



The following is a summary and analysis of the terrorist attacks and counter-terrorism operations that occurred during the month of November 2012, researched and recorded by the ICT database team. Important events this month included the following:

- On 1 November, nine people were arrested for allegedly planning to set up a terrorist training camp in the northern Rif Mountains, Morocco.
- On 6 November, a car bomb exploded at the entrance to an Iraqi army base in Taji, Iraq, killing 31 people and injuring 50 others.
- On 12 November, the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC), a superior court in the UK, upheld Abu Qatada's appeal against deportation from the UK to Jordan and released him on restrictive bail conditions.
- On 14 November, senior Hamas leader Ahmed Jabari was killed in an IAF missile strike in the Gaza strip. The incident marked the start of Operation Pillar of Defence, which lasted until 21 November. During the operation the IDF targeted more than 1,500 terror sites across the Gaza Strip.
- On 16 November, Raul Sanchez Fuentes Villota, 46, a suspected member of ETA was arrested in Liverpool, UK.
- On 18 November, Mohamed Nuh Aden (Abu Hafsa) head of the assassination division for Al-Shabab Al Mujheden was arrested in Galkayo, Somalia.
- On 19 November, four men from California, USA were charged with plotting to kill Americans by joining Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.
- On 22 November, 23 people were killed and 62 injured when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.
- On 27 November, 29 people were killed and 126 wounded as a result of eight car bombings in Iraq.
- On 28 November, two car bombs exploded simultaneously in Jaramana, an eastern suburb of Damascus, Syria killing 50 people and injuring 120 others.



EUROPE

United Kingdom

On 12 November, a man, 24, whose identity was not released to the public, was detained at Heathrow International airport on suspicion of being involved in terrorist activities in Syria.¹ He was arrested arriving in Britain on a flight from Bahrain and questioned as part of the Metropolitan Police's investigation into a group accused of kidnapping a British photographer and his colleague in 2012. The suspect, who was thought to be a senior leader of the cell, was detained on the suspicion that he was involved in preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism under the Terrorism Act 2000.²

On 13 November, Muslim cleric Abu Qatada was released on bail from the Long Lartin maximum security jail in Worcestershire. His appeal to the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC), a superior court in the UK, was upheld after lawyers claimed he would not get a fair trial in Jordan, where he is accused of plotting bomb attacks on Western and Israeli targets in 1998 and 1999. He was found guilty of terrorism offenses in his absence in Jordan in 1999.³ Authorities believe he played a key ideological role in spreading support for suicide bombings. The bail conditions imposed on Abu Qatada included being allowed out of his house only between 08:00 and 16:00, having to wear an electronic tag, and being restricted with whom he meets. The British government reacted strongly to this saying they would appeal.⁴ Abu Qatada is one of the most important ideologues in Al-Qaeda. He was described by Britain's National Security Court as a "truly dangerous individual" and by a Spanish judge as "Osama bin Laden's right hand man in Europe".⁵ Abu Qatada arrived in the UK in September 1993 on a forged United Arab Emirates passport. He claimed, and was granted, asylum in 1994 for himself and his family on the grounds that he had been tortured by the Jordanian authorities. He was granted leave to remain until June 1998.⁶ British authorities accused Abu Qatada of having ties to Zacarias Moussaoui, the "20th 9/11 hijacker," and with shoe bomber Richard Reid. Audio recordings of some of the cleric's

¹ Guardian, "Man arrested at Heathrow airport on suspicion of Syria terrorism links", 12 November 2012.

² Telegraph, "Syrian terror suspect arrested at Heathrow", 12 November 2012.

³ BBC, "Abu Qatada wins appeal against deportation", 12 November 2012.

⁴ Independent, "Prime Minister 'completely fed up' as terror suspect Abu Qatada walks free from prison", 14 November 2012.

⁵ Reuters, "Spiritual leader of European al-Qaida?", 25 October 2002.

⁶ Telegraph, "Timeline: Abu Qatada's legal battle to stay in Britain", 9 May 2012.



sermons were found in an apartment in Hamburg, Germany, used by some of the 9/11 hijackers.⁷

On 16 November, Umer Farooq, 34, a Pakistani dentist, who was studying for a Master's degree in the UK, was jailed for two years for having files on his computer with details of how to make explosives, poisons and mines. He pleaded guilty at the Central Criminal Court on 2 November 2012, to 14 counts of possessing material likely to be useful in terrorism.⁸ The material included copies of Al-Qaeda magazine Inspire and the Terrorist Handbook of Explosives; other documents included information on "homemade C4", guns with silencers, "home built mines" and "silent killing". One computer file contained information about the collection of evidence at crime scenes, while another bore the title "Black medicine: the dark art of death". Information about nuclear sites in the US was also found on his computer, which he had locked using encrypted codes.⁹ Farooq was served with deportation documents and will be sent back to Pakistan after serving his sentence.¹⁰

On 16 November, Raul Sanchez Fuentes Villota, 46, a suspected member of ETA was arrested in Liverpool as a result of a joint police operation between Spanish and UK forces. Authorities said he was linked to a series of murders and planted a car bomb, among other crimes in the early 1990s.¹¹ He was living in the UK under a false name since 1995 when he was released after having spent four years in preventive detention awaiting trial. Spanish law states that a suspect must be released if a trial against him has not been held in the four years that follow his arrest. He had been arrested 1991, in Barakaldo with other presumed members of the ETA unit 'Matalak' suspected of having murdered two Spanish policemen.¹²

⁷ CNN, "Radical cleric Abu Qatada released from UK jail", 14 November 2012.

⁸ Independent, "Umer Farooq admits possession of terrorist documents containing details of how to make explosives, poisons and mines", 2 November 2012.

⁹ BBC, "Umer Farooq jailed over terror material", 16 November 2012.

¹⁰ Independent, "Umer Farooq admits possession of terrorist documents containing details of how to make explosives, poisons and mines", 2 November 2012.

¹¹ BBC, "Police arrest fugitive Basque terror suspect in Liverpool", 16 November 2012.

¹² EITB, "UK police arrest suspected ETA member Fuentes Villota", 16 November 2012.



AFRICA

Morocco

On 1 November, Moroccan authorities arrested nine people, thus dismantling a terrorist cell known as "Ansar al-Sharia in the Islamic Maghreb", that was allegedly planning to set up a terrorist training camp in the northern Rif Mountains.¹³ Authorities believe the cell planned to make explosives via information on the Internet and to rob shops in Salé City in Rabat in order to finance their activities. Authorities claimed the cell planned to carry out attack on Moroccan targets. Several items including tools, bullet-proof vests, and black flags symbolizing Al-Qaeda were recovered from the detained suspects. Five of the nine detained suspects were remanded in custody while the remaining four were detained for further questioning.¹⁴

Nigeria

On 25 November, 11 people were killed and 30 wounded when two suicide car bombers targeted worshippers at the St. Andrew Military Protestant Church at the Jaji barracks in Kaduna.¹⁵ A military source who witnessed the attack said a suicide car bomber detonated explosives a few minutes after the service began and then as people went to help those who were injured, a second suicide car bomber detonated his explosives causing many casualties. No group claimed responsibility, but authorities blamed Boko Haram.¹⁶

Somalia

On 18 November, 11 Al-Shabaab Al Mujahdeen militants were arrested in Galkayo, Puntland including Mohamed Nuh Aden (Abu Hafsa) head of the assassination division. Authorities also seized a cache of explosives. The arrest of Hafsa led to the second arrest of Abdirasak Hussien Tahlil, an Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahedeen operative who was a logistics officer. Police officials said the two were transporting an arsenal of explosives through Galkayo when Puntland forces conducted the operations.¹⁷ The arrests appeared to confirm that Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahedeen commanders are fleeing to the Puntland mountainous surrounding

¹³ BBC, "Morocco dismantles terrorist cell", 1 November 2012.

¹⁴ RTT, "Islamist Terror Cell Busted In Morocco, Nine Arrested", 2 November 2012.

¹⁵ Reuters, "Suicide bombs kill 11 at military church in Nigeria", 25 November 2012.

¹⁶ AFP, "Double Suicide Bombings kill 11 Nigerians at Kaduna church inside military base", 25 November 2012.

