

Al-Hesbah online forum discussion from 2007 about possible attacks against targets in Eilat have resurfaced following calls to attack the royal Saudi family

In May 2007, a member of the Al-Hesbah online forum, who has been registered with the al-Qaeda affiliated site since October 2005 and belongs to its "Jihad Media Battalion,"¹ raised the issue of attacking southern Israel from the direction of Saudi Arabia.²

On the same day, a forum user referring to himself as "Morasel" wrote on behalf of the Jihad Media Battalion:³

"Some believe that Israel is far away and that in order to reach it one should traverse thousands of kilometers using airplanes and vehicles, but the distance between the "Salul Family"⁴ and Israel is only 20 kilometers, meaning 15 minutes in any small boat! Oh brothers! Gladden our heart and get rid of the State of the Salul Family! Oh people of Palestine! Soon we shall rise and avenge on your behalf and on behalf of all the Muslims around the world. From here, we urge Muslims too to get ready and take part, as the Jihad warriors do not fight in your place, they are the spearhead of the nation and our role is coming, if Allah wishes it."

Following this declaration, several online users posted replies in May 2007, a majority of which praised the proposed plan. Other forum users attempted to analyze whether the plan would be feasible. One of them called for caution, warning readers that the waters are watched closely, that there are marine mines

¹ This is an entity founded by al-Qaeda in the scope of the "Global Islamic Media Front" – GIMF, for the purpose of exploiting the internet in order to spread the organization's propaganda materials and its activities. See "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat", August 14th 2005: <http://www.asharqalawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=9756&article=317593&feature=>

² On August 19th 2005, al-Qaeda executed a combined attack of Katyusha rockets on Eilat and Aqaba, and on January 2007 the Palestinian Islamic Jihad carried out a suicide bombing in Eilat.

³ <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=127621>

⁴ A derogatory name for the royal family in Saudi Arabia, rhyming with the Saud Family.

in several areas and that "infidel" Jordanian helicopters fly constantly overhead. He also warned of an underwater electric fence from Eilat, further claiming that Jordanian and Israeli Navies do not leave the waters, otherwise – "we would have liberated Palestine already." At the end of his statement, the writer wonders, once someone reaches Israel, where do they go?

Another online user justified the call for caution and explained that Israel fears Al-Qaeda activists so much in Sinai that it has installed electronic measures at sea.

Another online user stated that the "infidels" protecting the "Jewish State" should be dealt with, and that after their removal, the Jewish state would be removed as well.

Al-Hesbah user Abu Al-Waleed Al-Shami suggested the use of Katyusha rockets, "Quds 1 rockets," and "al-Qaeda 1" rockets, with a range of up to 50 kilometers.

These talkback sessions are likely a direct result of the two posts that appeared in the Al-Hesbah forum several days prior. One post was written by the no. 2 activist of Al-Qaeda, Ayman Al-Zawahiri,⁵ and the other was written by Abu Yahya Al-Libi,⁶ considered to be one of the most senior activists in Al-Qaeda.⁷ In their posts, the two attacked, among other things, the Hamas movement for its helplessness in carrying out terrorist attacks against Israel.

⁵ <http://www.alquds.co.uk/index.asp?fname=2007\05\05-09\06e25.htm>

⁶ <http://www.alquds.co.uk/index.asp?fname=2007\05\05-02\28z24.htm>

⁷ For information about him, see:

http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/abu_yahya_al-libi.htm

On October 14, 2008, a forum user responded to these series of posts, in effect renewing the discussion regarding terrorist attacks in Israel and in the Eilat area. His response did not specifically address terrorist attacks against Israel, but he used the earlier dialogue as a platform to call for a battle against the royal family in Saudi Arabia. To date, there have been no more responses to this posting.

Relevant to this posting however, is that in October 2008 the Saudi Minister of Interior⁸ announced Saudi intentions to prosecute 991 people accused of belonging to Al-Qaeda and of being involved in 30 terrorist attacks, including attacks in Saudi Arabia itself. In an announcement published in the Saudi News Agency, he stated that since 2003, the security services foiled 160 terrorist attacks and confiscated enormous amounts of weapons and ammunition.

⁸ <http://www.spa.gov.sa/details.php?id=599731> ,
<http://www.spa.gov.sa/details.php?id=599732>

A map of the Gulf of Aqaba Bay, provided as an attachment by members of the Al-Hesbah forum:

