

Global Jihad: Summary of Information from Arabic Media Sources

The First Half of April 2011

This report summarizes the most prominent articles on the subject of global Jihad published in the media in the Arabic language in the first half of April 2011.

Following are the main issues raised in this report:

- Statements made by Al-Qaeda leaders Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Anwar Al-Awlaki, in which they support the uprisings and protests throughout the Arab world and stress the Islamic aspect of these protests.
- Seven foreign United Nations employees were killed by demonstrators in Afghanistan, in a protest following the burning of a copy of the Quran by the Floridian pastor, Terry Jones.
- 57 people were killed in Tikrit, Iraq in a terrorist attack which included the armed take over of the local government building, hostage taking and killing people inside the building. According to commentators, the modus operandi was similar to that of the Mumbai attacks of 2008, which has been gaining popularity among Global Jihad organizations.
- Concerns in North Africa over the possibility that Libya's security situation will be exploited by Al-Qaeda to transfer large quantities of weapons to Al-Qaeda strongholds in Northern Mali.
- 41 people were killed in Pakistan in a suicide bomb attack.
- The Somali Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen movement is threatening to perpetrate attacks in Kenya.

Afghanistan – Pakistan

Al-Qaeda's Leadership

- Al-Jazeera network's website quoted the American Christian Science Monitor newspaper and reported that Anwar Al-Awlaki published an article on the Al-Malahem online forum titled "The Tsunami of Change", in which he mocked those believing that the secular youth and the democratic movements are the ones inspiring the uprisings in the Arab world. He explained that "whatever the results are, our Jihad brethren in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and the rest of the Islamic World can now breathe easily after decades of repression". Awlaki stated that Jihad fighters worldwide are happy that the uprisings are occurring and, in his opinion, the most significant uprising is in Yemen, as the weakness of the central government there has turned it into fertile ground for Al-Qaeda's activities.¹
- Al-Jazeera network's website reported that Ayman Al-Zawahiri, in a filmed message published online prior to NATO's intervention in Libya, called for Gaddafi's downfall and the establishment of an Islamic state in Libya. He also asked the regional states to fight Gaddafi's mercenaries.²

Afghanistan

- On April 3rd 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting foreign news agencies, reported that the protests were continuing in Afghanistan for the second day, following of the burning of a copy of the Quran by the American pastor, Terry Jones. The rioters killed seven UN employees; four Nepalese, a Swede, a Norwegian and a Romanian, when they broke into UN offices in the city of Mazar-i-Sharif. Furthermore, suicide bombers attacked two NATO bases in

¹ Al-Jazeera, March 31st 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

² Al-Jazeera, April 15th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

Kabul. One attack was perpetrated by operatives disguised as women at a base near the Kabul airfield. Taliban spokesperson, Dhabih Allah Mujahis, published an announcement claiming responsibility for the attack and stating that it was carried out by seven suicide bombers.³

- On April 8th 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper, quoting foreign news agencies, reported that six Afghan policemen were killed in Kandahar in an attack perpetrated by armed men at the Police Training Center. According to reports, the attackers detonated an ambulance laden with explosives and then continued their attack with assault rifles and mortar fire.⁴

Pakistan

- On April 4th 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper quoted foreign news agencies and reported that the Pakistan-Taliban movement carried out two suicide attacks the previous day, at a Sufi tomb in Eastern Pakistan, killing 41 people and injuring dozens. The suicide bombers perpetrated the attacks during an annual ceremony to mark the birth of a Sufi figure buried there. The Taliban are opposed to the moderate Sufi interpretation of Islam and their activists have attacked Sufi targets in the past. The Taliban movement claimed responsibility for the two attacks and pledged to perpetrate additional attacks.⁵
- On April 1st 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported that 13 people were killed in two failed attempts on the life of an Islamist Member of Parliament from the Ulama Al-Islam Party in Pakistan's tribal region, Mulla Fadl Al-Rahman. The first attack was carried out in a crowded street in Sharsada, against a vehicle manned by two policemen guarding the Mulla. The previous day, ten people

³ Al-Hayat, April 3rd 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

⁴ Al-Hayat, April 8th 2011: <http://ksa.daralhayat.com>

⁵ Al-Hayat, April 4th 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

were killed in a suicide attack against the party offices, before the Mulla arrived there. The article stated that no claim of responsibility for the attempt was made. However, although the Mulla is considered to be a strong critic of the government and a radical, the Taliban oppose him since he takes part in the government as a Member of Parliament.⁶ On April 5th 2011, the newspaper further reported on a suicide attack perpetrated by a 16-year old youth at a bus station, killing at least seven people.⁷

