info/vb>;
https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=121624691281703&story_fbid=567459036698264 (both in Arabic).

¹⁰⁶ <https://twitter.com/MarkazAisha/status/486163325374722049> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁷ <http://justpaste.it/g6uk> (Arabic).

¹⁰⁸ <http://thecairopost.com/news/118181/news/ansar-bayt-al-maqdis-fires-five-rockets-from-sinai-to-israel>

Meanwhile, the wave of terrorism also continued against Egyptian targets. On July 1, 2014 a Christian engineer was kidnapped by masked men in the Sinai Peninsula. The identity of the kidnapers and the motive for the kidnapping were not known, and it was the third instance of aggression towards Christians since the beginning of June.¹⁰⁹ On July 14, 2014 terrorists launched mortars at a security compound in Al-Arish in northern Sinai, and damaged a supermarket, pharmacy and residential building. Eight people were killed and 28 others were injured in the attack.¹¹⁰ The following are a number of reactions from jihad fighters to Operation 'Protective Edge':¹¹¹

- The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan published an announcement titled, "Regarding Israeli Aggression against Gaza". The announcement, which referred to Operation 'Protective Edge', stated that the Islamic Emirate strongly condemned Israel's actions and the attack on Palestinians; in addition, the Islamic Emirate appealed to the world - the UN, Islamic countries and human rights organizations – and demanded that they take serious steps to put an end to Israeli aggression.¹¹²
- Sheikh Hani al-Sibai, a Salafi activist in Britain and a close associate of Salafi-jihadist groups, as well as the Director of the Almaqreze Center for Historical Research, harshly criticized the Egyptian regime led by Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. According to him, not only did al-Sisi distance himself from shari'a and disagree with its application, but he also acted against his brothers in Egypt and Gaza. In light of this, al-Sibai accused al-Sisi and the Egyptian army of treason and of collaborating with the IDF in the Gaza War.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2014/07/01/christian-kidnapped-sinai/>

¹¹⁰ <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2014/07/14/rocket-explosions-al-arish-death-toll-rises-8/>

¹¹¹ For further details regarding Operation 'Protective Edge' and the war between Israel and Hamas as reflected in the jihadist discourse, see: <http://www.ict.org.il/Article/1209/The-War-in-Gaza-as-Reflected-in-the-Global-Jihadist-Discourse>

¹¹² <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹³ <https://twitter.com/hanisibu/status/487408886044180481> (Arabic).



The banner of the lecture posted by al-Sibai to his Twitter account

- The Markaz Aisha jihadist media institution, which focuses mainly on the Sunni population in Lebanon, published “an urgent message to our people in Gaza” from Sheikh Muhammad bin Umar al-Lubnani, a senior Salafi-jihadist activist in Lebanon. According to him, Hamas was going to lose the war to Israel due to its series of shari’a violations, alliance with the Shi’ites and other offenses against the religion. According to the statement, the Salafi-jihadist activists in the Gaza Strip are the ones who should bear the burden of fighting against the Jews and of liberating Palestine from Israeli rule.¹¹⁴
- The Al-Batar jihadist media institution, which is affiliated with the Islamic State, published a video titled, “Gaza under Shelling”.¹¹⁵



A photo that the Al-Batar jihadist media institution posted on social networks. The photo displays criticism of Saudi Arabia for its intention to establish normalization with Israel after its attack on Gaza

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

¹¹⁵ https://twitter.com/AL_Bttaar/status/488091097969614848

- The jihadist media institution of Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia, Al-Bayariq, published an announcement condemning the Gaza war and expressing support for the Palestinians.¹¹⁶

Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis

- During the first half of July 2014, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis published several items against the backdrop of Operation ‘Protective Edge’, including:
 - Documentation of the launch of five 107 rockets on July 8, 2014 towards the Israeli community of Bnei Netzarim, near the Egyptian border. The rocket fire was described as an expression of solidarity with the residents of Gaza.¹¹⁷
 - A video in which its fighters are seen launching a 107 rocket towards the Israeli community of Bnei Netzarim, in support of the people of Gaza fighting against Israel.¹¹⁸

The Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem

- The Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem published an announcement (no. 46) regarding the battle that was taking place in Gaza. The announcement stated that the residents of Gaza were suffering from Israel’s severe aggression and violence at a time when the world sees everything but does not lift a finger in order to put an end to it. The Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem supports the people of Gaza and emphasized that its fighters were ambushing the Israeli occupation forces and attacking them in full force by launching rockets and attacking planes. The organization also emphasized that it had not released any video, to date, documenting its jihadist activities during the current war in Gaza.¹¹⁹

Supporters of the Islamic State in Bayt Al-Maqdis

- During the first half of July 2014, a group called Supporters of the Islamic State in Bayt Al-Maqdis published several items against the backdrop of Operation ‘Protective Edge’, including:

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

¹¹⁷ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁸ <http://shabakataljihad.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹¹⁹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

- An announcement in which the organization expressed its total commitment to the Islamic State, led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. It then went on to describe the organization's most recent operations: the abduction and murder of three Israeli teenagers in the West Bank, shooting in Hebron and Tarqoumiyya, and the launch of rockets from Gaza against the Zionists. The end of the announcement explained that the organization is not a partisan political party like many Palestinian organizations that exploit religion for the sake of politics and in order to gain access to parliaments; it is an organization that acts in the name of religion alone.¹²⁰
- A claim of responsibility for several rocket launchings towards Sderot, Be'er Sheva and Ashkelon that took place in the beginning of July, including the dates and times of the rocket fire. According to the claim of responsibility, the rockets were launched, in part, as revenge for the deaths of Usama al-Hassumi and Muhammad al-Fasih, two rocket launchers who belonged to the group and were killed at the end of June.¹²¹

Other jihadist organizations

- Jaish al-Ummah – Bayt Al-Maqdis, a Salafi-jihadist group operating in the Gaza Strip, claimed responsibility for launching several rockets at Israel, specifically at Eshkol,¹²² Western Negev,¹²³ Moshav Yesha,¹²⁴ and a group of military vehicles in Nahal Oz.¹²⁵ In addition to Grad rockets, the group also used a locally made rocket called “Al-Qa'qaa”.
- The Liwaa al-Tawhid organization published a claim of responsibility for firing rockets and mortar shells at several southern Israeli communities, including Ofakim, Be'er Sheva and Ashkelon. The claim of responsibility presented the rocket fire as a response to the “continued Zionist aggression”, and provided the dates and times of the rocket fire.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic).

¹²¹ <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb> (Arabic); <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/June-27/261839-israeli-air-raid-kills-two-palestinians-in-gaza.ashx#axzz39L92XVQ5> (English).

¹²² <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²³ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁴ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁵ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

¹²⁶ <http://www.hanein.info/vb> (Arabic).

- The al-Nasir Salih al-Din Brigades published a video documenting rocket fire directed at southern and central Israeli communities, including Rishon Letzion.¹²⁷
- The Jundallah jihadist organization published an announcement regarding the events in Gaza, in support of the Palestinians' fight against Israel.¹²⁸
- The jihadist media institution of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades, Al-Awzai, published a video documenting several rocket launchings from the Gaza Strip into Israeli communities.¹²⁹
- Visitors to the Al-Jihad Al-Alami jihadist Web forum started a thread in which they provided updated information on developments during Operation 'Protective Edge' in Gaza. Among other things, it provided frequent updates on the number of those killed and injured during the operation, and listed the names of those killed. The information was taken from news sites all over the world.¹³⁰

The Maghreb [North Africa]

In the first week of July, senior officials in the intelligence and security agencies of Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt held discussions regarding reports of the Islamic State's possible move into the Maghreb, specifically Libya. According to one Algerian security official, "the Islamic State's move into Libya is only a matter of time".¹³¹

Indeed, the declaration of the establishment of Caliphate demonstrated support for the IS in several places in the Maghreb. Several reports indicated that the declaration resulted in a loss of popularity for Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud (Abdelmalek Droukdel), Emir of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and, therefore, many militants decided to swear allegiance to the Islamic State.¹³² Another indication of support for the IS came from Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia. The spokesman for the organization, Seifeddine Rais, was arrested after he pledged allegiance to the leader of the IS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and called for the release of Ansar al-Sharia militants from prison in Tunisia.¹³³

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

¹²⁸ https://twitter.com/jund_allah_pal/status/486170088706297856 (Arabic).