¹⁷ AllAfrica.com, "Somalia: Puntland Nab Al Shabaab Agents and a Cache of Explosives", 18 November 2012.



areas following the loss of the port of Kismayo in September 2012.¹⁸ However, Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahedeen spokesman for military operations, denied any of its senior militants were arrested.¹⁹

Tunisia

On 1 November, authorities in Tunisia arrested four people, including a policeman in Zarzis, suspected of plotting to kidnap members of the local Jewish community for ransom. Police seized two weapons. The suspects' identities were not released to the public.²⁰ It was reported in the local media that the policeman arrested previously dealt with the security of the Jewish community in Zarzis. According to the report, he formulated the plot and created the infrastructure of the hijackers. The policeman was allegedly an activist of an extremist Islamic group active in the area. There are less than 2,000 Jews in Tunisia, mostly living in the town of Zarzis and the nearby island of Djerba in the south of the country.²¹

MIDDLE EAST

Iraq

On 6 November, an explosion killed 31 people and injured 50 others at an army base in Taji.²² There were conflicting reports about the source of the explosion. Police officials said a car bomb exploded in a parking lot near the recruitment center at the base, targeting potential new recruits. However, Iraqi military officials said a suicide bomber detonated his explosives at the gate of the base.²³ There was no claim of responsibility for the attack but authorities suspected the Islamic State of Iraq.²⁴

On 14 November, a series of car bomb attacks that targeted civilian, government and security interests throughout Iraq killed approximately 20 people and wounded 100 others. The attacks coincided with the eve of the Islamic New Year.²⁵ Authorities said a car bomb

¹⁸ Telegraph, "Al-Qaeda's East Africa network 'regrouping and rearming in northern Somalia'", 27 November 2012.

¹⁹ Reuters, "Puntland says arrests al Shabaab members, seizes explosives", 18 November 2012.

²⁰ Jerusalem Post, "Tunisia: Kidnapping plot against local Jews foiled", 1 November 2012.

²¹ Reuters, "Tunisia says foiled plot to kidnap local Jews", 1 November 2012.

²² Reuters, "Suicide bomber kills 31 at army base near Baghdad", 6 November 2012.

²³ New York Times, "Bombing at Iraqi Base Kills Dozens", 6 November 2012.

²⁴ BBC, "Car bombing kills 27 at Iraq army base", 6 November 2012.

²⁵ New York Times, "At Least 20 Die in Series of Bomb Attacks Throughout Iraq", 14 November 2012.



exploded outside a popular restaurant in Hafriya killing three people and wounding 15 others. A second car bomb targeting a security convoy exploded near two hotels in central Baghdad, killing one person and wounding seven others. In Kirkuk, nine people were killed and 31 others wounded when three car bombs were detonated. In Hilla, a car bomb exploded near an outdoor market, killing five people and wounding 12 others. In Diyala Province, two roadside bombs and a car bomb, all in different areas, wounded 11 people. One targeted the convoy of Diyala Gov. Omer Aziz al-Hamri; however he was unhurt in the attack.²⁶ There was no immediate claim of responsibility for any of the explosions but authorities blamed Al-Qaeda in Iraq.²⁷

On 27 November, 29 people were killed and 126 wounded as a result of eight car bombings in Iraq. In the first of a series of attacks, at least four people were killed and 41 others wounded when three car bombs exploded in Kirkuk. In Anbar province, six people were killed and 13 others injured, when two car bombs exploded in Ramadi and Falluja. Several hours later, 19 people were killed and 72 others injured in three separate explosions outside three Shiite mosques in Baghdad. While no group claimed responsibility for the attacks, police authorities blamed Al-Qaeda in Iraq.²⁸ The attackers targeted pilgrims who were celebrating the holy month of Ashura.²⁹

On 28 November, a series of explosions in Iraq killed 48 people and wounded 200 others. The worst attack occurred in Hilla, where a double suicide car bombing took place at a restaurant killing 32 people and wounding 138 others. In Karbala, a parked car exploded near one of the city gates killing five people. Authorities said that pilgrims come to the city each year for Ashura commemorations, to mark the end of the Shia Muslim holy month of Muharram.³⁰ Other attacks took place in Fallujah, Baghdad, and Mosul; these attacks killed 16 people and wounded 70 others. No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks.³¹

²⁶ CNN, "Car bombs kill at least 18 in Iraq", 14 November 2012.

²⁷ AP, "Terror Arrests: 4 California Men Charged With Plotting To Join Taliban & Al Qaeda, Kill Americans", 20 November 2012.

²⁸ CNN, "29 killed, 126 wounded in Iraq car bombings", 27 November 2012.