Iraq

- On April 3rd 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported that Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the attack on the government building in Salah Al-Din Province in Tikrit, which it called "Ghazwat Tikrit". Al-Qaeda's proclamation stated that "Five believers of Allah sacrificed themselves in order to send this message written in blood." The proclamation also stated that the attack began by breaking into the complex with a car bomb "and as soon as the [perpetrators] alighted from the vehicle, the first one intermingled with a group of officers and security officials and blew himself up in their midst in order to pave the way for his brothers, who took advantage of the security personnel's panic to penetrate the security circles whilst they were confronting the guards with light weapons and hand grenades". The article quoted senior Iraqi security personnel, who claimed that the armed groups, those are linked to Al-Qaeda and those who are not, are trying to demonstrate their presence following the national reconciliation plan and that Al-Qaeda is trying to prove

⁶ Al-Hayat, April 1st 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

⁷ Al-Hayat, April 5th 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

that it will not be influenced by the reconciliation between the regime and other armed groups.⁸

- With regard to the attack in Tikrit, Al-Hayat newspaper published an article tying the attack's *modus operandi*, in which the armed men seized the building, attacked the security personnel, took hostages and then executed them, to a series of similar attacks carried out by Jihadist groups throughout the world, the most famous of which was the 2008 attack in Mumbai. The article also mentions the 2002 attack on the Dubrovka Theater in Moscow, the 2004 attack in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, against the oil companies' complex and the attempt to take over the building of the Jyllands-Posten newspaper in Denmark, following the publication of the Danish Cartoons. The article stated that despite the high costs of such an attack, this *modus operandi* is becoming evermore popular with Jihad organizations as it draws intense media coverage and, therefore, recent years have witnessed many such attacks. The article further mentioned that in November 2010 there were warnings regarding such attacks in France, Britain and Germany and that the security services in Britain are concerned that such an attack may occur during the 2012 London Olympics. The article quoted Abu Saed Al-Amili, one of the Jihadist Salafist movement's ideologues, who praised the attacks in Mumbai, saying they have "shown the Muslims [...] that it does not matter how much the enemy increases his security measures and tracks every move, there will always be breaches through which it will be possible to penetrate his home". He also mentioned that these attacks create symbols and role models for young

⁸ Al-Hayat, April 3rd 2011: <http://ksa.daralhayat.com>

Muslims, "particularly those who have not yet joined the movements which carry out Jihad".⁹

- On April 3rd 2011 and April 5th 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that the attacks on Iraqi security forces and civilian targets continue to claim victims throughout Iraq, through a series of small attacks in the various districts throughout the country.¹⁰

Jordan

- On April 9th 2011, Al-Jazeera network reported that supporters of the Jihadist Salafist movement in Jordan held a mass demonstration in the northern city of Irbid, demanding the release of prisoners affiliated with their movement. The site reported that a month ago, the Jihadist Salafist movement started organizing demonstrations and processions in a number of Jordanian districts, demanding the imposition of Islamic religious rule and a halt to the persecution of the members of their movement.¹¹ On April 12th 2011, the site reported that the leaders of the Jihadist Salafist movement declared the demonstrations' cessation following the release of four of the movement's prisoners. The leaders of the organization declared that they had refused the Jordanian regime's request to stop their activities and that the accusations against the movement's activists regarding the recruiting of young men to fight in Iraq, "were accusations for which the Prophet Muhammad would have been incarcerated had he been alive, as he had urged the believers to go and

⁹ Al-Hayat, April 12th 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

¹⁰ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 3rd, 5th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>.

¹¹ Al-Jazeera, April 9th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

fight". The organization's leaders also stated that there are many youth who wish to die for Allah and that they refuse to negotiate with security forces.¹²

The Arabian Peninsula

Yemen

- On April 6th 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper reported that the opposition in Yemen held President Ali Abdullah Saleh responsible for the deterioration in the security situation and for handing over control of the Abyan Province to Al-Qaeda in order to create a "security vacuum".¹³ On April 8th 2011, Al-Hayat newspaper published a report on the security situation in Yemen, according to which the President was using Al-Qaeda as a bargaining chip with the West and intentionally increasing American concerns regarding the organization's capabilities in order to win their support. For this reason he created a false representation as to Al-Qaeda's control over wide areas in Yemen and the possibility that the regime's downfall will strengthen the organization. However, Muhammad Qahtan, official spokesperson of the Al-Liqaa Al-Mushtarak Opposition Parties' Union, intending to reassure the US, declared that any regime that will take control after the presiding president leaves "will be a serious and effective partner in the struggle against terrorism and Al-Qaeda". He also accused Saleh's regime of using Al-Qaeda to rob the international community.¹⁴
- On April 15th 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper published an article on the political and security situation in Yemen, quoting Said Obaid Al-Jmahi, an expert on Al-Qaeda in Yemen, who presented a somewhat different view of the

¹² Al-Jazeera, April 12th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

¹³ Al-Hayat, April 6th 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

¹⁴ Al-Hayat, April 8th 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

situation than the one portrayed in Al-Hayat. Al-Jmahi contended that the Americans do not perceive any regime as a balancing point in the war against Al-Qaeda and that they see themselves as fighting alone against the organization while, for the most part, the regime allows them freedom of action inside Yemen. Therefore, they do not necessarily see Saleh's regime as the key to the battle against Al-Qaeda. Al-Jmahi also explained that on the one hand, there are those (referring to Saleh's regime), who claim that only they can solve the Al-Qaeda phenomenon and, on the other hand, there are those who contend that Al-Qaeda is a bargaining chip for the regime, causing alarm, as the opposition claims. He believes that both sides are mistaken, as Al-Qaeda is a phenomenon which cannot be uprooted and it will continue to be the enemy of the Yemeni regime, whether Saleh's regime remains or a new regime rises in its stead. He continued to explain that if a new pluralistic and democratic regime is established in Yemen, Al-Qaeda will be its adversary as it perceives these ideals as heresy. He therefore advised both the opposition and the regime to consider Al-Qaeda as an enemy.¹⁵

Saudi Arabia

- On April 3rd 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that a day earlier, the Saudi regime published statistics relating to the war on terrorism in the country. According to the reports, since May 12th 2003, the number of prisoners incarcerated as part of the war against Al-Qaeda reached 11,527, of which 5,831 had since been released and 5,696 were still imprisoned, among them 616 still under interrogation. This is the first time the Saudi government published statistics regarding the number of prisoners accused of terrorism

¹⁵ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 15th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

over the past 8 years and of being involved in Al-Qaeda activities, which claimed the lives of 74 security personnel and 90 civilians and injured over one thousand people. It was further published that the prisoners were afforded all their legal rights under Saudi law, including legal representation and a just trial; they are permitted to have family visits, as well as receive monthly aid for themselves and their families. The total aid for these purposes reached 529 million Riyal over an unspecified period of time.¹⁶

The Maghreb

- On April 7th 2011, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper reported that Chad's government closed its border with Libya, in cooperation with Mauritania and Algeria, fearing infiltration of Al-Qaeda activists into their country following the security situation in Libya.¹⁷
- The Arab media stated in a number of articles that the Sahel countries, headed by Algeria, fear that Al-Qaeda will take advantage of the decline in the security situation in Libya and the large quantities of arms to be found in the country and try to obtain weapons, particularly SA-7 surface to air missiles and transport them to the organization's strongholds in Northern Mali. According to some of the reports, Algerian leaders stated that surface to air missiles of this type and RPG launchers have already been transported by truck from Libya to Northern Mali.¹⁸

¹⁶ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 3rd 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹⁷ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 7th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹⁸ Al-Hayat, April 5th, 9th 2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>, Al-Jazeera, April 6th 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, April 5th, 7th 2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>.

Africa

Somalia

- On April 2nd 2011, Al-Jazeera network reported that the Kenyan government cooperates with the Somali Army in the border region between both countries in the fighting between it and the Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen movement, which threatened to carry out attacks deep inside Kenyan territory. A leader of the movement, who refused to identify himself, said that they have “formed special brigades to teach the Kenyans a lesson in fighting and battles, deep inside Kenyan territory”.¹⁹

The West and the Rest of the World

Brazil

- On April 4th 2011, Elaph news website, quoting the Daily Telegraph, stated that security experts have expressed their concerns that terrorists will take advantage of weak international legislation, Brazil lack of counter terrorism legislation, the fact it does not perceive Hezbollah and Hamas as terrorist organizations and the fact that the Federal Police's counter terrorism unit was dismantled in 2009, in order to perpetrate attacks at the 2016 Rio De Janeiro Olympics. It was further mentioned that the Brazilian Pija newspaper published an investigative report on the terrorist threat against Brazil, claiming there are 21 Islamic radicals in Brazil who are tied to terrorist organizations including Al-Qaeda and who are using Brazil for various purposes, such as fund raising and planning attacks. Those mentioned in the article include Khalid Hussein Ali, who grew up in Lebanon and now lives in San Paulo. He is a restaurant manager and, according to the newspaper, runs an internet branch

¹⁹ Al-Jazeera, April 2nd 2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

tied to Al-Qaeda, called Jihad Media Battalion, publishing announcements on behalf of Al-Qaeda's leadership. Another person that was mentioned is the Iranian Muhsin Rabani, wanted by Interpol for planning the attacks against Jewish centers in Buenos Aires, killing 114 people. According to the article, he enters and leaves Brazil with a forged passport. It is further mentioned that according to the US Treasury, the border between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay is considered an artery for transferring funds for Hezbollah.

The United States

- Al-Hayat newspaper quoted foreign news agencies with regard to the American decision to bring five of the accused in the 9/11 attacks to trial in a military court at Guantanamo. These include Khaled Sheikh Muhammad, believed to be the one who suggested to Bin Laden to use aircraft in the attacks and the one who supervised the execution of the attack until the very last moment. Walid Bin Attash, who boarded a plane from Bangkok to Hong Kong with a knife in his pocket and who approached the cockpit in order to check the security measures is also one of the accused. He later boarded other flights without the knife being discovered. Other prisoners are accused of transferring funds to finance the attacks and for providing logistical support.²⁰

²⁰ Al-Hayat, April 5th, 11th 2011: <http://www.daralhayat.com>.