¹²⁹ https://twitter.com/azzambrigades_/status/486957526701715456 (Arabic).

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

¹³¹ <http://www.alraimedia.com/Articles.aspx?id=516722>

¹³² <http://elmihwar.com/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AB/5452.html>

¹³³ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/07/08/feature-01

Nevertheless, despite this call, it seems that most of the Tunisian public rejects the idea of the Caliphate or remains indifferent to it.¹³⁴

Meanwhile, the Moroccan authorities reported that approximately 3,000 Moroccan jihad fighters were taking part in the battle in Syria and Iraq. According to the report, 128 fighters who returned to Morocco were arrested and interrogated. In a July 10 announcement, the Moroccan Interior Minister, Mohamed Hassad, warned of a “terrorist attack against the Kingdom in light of the growing number of Moroccans who belong to extremist groups in Syria and Iraq”.¹³⁵

Algeria also increased its alert level in light of warnings of terrorist attacks being planned against American targets in the country. As a result of the warnings, the American embassy in Algeria called on its citizens to avoid staying in American hotels.¹³⁶ Further testimony of the tension could be seen in the protest held by Salafists in the capital city of Algiers against the government’s intention to re-open Jewish synagogues in the country.¹³⁷

Algeria

- The jihadist media institution of AQIM, Al-Andalus, published an announcement titled, “The killing and wounding of over 30 infidels...including several officers”. According to the announcement, the organization claimed responsibility for the attempted assassination of Algerian military officers in revenge for the latter’s attack on the families of mujahideen in one of the villages in Jijel Province in eastern Algeria. In the framework of this revenge attack, they planted explosives next to Algerian army forces, killing and wounding over 30 soldiers. Finally, the organization emphasized that this attack was a message to Algerian soldiers that their criminal actions will be responded to accordingly.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/07/14/feature-01

¹³⁵ http://magharebia.com/en_GB/articles/awi/features/2014/07/14/feature-01

¹³⁶ <http://www.france24.com/ar/20140704-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%A7-%D9%85%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA/>

¹³⁷ <http://www.middle-east-online.com/?id=180331>

¹³⁸ <https://alfidaa.info/vb> (Arabic).

Tunisia

- Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia published an announcement in which it condemned Israel's attacks on Gaza as well as the murder of Palestinian teen, Muhammad Abu Khdeir, which led to an escalation of the situation. It accused Arab regimes of collaborating with the "Zionist-Crusader" alliance and called for those regimes to be weakened in order to be able to help Gaza.¹³⁹

Nigeria

Boko Haram

*Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram in Nigeria, claimed responsibility for terrorist attacks that members of its organization carried out in Abuja and Lagos on June 25, 2014. In addition, it expressed its support for the Islamic State, the Afghani Taliban and Al-Qaeda.*¹⁴⁰



A clip from the video in which Shekau claimed responsibility for his organization's attack on two Nigerian cities

Somalia

In Somalia, terrorist organizations continued to carry out violent attacks but, unlike their most recent attacks, these were isolated incidents seemingly intended to deliver a message and demonstrate that jihadist organizations were still active in the country. On July 5, 2014 four people were killed in a car bomb explosion next to the Somali Parliament building in the capital of Mogadishu. Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen (the jihadist organization active in Somalia) claimed

¹³⁹ https://twitter.com/AnsarShariaa_tn/status/488100468913373184 (Arabic).