²⁹ Reuters, "Car bombs kill 23 Shi'ite Muslims in Iraqi capital", 27 November 2012.

³⁰ BBC, "Bombings kill Shias in Iraq cities of Hilla and Karbala", 29 November 2012.

³¹ NYTimes, "Bombings in Iraq Kill at Least 48", 29 November 2012.



Israel and West Bank

On 1 November, Israel Security forces (Shin Bet) arrested Maher Abu-Gava, 41, a Gaza metal trader on suspicion of transferring millions of dollars to Hamas. When arrested, Abu-Gava had over \$100,000 in his possession. Authorities also believe he sold materials to Hamas's military wing in Gaza; the materials were allegedly used to construct tunnels, bunkers under mosques and lookout positions. According to the indictment, Abu-Gava imported iron from various countries, including Turkey, to the Ashdod port. Authorities said he kept the iron in storage areas in Israel until it was time to transfer them to the Gaza Strip via the Kerem Shalom crossing. He had business partners in Israel and was assisted by his brother, Mahmoud, who lives in Egypt. The total amount of cash transferred to Hamas on various trips was \$3.35 million. The indictment also included charges of conspiracy to commit a felony, contact with foreign agents, support for a terrorist organization and prohibited use of property for terrorist purposes.³²

On 14 November, an IAF missile strike killed Ahmed Jabari and one other militant in the Gaza strip.³³ The IDF said that Jabari, who was the head of Hamas' military wing in the Gaza Strip, had carried out and ordered numerous terror attacks against Israel, including the abduction of IDF soldier Gilad Schalit and the firing of hundreds of rockets into Israeli cities in recent years.³⁴ The incident marked the start of Operation Pillar of Defense. The IDF said it had two main goals: to destroy terror organizations in the Gaza Strip and to defend Israeli civilians who have been targeted by rocket fire from militants in the Gaza strip.³⁵

During the Operation, which lasted eight days, the IDF targeted more than 1,500 terror sites across the Gaza Strip. Between 14-21 November, the IAF struck over 20 underground rocket launchers belonging to Hamas and Islamic Jihad.³⁶ The targets included 19 senior command centers, operational control centers, Hamas' senior-rank headquarters and 30 senior operatives. Operatives targeted included: Hab's Hassan Us Msamch (senior operative in Hamas' police), Ahmed Abu Jalal (Commander of the military wing in Al-Muazi)³⁷, Khaled

³² Jerusalem Post, "Shin Bet: Gaza metal trader 'funneled millions to Hamas'", 1 November 2012.

³³ Jerusalem Post, "IAF strike kills Hamas military chief Jabari", 14 November 2012.

³⁴ Jerusalem Post, "Profile of a terrorist: Ahmed Jabari", 14 November 2012.

³⁵ IDF, "Operation Pillar of Defense: Summary of Events", 22 November 2012.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ynet, "Report: IDF kills senior Hamas military wing commander", 18 November 2012.



Shaer (senior operative in the anti-tank operations)³⁸, Osama Kadi (senior operative in the smuggling operations in the southern Gaza Strip)³⁹, Muhammad Kalb (senior operative in the aerial defense operations), and Ramz Harb (Islamic Jihad senior operative in propaganda in Gaza city)⁴⁰. The operation also damaged Hamas' command and control and destroyed hundreds of underground rocket launchers, 140 smuggling tunnels, 66 terror tunnels, dozens of Hamas operation rooms and bases, 26 weapon manufacturing and storage facilities, and dozens of long-range rocket launchers and launch sites.⁴¹ These actions severely weakened Hamas' launching capabilities, resulting in a decreasing number of rockets being fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel.⁴² According to the IDF, 84% of rockets fired into Israel were intercepted by the 'Iron Dome' defense system and Hamas' accuracy with regards to hitting populated areas within Israel remained below 7%⁴³. On 16 November, IDF Spokesman Yoav Mordechai said 30,000 IDF reservists had been called up for an expansion of Operation Pillar of Defense⁴⁴; however a ground invasion of Gaza did not take place, as on 21 November at a ceasefire was announced⁴⁵. Mohamed Kamel Amr, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, and Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, announced a ceasefire would take effect on 21:00 but several hours later 12 more rockets were fired into Israel from Gaza.⁴⁶

In the course of Operation Pillar of Defense, Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups fired for the first time long-range rockets, such as the Fajr-5, towards Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Israeli authorities believe the rockets were supplied by Iran.⁴⁷ Israeli authorities said that in total six Israelis were killed during Operation Pillar of Defense (including two IDF soldiers) and 231 Israelis were injured, the majority suffered minor injuries.⁴⁸ Israeli authorities said that Hamas used civilians as human shields and that during the operation the IDF did everything necessary to refrain from hurting innocent bystanders and minimized harm to

³⁸ Ynet, "IAF kills Hamas activist in Gaza", 16 November 2012.

