



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

- On 4 September, 25 people were killed and 30 injured in a suicide bombing in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan.
- On 7 September, the US State Department designated the Haqqani Network a foreign terrorist organization.
- On 8 September, the Egyptian military killed 23 militants, arrested 58 suspects and destroyed 31 smuggling tunnels in the Sinai Peninsula.
- On 9 September, 108 people were killed and 371 others injured in a series of coordinated bombings and shootings throughout Iraq.
- On 12 September, authorities arrested a man, 23, accused of terrorism-related offences following raids in six suburbs in Melbourne, Australia.
- On 13 September, Mehrajuddin Dand, aka Javed, was arrested in Indian Kashmir for his alleged role in the 1999 hijacking of an Indian passenger plane.
- On 14 September, Amine El-Khalifi, 29, was sentenced to 30 years in prison for plotting to detonate a suicide bomb at the US Capitol in Washington, DC, USA.
- On 18 September, eight men were arrested in Copenhagen, Denmark and accused of providing financial support to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).
- On 21 September, six people were killed and 40 others injured when two bombs exploded near a crowded market in Sai Buri District, Pattani Province, Thailand.
- On 23 September, an Indonesian anti-terrorist squad arrested 10 suspected militants and seized explosives in Java and Borneo Island.
- On 24 September, the European Court of Human Rights approved the extradition of five major terrorism suspects, including Abu Hamza, from the UK to the US.



## **EUROPE**

### **Bulgaria**

On 20 September, it was reported that police in Bulgaria had arrested a man accused of aiding the perpetrator of the 18 July terrorist attack at Burgas Airport. According to the report, the alleged accomplice, whose appearance matched that of computer-generated images released by police after the attack, was only found after a manhunt in the woods outside the village of Zvezdets, near Strandzha Mountain at the Turkish border, when he lit a fire to get warm.<sup>1</sup> The suspect's passport reportedly showed that he had crossed the Bulgarian-Turkish border several times. During interrogation, the alleged accomplice, who was reportedly fluent in Bulgarian,<sup>2</sup> admitted to being a member of a new branch of Al-Qaeda. The Bulgarian Interior minister denied this report.<sup>3</sup>

### **Denmark**

On 18 September, eight men ages 22-71, whose identities were not released to the public, were arrested in Copenhagen, accused of providing financial support to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The suspects, the majority of whom are Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin now living in Denmark, allegedly transferred \$24.6 million from Denmark to the PKK. The money was raised mainly in Kurdish business circles in Denmark.<sup>4</sup> Danish police reported that the alleged fundraising was discovered as part of a separate investigation into Roj TV, a Copenhagen-based Kurdish TV network that Turkey has accused of being the PKK's "voice", and which a Danish court found guilty of promoting terrorism in January 2012.<sup>5</sup> If convicted, the suspects are likely to be sentenced to six years in prison.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Yahoo News, "The Investigation into The Bulgaria Bomber Keeps Getting Stranger and Stranger", 20 September 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Novinite.com Sofia News Agency, "Accomplice in Terror Act in Bulgaria Arrested – Report", 20 September 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Ynet, "Report: Burgas bomber's accomplice arrested", 20 September 2012.

<sup>4</sup> AFP, "Eight arrested in Denmark suspected of funding PKK", 18 September 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Daily Star, "Eight arrested in Denmark suspected of funding PKK", 18 September 2012.

<sup>6</sup> AP, "Danish police arrest 8 people suspected of terror financing for supporting Kurdish militants", 18 September 2012.



## France

On 10 September, French anti-terrorism judges interrogated Abdelkader Merah, 29, the brother of gunman Muhammad Merah, who killed seven people in Toulouse and Montauban in March 2012. Abdelkader Merah has been in detention since March 2012 while under investigation for complicity in terrorism, murder, and theft. The anti-terrorism judges wanted to determine whether Abdelkader had provided his brother with logistical support, including helping to steal the Yamaha scooter used as the getaway vehicle in the three attacks. Abdelkader was previously known to French security services for having helped smuggle jihadist militants into Iraq in 2007.<sup>7</sup> On 26 September, police raided his home in Auterive, south of Toulouse, in an attempt to find further intelligence.<sup>8</sup>

## Spain

On 14 September, the Spanish Interior Ministry reported that four people had been arrested in northwest Spain when police discovered two primed explosive devices in their car. Two other suspects were arrested the following morning. The men were accused of belonging to "the Galician Resistance", a violent regional pro-independence group based in the port city of Vigo. The group first came to public attention in November 2011, when another of its members was arrested for possession of explosives.<sup>9</sup>

## United Kingdom

On 2 September, Warsame Nuur, 42, and Sharrif Ali, 45, both of Coventry, were charged with selling drugs to fund terrorism. They appeared in court, where they were charged with conspiracy plot to fund terrorism by sending *khat* abroad. No pleas were entered during the brief hearing, and the case was adjourned until 1 October 2012. The men had been arrested after Metropolitan Police counter-terrorism teams raided properties in Coventry, Cardiff and London.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Reuters, "Brother of French al-Qaeda-inspired killer questioned", 10 September 2012.