¹⁴⁰ <http://www.alyaum.com/article/4001857> (Arabic).

responsibility for the attack a short while after it was carried out.¹⁴¹ On July 8, 2014 gunmen carried out a shooting attack on the presidential palace in Mogadishu. The gunmen opened heavy fire and attacked the fortified palace. No official claim of responsibility was made but, according to security forces, the attack displayed all of the signs and characteristics of an Al-Shabab attack and was a reconstruction of a similar attack that the organization carried out on the palace in February.¹⁴²

The Caucasus

- Ali Abu Muhammad al-Daghistani, Emir of the Caucasus Emirate, called on his fighters to avoid carrying out suicide attacks because they harm innocent civilians. He forbid the use of female suicide bombers because of the great sorrow it brings to their families. In the instance that a terrorist is captured by Russian forces, the emir instructed his fighters to submit to the security officers' demands. In a video that was published on July 9, 2014 the emir answered questions regarding the organization's day-to-day operations and the emirate's operating strategy. In the video, Abu Ali noted that Russian civilians are not a target of attack for the Caucasus Emirate and that the fight is only against Russian security forces. In addition, the emir noted that he shares the opinion of the leader of Al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who he referred to as "my emir".

Russian analysts noted that Ali Abu has become more moderate in his tone in the most recent videos that were published. He talked a lot about cost-benefit considerations that he takes into account when preparing operations.

In summary, his words hinted at a change in the behavior of the Caucasus Emirate and at the emir's attempt to garner more widespread support among the population that is unsatisfied with Putin's rule.

¹⁴¹ http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/06/world/africa/somalia.html?_r=0 (English).

¹⁴² <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/08/somalil-militants-attack-presidential-palace-mogadishu> (English).



Ali Abu Muhammad al-Daghistani

The West

- Sheikh Anjem Choudary, a radical Islamic preacher in England, continued to publish controversial correspondence on his Twitter account. During the first half of July 2014, Choudary focused on various topics, including the need to release Muslim prisoners like his teacher, Sheikh Omar Bakhi, who was arrested by security forces in Lebanon. Bakri, a radical Islamic preacher who used to lead a radical movement in London and was expelled from Britain in 2005. In addition, Choudary shared several filmed interviews that he gave to the media. For example, he referred to the obligation of young Britons to move to the arena of jihad in Syria, claiming that their aim is to overthrow the regime of dictator, Bashar al-Assad, and to implement shari'a. According to him, these continued persecution of Muslim immigrants by the British government will only lead to radicalization and escalation of the security situation in Britain.¹⁴³

¹⁴³ <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary>



Anjem Choudary
@anjemchoudary

Follow

One day the whole world will be under the authority of the Muslims, the East of the East & the West of the West, may Allah hasten it Ameen!



RETWEETS
95

FAVORITES
29



A tweet posted by Choudary to his Twitter account¹⁴⁴

Miscellaneous

- The Fursan al-Balagh media group published an index of publications (17 pp.) that were released in June 2014 by various jihadist media institutions.¹⁴⁵



The banner page of the index

¹⁴⁴ <https://twitter.com/anjemchoudary/status/484468054609633280>

¹⁴⁵ <http://al-fidaa.com/vb> (Arabic).

- A senior visitor to the Al-Fidaa jihadist Web forum criticized the administrators of the Minbar al-Illam jihadist Web forum for its support of the Islamic State. According to him, this support contributes to the rift among jihad fighters and sows division among the ranks. In addition, the visitor posted correspondence attributed to one of the supervisors of the Minbar al-Illam forum in which he called to cast Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, leader of Al-Qaeda, and Sheikh Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a senior member of the Salafi-jihadist movement in Jordan and a supporter of al-Zawahiri, into the garbage bin of history (see picture below). The visitor decried this type of conduct and asked visitors to avoid behaving in this manner. It should be noted that the administrators of the Al-Fidaa jihadist Web forum withheld further access to this correspondence, seemingly in an attempt to hide the existing rift between supporters of Al-Qaeda and supporters of the Islamic State, and in order to demonstrate unity among the ranks of jihad fighters.¹⁴⁶



The correspondence: “My brother, the place of al-Zawahiri and al-Maqdisi is here [referring to the garbage bin] [...]”

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

ABOUT THE ICT

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