³⁹ Times of Israel, "Gaza PM goes into hiding; Hamas rocket chief killed", 18 November 2012.

⁴⁰ MFA, "Operation Pillar of Defense - IDF updates", 22 November 2012.

⁴¹ IDF, "Operation Pillar of Defense: Summary of Events", 22 November 2012.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ IDF, "Ceasefire agreement comes into effect", 22 November 2012.

⁴⁴ Times of Israel, "IDF calling up 30,000 reserves ahead of possible Gaza ground operation", 15 November 2012.

⁴⁵ Strafor, "Cease-Fire Announced in Israel-Gaza Conflict", 21 November 2012.

⁴⁶ Reuters, "Hamas-Israel ceasefire takes hold but mistrust runs deep", 21 November 2012.

⁴⁷ World Tribune, "Hamas fires first Iran-made Fajr-5 rockets toward Tel Aviv", 16 November 2012.

⁴⁸ Israel Security Agency (ISA), "Operation Pillar of Defense", November 2012.



innocent civilians in Gaza.⁴⁹ This included calling thousands of residents in Gaza to warn them of strikes and disseminating leaflets in Gaza warning them to avoid being present in the vicinity of Hamas operatives.⁵⁰ According to the IDF, 80 Palestinian militants were killed and over 1,100 Palestinian casualties were recorded in Gaza.⁵¹ It was reported however in the New York Times and by other international media outlets that the Hamas Health Ministry has said a total of 107 people were killed. Hamas officials also said more than 860 have been wounded.⁵²

The following is a summary of the most serious attacks that targeted Israeli citizens during Operation Pillar of Defense:

- On 15 November, three people were killed and two others injured when a Grad rocket hit their apartment in Kiryat Melachi. The casualties were identified as Mirah Scharf, 25, Itzik Amsalem, 24, and Aharon Smadja, 49. A barrage of rockets were also fired from the Gaza Strip targeting Beersheba and Ashdod (within a range of 40 kilometers), and Ashqelon (within a range of 20 kilometers). A long-range rocket targeted the Tel Aviv for the first time. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attacks.⁵³
- On 16 November, Israeli authorities confirmed that one rocket directed towards Jerusalem had landed in the Gush Etzion region near a Palestinian village. This was the first time an air raid siren sounded in the Jerusalem region since the IDF launched Operation Pillar of Defense. There were no reports of injuries or damage. An air raid siren sounded in Tel Aviv at a similar time, followed by an explosion caused by a missile landing in an open area. Hamas' military wing, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, claimed responsibility for both rocket attacks.⁵⁴
- On 18 November, the IDF said 94 rocket hits were identified in Israel. The most destructive of these rocket attacks included two long-range rockets fired at the Tel Aviv area. Both were intercepted and destroyed by the Iron Dome aerial defense

⁴⁹ Jerusalem Post, "Dealing with Hamas's human shield tactics", 20 November 2012.

⁵⁰ CNN, "Rockets pound Israel, Gaza as Netanyahu alleges 'double war crime'", 19 November 2012.

⁵¹ Israel Security Agency (ISA), "Operation Pillar of Defense", November 2012.

⁵² New York Times, "U.S. Seeks Truce on Gaza as Enemies Step Up Attacks", 20 November 2012.

⁵³ MFA, "Operation Pillar of Defense - IDF updates", 22 November 2012.