<sup>8</sup> AFP, "French police raid home of Toulouse gunman's brother", 26 September 2012.

<sup>9</sup> AP, "Spanish police arrest 4 'suspected terrorists'", 14 September 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Coventry Telegraph, "Coventry duo accused of selling drugs to fund terrorism, 2 September 2012.



On 24 September, the European Court of Human Rights approved the extradition of five major terrorism suspects from the UK to the US. All five cases were returned to the High Court after the European Court of Human Rights refused to intervene to stop the extradition. All five men – Abu Hamza, Babar Ahmad, Syed Talha Ahsan, Adel Abdul Bary and Khaled Al-Fawwaz – had been indicted in the US on terrorism-related charges between 1999 and 2006.<sup>11</sup> They are likely to be extradited from the UK within a few weeks. The suspects had argued that they would face inhumane treatment if they were sent to the US.<sup>12</sup> Authorities reported that Abu Hamza has been charged with 11 counts of criminal conduct related to the taking of 16 hostages in Yemen in 1998, advocating jihad in Afghanistan in 2001, and conspiring to establish a jihad training camp in Bly, Oregon, between June 2000 and December 2001. Babar Ahmad and his co-accused, Syed Talha Ahsan, allegedly ran a jihadist website in London, which authorities claimed provided material support for terrorism. They were charged with using a website to support terrorists and conspiracy to kill, kidnap, maim or injure persons or damage property in a foreign country. Adel Abdul Bary and Khaled Al-Fawwaz were accused of being aides to Osama bin Laden in London.<sup>13</sup> Bary and Al-Fawwaz were indicted with Osama bin Laden and 20 others for their alleged involvement in, or support for, the 1998 bombing of US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam. Al-Fawwaz faces more than 269 counts of murder<sup>14</sup>

## AFRICA

### Kenya

On 7 September, 150 detonators were seized by police who raided a residence in the Githurai neighbourhood of Nairobi<sup>15</sup> after receiving a tip from a civilian who had been told to watch the luggage of a man he did not know. Although the police could not establish the specific purpose of the detonators, they reported suspecting that they would be used in terrorist attacks in Kenya. No arrests were made.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Telegraph, "Abu Hamza to be extradited within days after final appeal fails", 5 October 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Guardian, "Abu Hamza extradition halted by judge", 26 September 2012.

<sup>13</sup> BBC, "Abu Hamza and Babar Ahmad extradition approved", 24 September 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Telegraph, "Abu Hamza to be extradited within days after final appeal fails", 5 October 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Reuters, "Kenyan police seize over 150 bomb detonators from Nairobi house", 7 September 2012.

<sup>16</sup> Xinhua, "Kenyan police seize 150 bomb detonators", 8 September 2012.



On 7 September, an arrest warrant for fugitive British terrorism suspect Samantha Lewthwaite, aka Natalie Webb, which was originally issued by Mombasa chief magistrate Lilian Mutende on 4 January 2012, was extended by a Mombasa court. Lewthwaite and her Kenyan accomplice Habib Saleh were charged *in absentia* with unlawful possession of explosives and conspiring to commit a crime. On 20 December 2011, the pair were found in possession of the explosives in Kisauni, but escaped arrest, reportedly because of a tip-off. Lewthwaite is believed to have entered Kenya illegally on a South African passport, en route to Somalia to join Al-Shabab Al-Mujahedeen. She was allegedly planning terrorist attacks in Mombasa.<sup>17</sup>

On 14 September, Kenyan national Abdul Majid Yasin Muhammad, 26, and Somali national Suleiman Abdi Aden, 24, were arrested when police raided a residence in Nairobi. Police seized four suicide vests, each lined with approximately 10 kilograms of explosives and designed to be detonated by mobile phone; four AK-47s along with 480 rounds of ammunition; two improvised explosive devices; and 12 grenades. Police suspect the attackers were planning to target crowded churches in the city.<sup>18</sup> Authorities launched a manhunt for eight more suspects, including the would-be bombers and masterminds of the planned attack.<sup>19</sup>

### Somalia

On 12 September, two suicide bombers simultaneously attacked the Jazeera Palace Hotel in Mogadishu, where newly-elected Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and the Kenyan Foreign Minister Sam Ongeri were holding high-level meetings. Although they were not harmed in the attack, five soldiers were killed.<sup>20</sup> Witnesses said one of the suicide bombers parked a vehicle near the hotel and walked towards the building, where he detonated his explosive vest. A second man then ran into the hotel firing a gun, wounding a policeman. The second attacker was shot dead before he could detonate his explosives.<sup>21</sup> Authorities reported that the president was transferred to Villa Somalia, a highly fortified complex that

<sup>17</sup> The Star, "Kenya: Arrest Warrant for Fugitive British Terror Suspect Extended", 7 September 2012.

<sup>18</sup> The Star, "Kenya: Police Nab Terror Suspects in Dawn Raid", 14 September 2012.

<sup>19</sup> Reuters, "Kenyan Police Foil Attack by al-Qaeda-Linked Militia, Arrest Two", 14 September 2012.

<sup>20</sup> CNN, "Soldiers killed in blast targeting new Somali president", 12 September 2012.

<sup>21</sup> BBC, "Somali President Mohamud's hotel targeted by bombers", 12 September 2012.



houses several Somali institutions.<sup>22</sup> Al-Shabab Al-Mujahedeen took responsibility for the attack.<sup>23</sup>

On 20 September, 15 people were killed and 20 others injured in a twin suicide bombing that targeted The Village restaurant, located near the Presidential Palace in Mogadishu.<sup>24</sup> The restaurant, owned by a British-Somali businessman, is popular with students, politicians, and journalists. Among the victims were three prominent journalists, including the news director of Somali national television.<sup>25</sup> No group has taken responsibility for the attack, but authorities have blamed Al-Shabab Al Mujahedeen.<sup>26</sup>

### Uganda

On 23 September, police arrested Pakistani national Razaqat Abdi Hamid, aka Razaqat Muhamed, 30, at a residence in Kampala. Abdi Hamid stands accused of kidnapping an Asian woman on 2 September and demanding \$70,000 in ransom money, which he asked the woman's family to wire to an account in Pakistan. The woman was returned to her family unharmed.<sup>27</sup> According to police, the woman was lured from her workplace in Old Kampala to Embassy Supermarket Nsambya, purportedly to discuss a business deal. When she got there, two Pakistani men overpowered her and drove her to a rented house in Buziga, where they tied her up and threatened to kill her if the ransom was not paid. Police raided the house, freeing the woman and arresting Abdi Hamid. Sarfraz Anwal, his alleged accomplice, is thought to have fled the country after learning that the kidnapping had been intercepted. According to Ugandan authorities, the suspects belong to a group of militants with ties to Al-Qaeda and the Taliban that targets high-profile politicians, businessmen, and cultural and religious leaders. Police believe the suspects were planning terrorist attacks targeting Uganda's Golden Jubilee celebrations, which are scheduled for October 2012.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Reuters, "Two days into job, Somali president survives attacks", 12 September 2012.

<sup>23</sup> Reuters, "Attack on Somali president exposes fragile "new era", 13 September 2012.

<sup>24</sup> Reuters, "Suicide bombers kill 15 in Somali capital", 20 September 2012.

<sup>25</sup> The Guardian, "At least 15 killed in Mogadishu suicide bombing", 20 September 2012.

<sup>26</sup> Reuters, "Suicide bombers kill 15 in Somali capital", 20 September 2012.

<sup>27</sup> All Africa.com, "Uganda: Terror Suspect Nabbed", 23 September 2012.

<sup>28</sup> The Observer, "Woman rescued from Buziga kidnapers", 25 September 2012.



## **MIDDLE EAST**

### **Iraq**

On 9 September, a series of coordinated bombings and shootings in Baghdad and several other major cities in the north and south of Iraq killed 108 people and injured 371 others. The most serious of these attacks occurred near Amara, where two car bombs exploded outside a Shi'ite shrine and a market place, killing 16 people and wounding 100 others. In Dujail, gunmen and a suicide attacker in a car attacked a military base, killing 11 soldiers and injuring seven others. In Kirkurk, a car bomb killed eight people and wounded 40 others as people were queuing for jobs as guards for the Iraqi North Oil Company. Other bombings occurred in Baquba, Samarra, Basra, and Tuz Khurmato.<sup>29</sup> No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks, but authorities suspected Al-Qaeda in Iraq.<sup>30</sup>

On 30 September, a series of attacks across Iraq killed 37 people and injured 90 others.<sup>31</sup> The worst of the attacks was a series of car bombings in Taji, where three car bombs exploded within minutes of each other, killing 11 people and wounding more than 24 others. In Baghdad, 14 people were killed and 55 wounded. In Baghdad's Karrada neighbourhood, multiple car bombs killed at least four people. In Kut, a suicide bomber killed at least three police officers and wounded several others. In Balad Ruz, a car bomb killed two policemen. Additional attacks took place in Kirkuk, Khan Bani Saad, Tuz Khormato, Madain, and Tarmiyah. No group has taken responsibility for this spate of attacks, but authorities suspect the Islamic State of Iraq, which has claimed to have embarked on a new offensive, primarily against Shi'ite targets.<sup>32</sup>

### **Egypt**

On 8 September, in an offensive dubbed "Operation Sinai", the Egyptian military killed 23 militants, arrested 58 suspects, and destroyed 31 smuggling tunnels. According to Colonel Ahmed Muhammad Ali, the first phase of this operation – which was launched in retaliation for the 5 August attack near Rafah, in which 16 Egyptian border troops were killed – was successful, and its second phase has been launched. As part of the operation, authorities staged a pre-dawn raid in a Bedouin village in the Sheik Zweid district near the border of the

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<sup>29</sup> AP, "Explosions kill 58 in Iraq, French consulate hit", 9 September 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Guardian, "Iraq insurgents leave dozens dead with wave of attacks", 9 September 2012.

<sup>31</sup> Reuters, "String of Iraq car bomb blasts kill at least 32", 30 September 2012.

<sup>32</sup> VOA, "Bomb Attacks Kill 32 Across Iraq", 30 September 2012.



Gaza Strip, capturing Hamada Abou Shita, who was sentenced to death *in absentia* by an Egyptian court on 14 August 2012 for his alleged role in attacks in the Sinai Peninsula during 2011. It was not clear whether Abu Shita was suspected of involvement in the attack of 5 August 2012.<sup>33</sup>

On 24 September, an Egyptian court in Ismailia upheld the death sentences of 14 Islamist militants, members of Al-Tawheed wal-Jihad, who had been charged with killing three police officers, an army officer and a civilian in attacks in al-Arish in June and July 2011. Nine of the 14 had been sentenced *in absentia*; four additional militants were sentenced to life imprisonment.<sup>34</sup> Egyptian authorities claimed that the sentences demonstrate Egypt's determination to eradicate militancy in the Sinai Peninsula, which is crucial to Egypt's relations with Israel.<sup>35</sup>

### Israel and the West Bank

On 9 September, in the early morning hours, two Grad rockets were fired at Beersheva. No casualties were reported. Shortly thereafter, a second Grad rocket was fired at Netivot, injuring seven and damaging two buildings. The Israel Air Force retaliated by striking a terrorist squad in the central Gaza Strip as it prepared to fire more rockets at Israel. According to Palestinian sources, at least three men were killed and one was wounded in the air strike. On the following day, the Israel Defense Forces attacked a terrorist cell that was attempting to plant a bomb near the Gaza Strip border. Infantrymen from the Givati Brigade, reinforced by tanks and aircraft, succeeded in striking the cell, killing three people according to Palestinian sources.<sup>36</sup>

On 23 September, four Israelis, one of them a minor, were arrested for their involvement in the abduction of African migrants in the Sinai Peninsula and the extortion of up to \$20,000 in ransom payments from their families in Israel. The suspects were accused of being the liaison between Eritrean migrants in Israel and suspected Hamas operative Louai Nasser Al-Din, who was purportedly responsible for transferring the ransom money to Hamas in Ramallah. According to police, what developed into a month-long undercover investigation had begun as a straightforward investigation into the transfer of money to Hamas by Al-Din.

<sup>33</sup> AP, "Egypt: Top militant arrested in Sinai", 1 September 2012.

<sup>34</sup> BBC, "Egypt upholds death sentences for Sinai Islamist attacks", 24 September 2012.

<sup>35</sup> Reuters, "Egypt sentences 14 to death for Sinai attacks", 24 September 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Jerusalem Post, "PM: Terrorists will pay a price for rocket fire", 9 September 2012.



Interrogation revealed that the money being transferred by Al-Din was ransom money from at least one kidnapping. On 25 August, a man from the Sinai Peninsula calling himself Salam contacted an Eritrean migrant living in Tel Aviv, saying he had kidnapped the man's nephew. Salam told the migrant that his nephew would be killed if he did not pay \$20,000 in ransom within two days. When the migrant arrived with other relatives at the scene of the exchange, they demanded to speak with the nephew before paying the ransom. When their demand had been satisfied they agreed to pay the money. They subsequently handed \$13,000 – all they had been able to raise – to two of the Israeli suspects, Yaakov Grad and Eliran Mahfoud Moshe, during a clandestine meeting at the Tel Aviv Central Bus Station. On 28 August, Grad and Moshe passed the money to Al-Din, whom they met at the mobile phone store he owns in East Jerusalem. Al-Din was to transfer the money to Hamas in Ramallah, but police arrested him just after his meeting with Grad and Moshe, before he had had time to remove the ransom money from his store. According to Lea Tsemel, Al-Din's lawyer, the money was not ransom money and was not destined for Ramallah. This is not the first time police have investigated Al-Din for involvement in Hamas activities; however, Tsemel avers that he has always been released without charge. Police subsequently arrested a third man, Victor Savioni of Netanya, whom they believe was the principal contact of Salam (whose real name is Amad Abu Arar). Savioni allegedly met Hamas activists while working at a construction site in Netanya, and became involved transferring money between Israel and the Gaza Strip for Hamas. Police believe the Israeli suspects were involved with some six money transfers, of between NIS 10,000 and NIS 15,000, to Hamas, only one of which appears to have involved kidnapping. The Israeli suspects, for their part, told police they had not realized the money was destined for Hamas. Jerusalem District Court indicted Grad, of Kfar Yonah, and Moshe, of Netanya, on counts of kidnapping for the purposes of extortion and murder. Jerusalem Magistrates Court indicted Savioni for abetting a felony and illegal border infiltration. The same court remanded Al-Din for five days on suspicion of membership in an illegal organization and kidnapping, and released the minor to house arrest.<sup>37</sup> Police continue to investigate whether the abductions are part of a larger operation.

## Libya

On 11 September, US Ambassador to Libya J. Christopher Stevens and three consular officers were killed when Islamist gunmen armed with anti-aircraft weapons and rocket-propelled

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<sup>37</sup> Jerusalem Post, "Israelis arrested for Hamas Sinai kidnapping plot", 23 September 2012.



grenades attacked the US consulate and safe house in Benghazi. Initially, authorities believed the attack was linked to the wave of violent protests that swept the Muslim world in the wake of a defamatory American film, “Innocence of Muslims”, which was uploaded to YouTube in July 2012 by someone who called himself “Sam Bacile” and claimed to be an Israeli-American real estate developer (actually Nakoula Basseley Nakoula, a Copt).<sup>38</sup> However, authorities later concluded that the complex attack had been committed by “professionals”, possibly linked to jihadist groups, and was most likely timed to coincide with the anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001 in the US. Another possible motivation for the attack was retaliation for the assassination of Al-Qaeda leader Abu Yahya Al-Libi in a drone strike in June 2012.<sup>39</sup> Apparently, protests against the movie merely provided a convenient pretext for the assault, for which no group has yet claimed responsibility. Authorities suspect the involvement of Ansar Al-Sharia, which has denied the accusation, or Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).<sup>40</sup> US President Obama condemned the attack and ordered an increase in security at US diplomatic missions around the world.<sup>41</sup> Subsequently, an angry mob comprising Islamists and teenage football (soccer) fans stormed the US embassy in Cairo, tearing down and burning an American flag and replacing it with the black flag of Islamist jihad.<sup>42</sup>

## Turkey

On 16 September, eight police officers were killed and seven others were wounded when their vehicle hit a land mine allegedly planted by Kurdish separatist rebels.<sup>43</sup> The officers had been travelling from the town of Karlioiva to their base in Bingöl Province, in the predominantly Kurdish southeast. No group has taken responsibility for the attack, but authorities have blamed the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).<sup>44</sup>

On 18 September, a military convoy traveling between the provinces of Bingöl and Muş was hit by rockets near the village of Kardeşler, allegedly launched by suspected PKK rebels. Ten soldiers were killed and more than 70 others were wounded. According to authorities, these

<sup>38</sup> Jerusalem Post, “Analysis: Film behind Libya attack may be fake”, 13 September 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Ynet, “Were Libya attacks coordinated to mark 9/11?”, 13 September 2012.

<sup>40</sup> BBC, “Libya attack: US to investigate Benghazi assault”, 13 September 2012.

<sup>41</sup> Reuters, “Obama vows to track down ambassador's killers”, 13 September 2012.

<sup>42</sup> CNS, “Assault on U.S. consulate in Benghazi leaves 4 dead, including U.S. Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens”, 11 September 2012.

<sup>43</sup> Reuters, “Eight Turkish police killed in suspected PKK attack”, 18 September 2012.

<sup>44</sup> AP, “Kurdish Separatists Suspected After 8 Turkish Police Officers Are Killed in Blast”, 16 September 2012.



attacks coincide with violent clashes between PKK rebels and the Turkish military near the southeastern Turkey-Iraq border. In a major mid-September offensive involving both air strikes on PKK bases, including over the border into northern Iraq, and several thousand Turkish ground troops, Turkish security forces report killing more than 120 terrorists.<sup>45</sup>

## Syria

On 10 September, a car bomb exploded near two hospitals in Aleppo, killing 27 people and wounding 64 others.<sup>46</sup> Authorities said that the explosion was caused by a small truck rigged with more than 1,000 kilograms of explosives, which left a crater six meters deep.<sup>47</sup> The Halab Al-Shahbaa rebel brigade took responsibility for the bombing, claiming that the Syrian military had turned the hospitals into barracks.<sup>48</sup> According to Aleppo-based activist Muhammad Al-Hassan, one of the hospitals, Al-Hayat, had been treating government troops almost since the fighting began in Aleppo, in July 2012.

## Yemen

On 11 September, 12 people were killed and 15 were wounded when a car bomb exploded near a convoy carrying Yemeni Defence Minister General Muhammad Nasser Ahmed in Sana'a. Seven of General Nasser Ahmed's bodyguards were among the casualties. The Interior Ministry reported that additional explosives found nearby had been defused. No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but the authorities suspected Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). This was the fourth assassination attempt against the defense minister since the formation of a new government in December 2011.<sup>49</sup>

## North America

### USA

On 5 September, three men pleaded guilty in an Ohio court to conspiracy to use, and attempted use, of a weapon of mass destruction, and to attempted use of an explosive device to destroy property used in interstate commerce.<sup>50</sup> The men were identified as Douglas L. Wright, 26; Brandon L. Baxter, 20; and Connor C. Stevens, 20. In a separate

<sup>45</sup> Today's Zaman, "Bingöl hit by second PKK attack: 10 soldiers dead, 70 injured", 18 September 2012.

<sup>46</sup> BBC, "Syria conflict: Aleppo car bomb 'kills 17'", 10 September 2012.

<sup>47</sup> AP, "Syrian bombing death toll at 30", 10 September 2012.

<sup>48</sup> UPI, "27 killed by Aleppo car bomb near hospital", 10 September 2012.

<sup>49</sup> Reuters, "Yemen defense minister escapes car bombing, 12 die", 11 September 2012.

<sup>50</sup> FBI, "Three More Men Plead Guilty in Plot to Bomb Ohio Bridge", 5 September 2012.



hearing held in July 2012, Anthony M. Hayne, 35, of Cleveland, pleaded guilty to the same charges. A fifth defendant who was not identified was to face trial after undergoing a defence-requested psychiatric examination.<sup>51</sup> The suspects, self-proclaimed anarchists, were accused of plotting to bomb a four-lane highway bridge near Cleveland in April 2011.<sup>52</sup> They were arrested on 30 April 2012 as part of an FBI sting operation, in which authorities paid a criminal informant more than \$5,000 to help expose the group. The informant met the five suspects at an anti-Wall Street, Occupy Cleveland rally in October 2011<sup>53</sup> and provided the men with a false bomb. There were no casualties, and the FBI stated that the public had not been in danger at any stage of the operation.<sup>54</sup>

On 7 September, the US State Department designated the Haqqani Network a foreign terrorist organization. The designation prohibits companies and individuals in the US from supporting the Network, and freezes any assets it may have in the US.<sup>55</sup> The majority of the Haqqani Network's leaders had already been blacklisted individually, prior to the announcement by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.<sup>56</sup> Authorities claim that the Haqqani Network raises money through kidnapping, extortion, and drug trafficking, and uses a legitimate business portfolio to obtain and transfer funds through import and export, transportation, property and construction interests in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Persian Gulf.<sup>57</sup> Some US officials were concerned that the terrorist designation would make it harder to negotiate a peace settlement with the Haqqani Network and its Taliban allies. Yet to date such negotiations have failed. The CIA has been launching drone strikes at Haqqani targets, including an August 2012 attack that killed Badruddin Haqqani, son of the group's leader and a member of its governing council. US State Department and military officials countered that the terrorist designation would help restrain the group's fund-raising activities and pressure Pakistan into acting against the militants.<sup>58</sup>

On 14 September, Amine El-Khalifi, 29, was sentenced to 30 years in prison after being convicted of plotting to blow himself up at the US Capitol in Washington, DC. An illegal

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> AP, "3 suspects plead guilty in Ohio bridge bomb plot", 5 September 2012.

<sup>53</sup> NBC News, "Anarchists at Occupy Ohio admit guilt in bomb plot", 6 September 2012.

<sup>54</sup> AP, "3 suspects plead guilty in Ohio bridge bomb plot", 5 September 2012.

<sup>55</sup> BBC, "US to designate Haqqani network as terror group", 7 September 2012.

<sup>56</sup> Reuters, "U.S. designates Haqqani network a terrorist group", 8 September 2012.

<sup>57</sup> AL-Jazeera, "US US designates Haqqani group as 'terrorists'", 8 September 2012.

<sup>58</sup> LA Times, "U.S. designates Haqqani network a terrorist organization", 7 September 2012.



immigrant who had been living in Alexandria, Virginia, El-Khalifi pleaded guilty in June 2012 to attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction. Although he had legally faced a maximum sentence of life in prison, El-Khalifi had managed to obtain a lighter sentence as part of a plea deal with the prosecution.<sup>59</sup> El-Khalifi was arrested in February 2012 in a parking garage near the Capitol, wearing what he thought was an explosives-laden suicide vest. But in an undercover FBI sting, agents posing as Al-Qaeda operatives had supplied him with a vest carrying inert explosives and had given him an inoperable gun.<sup>60</sup> In conversations with the undercover agents, El-Khalifi admitted planning to bomb US military targets, but then changing his mind and deciding to target the Capitol building.<sup>61</sup> El-Khalifi did not express any remorse at his sentencing, but rather only reiterated his commitment to Allah.<sup>62</sup>

## **South America**

### **Colombia**

On 12 September, Joaquin Perez Becerra (aka Alberto Martinez) was sentenced to eight years in prison for his alleged ties to the Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC).<sup>63</sup> The former editor of the well-known pro-FARC website Anncol, Becerra was convicted of conspiracy, of promoting the ideology of FARC, and of engaging in “international relations” for FARC. He was acquitted of charges of terrorism financing. Colombian prosecutors said Becerra had been working with FARC since 1993, from Sweden, where he had been living. Becerra denied having any connection to the group. He was first arrested in April 2011 in Venezuela, as he was en route to Colombia from Sweden. He was then handed over to the Colombian authorities, who have kept him at Bogota's Modelo Prison.<sup>64</sup> Becerra’s lawyer, who insists that Becerra is “an ordinary journalist”, plans to appeal the conviction. Becerra is also entitled to ask to serve his sentence in Sweden.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Reuters, “Moroccan man sentenced to 30 years in U.S. bomb plot”, 14 September 2012.

<sup>60</sup> AP, “Va. man in Capitol bomb plot sentenced to 30 year”, 14 September 2012.

<sup>61</sup> Reuters, “Moroccan man sentenced to 30 years in U.S. bomb plot”, 14 September 2012.

<sup>62</sup> ABC News, “Va. man in Capitol bomb plot sentenced to 30 years”, 14 September 2012.

<sup>63</sup> Colombia Reports, “Former editor of pro-FARC website sentenced to 8 years”, 18 September 2012.

<sup>64</sup> BBC, “Colombia jails Farc website editor Perez Becerra”, 18 September 2012.

<sup>65</sup> AFP, “Swedish journo found guilty over ties to FARC”, 12 September 2012.



## ASIA

### Afghanistan

On 1 September, 12 people were killed and 59 others were wounded when two suicide bombers carried out a carefully-coordinated attack in Sayed Abadin, in Wardak Province.<sup>66</sup> The attack began at dawn when a man wearing a suicide vest ran toward a US military base and local police headquarters, firing a Kalashnikov rifle before detonating his explosives. He caused little damage and no casualties. Authorities said that the purpose of his attack was to cause confusion and divert people's attention from a second suicide bomber, who was driving a truck filled with a huge cache of explosives. Moments after that first explosion, the second attacker drove the truck at high speed toward the base, where he stopped in the midst of a crowd shopping at a bazaar and detonated the explosives, killing eight Afghan civilians and four Afghan policemen. Authorities suspected that the attack was intended to reprise the truck bombing carried out at the same base – Combat Outpost Sayed Abad – in September 2011, in which five Afghans had been killed and 77 US soldiers wounded. Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid took responsibility for this attack, but would neither confirm nor deny the involvement of the Haqqani Network.<sup>67</sup>

On 4 September, 25 people were killed and 50 injured when a suicide bomber detonated his explosive belt at the funeral of a village elder in the Dur Baba district of Nangarhar Province.<sup>68</sup> Authorities believe the attack was an attempt to assassinate Hamesha Gul, the district chief, who was among the mourners. Although Gul had been hospitalized, he was reported to be in stable condition. Deputy Police Chief for Nangarhar Province, Jamil Shamal, said that Hamesha Gul's son had been killed when he attempted to physically stop the bomber.<sup>69</sup> No group immediately claimed responsibility, but the authorities suspect the Taliban.<sup>70</sup>

On 10 September, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid threatened to kidnap or kill Britain's Prince Harry, an Apache helicopter pilot who had recently begun serving a four-month tour of duty at Camp Bastion in Helmand Province.<sup>71</sup> Following the threat, on 14

<sup>66</sup> Guardian, "Suicide blasts kill at least 12 near US base in Afghanistan", 1 September 2012.

<sup>67</sup> New York Times, "Bombers Strike Outside U.S. Military Base in Afghanistan", 1 September 2012.

<sup>68</sup> Reuters, "LA Times," Afghan bomber kills at least 25", 4 September 2012.

<sup>69</sup> Guardian, "Afghanistan suicide bomber kills dozens at funeral", 4 September 2012.

<sup>70</sup> AP, "Suspected Afghanistan suicide bomber kills dozens at funeral", 4 September 2012.

<sup>71</sup> Reuters, "Afghan Taliban threaten to kidnap, kill Prince Harry", 10 September 2012.



September, 15 Taliban militants disguised in US military uniforms attacked Camp Bastion. The militants breached the perimeter fence of the base, then fired on planes and people with automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, destroying six fighter jets, killing two US Marines, and wounding several others before troops managed to return fire. All but one of the attackers was killed. Prince Harry was not harmed in the attack and,<sup>72</sup> according to NATO, had never been in any danger.<sup>73</sup> On 25 September, the Taliban released a video showing insurgents plotting the attack, and Taliban leaders taking responsibility for it.<sup>74</sup>

### India

On 13 September, Mehrajuddin Dand, aka Javed, was arrested by police in Indian Kashmir for involvement in the 24 December 1999 hijacking of an Indian passenger plane. The Indian Airlines plane, the majority of whose passengers were Indian, had been bound for India from Nepal. Just as the plane entered Indian airspace, the militants hijacked it and diverted it to Kandahar, Afghanistan. The hijackers killed one passenger. The hijacking ended when the Indian government released three terrorists, including Maulana Masood Azhar and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, in exchange for the safe return of the passengers. Authorities accused Dand of providing logistical support, including faked travel documents, to the five hijackers, none of whom were apprehended by police after the incident.<sup>75</sup> Dand himself had evaded arrest for nearly 13 years. Police caught him when he returned to India from Pakistan, via Nepal, to recruit youth for more militant attacks. According to the authorities, under interrogation Dand provided details about his relationship with Syed Salahuddin and Dawood Ibrahim, both of whom are on India's 20 most wanted persons list. Dand has ties to the Islamic Front, Muslim Mujahiddin, and Hizbul Mujahiddin,<sup>76</sup> and is also suspected of involvement in the 1996 bombing of Delhi's busy Lajpat Nagar market.<sup>77</sup>

### Indonesia

On 12 September, suspected militant Wahyu Ristanto was killed in Jakarta when a bomb he was making exploded prematurely. The explosion took place at a house on the outskirts of the capital. Two other suspects fled, including one who was slightly injured. Police believe

<sup>72</sup> Reuters, "Taliban Afghan attack kills two U.S. troops, Prince Harry unhurt", 14 September 2012.