⁵⁴ Ynet, "Hamas fires first rockets at Jerusalem", 16 November 2012.



system. However, shrapnel from one of the rockets, hit a car in Holon causing damage but no casualties.⁵⁵ A rocket hit a car in Ofakim, causing extensive damage and lightly injuring five people.⁵⁶ Two rockets landed in Ashkelon causing extensive damage to a residential building. Similar rockets landed in Sderot and in Beersheba causing considerable damage to the buildings.⁵⁷

- On 20 November, IDF Corporal Yosef Partuk, 18, was killed in a mortar attack in the Eshkol Regional Council area. Partuk was posthumously promoted to corporal. Elian Salam Id Alanbary, 29, a Bedouin was killed as a result of a rocket attack.⁵⁸ Four people were also wounded when a long-range rocket directly hit an apartment building in Rishon Letzion, south of Tel Aviv, wounding four people. It was the first time a long-range rocket had caused significant damage to a building in the greater Tel Aviv area. In Jerusalem, two long-range rockets were launched towards the city; one fell in Gush Etzion, while the other landed in the Hebron region. There were no casualties and no damage was reported. A rocket also hit a factory in the western Negev. In Ashdod, a barrage of rockets was fired at the city and one hit a building. Four rockets were intercepted and destroyed by the Iron Dome aerial defense system.⁵⁹
- On 21 November, IDF soldier Boris Yarmilnik, 28 died of his wounds from a rocket attack several days earlier. He was the sixth Israeli to be killed in the Operation.⁶⁰ On the same day, an explosion occurred on a bus in Tel Aviv, close to the Ministry of Defense building, injuring 28 civilians. Public Security Minister, Yitzhak Aharonovich, said the explosive device was placed under one of the bus's seats. It was reported that the bomb was a relatively small device of three kilograms and it was packed with over 800 screws and used fireworks components as its explosive ingredient.⁶¹ Israel Security Agents (Shin Bet) announced that several hours after the bombing, they arrested a man from the village of Taybeh in Israel. Israeli authorities said that a Palestinian militant cell based in the West Bank village of Beit Lakiya sent the suspect

⁵⁵ AFP, "Two rockets intercepted as Hamas targets Tel Aviv", 18 November 2012.

⁵⁶ Ynet, " Grad hits near car in Ofakim; 5 wounded", 18 November 2012.

⁵⁷ IDF, "Operation Pillar of Defense: Summary of Events", 22 November 2012.

⁵⁸ Ynet, "Israeli soldier, civilian killed by barrages from Gaza", 20 November 2012.

⁵⁹ IDF, "Operation Pillar of Defense: Summary of Events", 22 November 2012

⁶⁰ Ynet, "IDF officers killed in rocket attack laid to rest", 21 November 2012.

⁶¹ Times of Israel, "After eight days of fighting, ceasefire is put to the test", 21 November 2012.



to place a bomb connected to a mobile phone on the Tel Aviv bus. After he planted the bomb, the attacker left the bus and called his handlers, who remotely detonated the explosive.⁶² According to the indictment, the main suspect was identified as Muhammad Abed al-Jaffer Nasser Mafarja, 18, and was charged in the Tel Aviv District Court with aiding the enemy in a time of war, dozens of counts of attempted murder, conspiracy to commit a crime, causing an explosion, aggravated assault, illegally transporting weapons, and giving assistance to an illegal organization. He admitted planting the explosive device.⁶³ The Beit Lakiya cell was also made up of the following suspects: Ahmad Salah Ahmad Musa, 25; Fuad Rabah Shukri Atzi, 27; and Muhammad Mahfud Said Damra, 25. Indictments were filed against all three men and authorities said the cell was also plotting to carry out suicide bombings and shooting attacks against Israeli politicians and soldiers. According to the indictment Ahmad Salah Ahmad Musa served as the leader of the cell and was in charge of acquiring intelligence on the targets, making the bombs, and recruiting others to place the bombs. Israeli authorities said he admitted to learning bomb making skills on the internet. Israeli authorities believe he detonated the Tel Aviv bus bomb using a remotely controlled device and police said he admitted to planning other attacks during his interrogation. Musa also attempted to recruit would-be suicide bombers – including from among the student population at Bir Zeit University in Ramallah, where Mafarja also studied – but was unsuccessful. It was also alleged that he planned to carry out a drive-by shooting of soldiers in the West Bank. Following his arrest, Mafarja confessed to the crime and re-enacted it for the investigators.⁶⁴

Syria

On 28 November, two car bombs exploded simultaneously at 06:40 in a central square in Jaramana, an eastern suburb of Damascus, killing approximately 50 people and injuring 120 others. The suburb is mostly populated by Christians and Druse.⁶⁵ Authorities said the bombs exploded within minutes of each other, with the second bombing targeting rescue workers attending to those who were injured in the first bomb.⁶⁶ It was also reported that two other

⁶² Telegraph, “Israeli Arab man arrested over Tel Aviv bus bombing”, 21 November 2012.

⁶³ Al Akbar, “Palestinian citizen of Israel charged with Tel Aviv bombing”, 21 December 2012.

⁶⁴ Jerusalem Post, “Man placed bomb, returned to work at McDonalds”, 19 November 2012.

⁶⁵ AP, “Jaramana Car Bombs Kill Dozens In Syrian Capital's Suburb”, 28 November 2012.

⁶⁶ BBC, “Syria conflict: Twin bomb blasts shake Damascus suburb”, 28 November 2012.



smaller bombs were planted and exploded by the gates of two neighboring schools, killing one and wounding many others. The exact figures were unknown. They were timed to explode at 07:30 to coincide with the start of the school day.⁶⁷ No group claimed responsibility for the attack.⁶⁸

North America

USA

On 1 November, Rezwan Ferdaus, 26, was sentenced to 17 years in prison for a plot to attack the Pentagon and the US Capitol building in Washington with explosives loaded into remote-control model airplanes. Ferdaus, who was from Massachusetts, was arrested in September 2011 after an FBI sting operation in which he requested and took delivery of plastic explosives, three grenades, and six assault rifles from undercover FBI agents who he believed were members of the Al-Qaeda network. He pleaded guilty in July 2012 to terrorism-related charges. The 17-year sentence, which included 10 years of supervised release, was the result of a July 2012 plea agreement worked out between his attorneys and prosecutors. Ferdaus pleaded guilty to charges of attempting to destroy and damage a federal building and attempting to provide material support to terrorists. Prosecutors dropped four other counts that could have raised the total possible sentence to 35 years. Ferdaus planned to carry out the attacks on the Pentagon, located in Arlington, Virginia, and the US Capitol building, in Washington. The attacks were to use a scale model of a U.S. Navy F-86 Saber fighter jet, about the size of a picnic table, which he kept in a storage locker in suburban Boston. Authorities said the public was never in danger from the explosives, which they said were always under the control of federal officials. The government had alleged that Ferdaus told undercover agents of his plans to commit acts of violence against the US by "decapitating" its "military center" and killing "kafirs," an Arabic term meaning non-believers.⁶⁹

On 14 November, Omar Shafik Hammami, alias Abu Mansour al-Amriki, was added to the US FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists list. Hammani, who is a US national from Alabama, became a prominent spokesman for Al-Shabaab Al-Mujahedeen after he traveled to Somalia in 2006 to

⁶⁷ AlAkbar, "Two Bombs in Jaramana: A Very Bloody Morning", 29 November

⁶⁸ AP, "Jaramana Car Bombs Kill Dozens In Syrian Capital's Suburb", 28 November 2012.

⁶⁹ NBC News, "Massachusetts man gets 17 years for plot to bomb Pentagon, Capitol with model planes", 1 November 2012.



join their cause. He is suspected of threatening attacks against the US and US interests abroad. Hammami's messages have included hip-hop chants that expressed his desire to become a martyr as a result of a US drone attack.⁷⁰

On 19 November, four men from California were charged with plotting to kill Americans by joining Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. They were accused of planning to bomb government facilities and public places and kill members of the armed forces abroad.⁷¹ Sohail Omar Kabir, 35, the suspected ringleader, was arrested during a military raid in Kabul, Afghanistan on 17 November, involving US and Afghan forces. Authorities said he attempted to grab grenades and other weapons from his captors. He was injured during his arrest.⁷² Authorities said the other men, Ralph Deleon, Miguel Alejandro Santana Vidriales, and Arifeen David Gojali were arrested on 16 November in Chino, California, as a result of an FBI sting operation.⁷³ According to a criminal complaint filed by the FBI, Kabir recruited Deleon and Vidriales, and introduced them to the teachings of the late Al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula leader Anwar al-Awlaki. The men began taking part in online discussions about jihad, including posting radical content to Facebook and expressing extremist views. In late September 2012, they recruited Gojali.⁷⁴ Authorities claimed Kabir told the men he would arrange meetings with militants in Afghanistan and that he would find them a place to sleep in mosques or the homes of fellow jihadists once they arrived in Afghanistan.⁷⁵ The suspects made plans to depart in mid-November 2012, intent on carrying out plots in Afghanistan and also in Yemen. The men allegedly sold their belongings to fund their travel arrangements. In one online conversation, Santana told an FBI undercover agent that he wanted to carry out jihad and expressed interest in a jihadist training camp in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. The FBI agent also said that the men had practiced using assault rifles at gun ranges and practiced battle tactics at a Southern California paintball field. The group also shaved their beards and deleted audio files and other signs of their support for violent jihad from their Facebook pages several days before they were due to travel to Afghanistan.⁷⁶ On 19 December, the

⁷⁰ Time, "Meet Abu Mansoor al-Amriki, the American-Born Rapping Jihadist on the Most Wanted List", 19 November 2012.

⁷¹ AP, "Terror Arrests: 4 California Men Charged With Plotting To Join Taliban & Al Qaeda, Kill Americans", 20 November 2012.

⁷² Reuters, "Four California men plead not guilty to plotting to support al Qaeda", 19 December 2012.

⁷³ Fox News, "4 men in Southern California charged with attempting to support terrorism", 19 November 2012.

⁷⁴ Reuters, "Four California men plead not guilty to plotting to support al Qaeda", 19 December 2012.

⁷⁵ Time, "FBI: 4 California Men Charged in Alleged Terror Plot", 20 November 2012.

⁷⁶ Fox News, "4 men in Southern California charged with attempting to support terrorism", 19 November 2012.



men appeared together in federal court for the first time and pleaded not guilty to charges they conspired to support terrorists. If convicted, they faced a maximum sentence of 15 years in federal prison.⁷⁷

ASIA

Afghanistan

On 2 November, 18 people were killed as a result of a fire that erupted after suspected Taliban gunmen opened fire on a passenger van at a petrol station in the outskirts of Khuzdar.⁷⁸ According to eyewitnesses, drums of petrol and diesel on the side of the road next to the petrol station ignited when the gunmen opened fire at the van. The fire damaged four shops nearby.⁷⁹ Authorities said there was no immediate claim of responsibility for the incident and it could not be ascertained if the shooting was targeted or not.⁸⁰

India

On 21 November, Ajmal Kasab, the sole surviving Pakistani gunman involved in the 2008 Mumbai attacks, was executed in secret at Yerawada prison in Pune. Authorities said he was buried inside the premises of the jail shortly after he was hanged.⁸¹ Kasab and an accomplice carried out the assault on the main railway station, killing 52 people. Kasab was charged with 86 offences, including murder and waging war against the Indian state. He was convicted of murder and other crimes in May 2010.⁸²

Pakistan

On 22 November, 23 people were killed and 62 injured when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives amongst a crowd of Shia Muslim who were marching in procession to a mosque in Rawalpindi. The force of the explosion caused a hole in the wall of the mosque. Police also said that on the same day, militants detonated two bombs within minutes of each other

⁷⁷ Reuters, "Four California men plead not guilty to plotting to support al Qaeda", 19 December 2012.

⁷⁸ AFP, "Van attack kills at least 18 in SW Pakistan: officials", 2 November 2012.

⁷⁹ DAWN, "Van attack, blaze kill 18 in Balochistan", 2 November 2012

⁸⁰ IHT, "18 killed in petrol pump fire in Khuzdar", 2 November 2012.

⁸¹ Times Of India, "Ajmal Kasab hanged and buried in Pune's Yerwada Jail", 21 November 2012

⁸² BBC, "Mumbai attack gunman Ajmal Qasab executed", 21 November 2012.



outside a Shia mosque in Karachi, killing at least one person and wounding several others.⁸³ The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for both attacks. The bombings come as Shia Muslims mark the holy month of Muharram.⁸⁴

Philippines

On 11 November, three Abu Sayyaf militants were arrested on the island of Basilian, suspected on plotting to carry out a bombing in the area. Police said they seized two motorcycles, one of which was rigged with explosives, as well as handguns. The suspects were members of a cell responsible for carrying out sabotage attacks to divert military and police attention as other members carried out kidnappings for ransom.⁸⁵

⁸³ BBC, "Taliban bomber kills Pakistan Shia marchers", 22 November 2012.

⁸⁴ AP, "Pakistan Taliban suicide bomber kills 23 in Rawalpindi", 22 November 2012.

⁸⁵ AFP, "Philippine police say they thwarted bomb attack", 11 November 2012.