<sup>73</sup> BBC, "Camp Bastion assault: Two US marines die in 'Taliban revenge'", 15 September 2012.

<sup>74</sup> AP, "Taliban Releases Film Showing 'Planning' For Camp Bastion Assault", 25 September 2012.

<sup>75</sup> AFP, "India arrests suspect in 1999 Kandahar hijacking", 13 September 2012.

<sup>76</sup> One India News, "Top militant accused of Kandahar hijack arrested in J&K", 13 September 2012.

<sup>77</sup> BBC, "Arrest in Kashmir in India IC-814 hijack case", 13 September 2012.



that one of the militants who fled was alleged bomb maker Muhammad Toriq, who later surrendered to police in Jakarta; he was wearing an empty explosives belt. Authorities claimed Toriq was part of a group that was planning to attack members of Indonesia's anti-terrorism squad and bomb parliament to promote their aim of imposing Islamic law in the world's most populous Muslim nation.<sup>78</sup> On 23 September, police arrested ten other militants, suspected members of this group, and seized a stash of explosives. Two of the ten, identified as Badri Hartono and Rudi Kurnia Putra, were arrested in Solo town in central Java thanks to intelligence from yet other members of the militant group, who had turned themselves in. National Police Spokesman Brigadier General Boy Rafli Amar reported that interrogation of these suspects led to the arrest of six more suspects in Solo town, and to arrest of a ninth suspect on Borneo Island. The tenth suspect, who was identified as Joko Partit, was subsequently arrested in Solo.<sup>79</sup>

### Pakistan

On 10 September, 14 people were killed and 45 others were wounded after a car bomb exploded at a market in the town of Parachinar in northwestern Pakistan. The booby-trapped vehicle, which had been carrying grapes,<sup>80</sup> was detonated as a security convoy passed Turi Market. The explosion destroyed 30 shops and damaged 50 more. It was not clear whether the attack had been a suicide attack. Initially, it was also unclear whether the target of the attack was the security forces' convoy or members of Pakistan's minority Shi'ite community, many of whom were walking along a narrow road adjacent to the market when the explosion occurred.<sup>81</sup> Authorities reported that 50 kilograms of explosives had been used to make the bomb, which was packed into the vehicle alongside mortars and rockets to make the explosion more lethal.<sup>82</sup> A previously-unknown militant group, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan Ghazi Group, claimed responsibility for the attack, and claimed it had been aimed at the country's Shi'ite minority.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> AP, "Injured militant injured in accidental bomb explosion dies in Indonesia", 12 September 2012.

<sup>79</sup> Associated Press, "Indonesian police arrest 10 terror suspects", 23 September 2012.

<sup>80</sup> Reuters, "Car bomb kills 14 in northwest Pakistan: officials", 10 September 2012.

<sup>81</sup> BBC, "Pakistan blast: Bomb 'kills 12' in Parachinar market", 10 September 2012.

<sup>82</sup> DAWN, "14 killed in Parachinar sectarian attack", 11 September 2012.

<sup>83</sup> Reuters, "Car bomb kills 14 in northwest Pakistan: officials", 10 September 2012.



## Thailand

On 21 September, six people were killed and 40 others injured when two bombs hidden in gas canisters loaded onto a pickup truck were detonated at a crowded market in Sai Buri, Pattani Province.<sup>84</sup> In this two-pronged attack, three militants first opened fire on a jewellery shop in the marketplace in the town's center, shortly after Friday prayers. This caused a fire that destroyed several shops, and drew a response from police and security forces. As is visible in CCTV footage recovered from the market, the militants detonated the booby-trapped pickup truck when security forces reached the scene.<sup>85</sup> Authorities later revealed that merchants at the market had been warned not to open their shops on Friday, a day holy to Muslims. No group has taken responsibility for the attack.<sup>86</sup>

## OCEANIA

### Australia

On 12 September, following raids in six Melbourne suburbs, authorities arrested a man, 23, accused of terrorism-related offences.<sup>87</sup> In a statement to the media, authorities said the raids were part of ongoing counter-terrorism investigations by Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Victoria State Police. The raids also targeted the Al-Furqan Islamic Centre and Bookstore in Melbourne itself.<sup>88</sup> The identity of the arrested suspect was not revealed; if convicted, he faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.<sup>89</sup> In the raids police also seized a USB storage device containing violent extremist material, computer equipment, imitation firearms, and a number of registered firearms.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> BBC, "Bomb leaves six dead in Thailand's restive south", 21 September 2012.

<sup>85</sup> AFP, "Six killed, dozens hurt in Thai blast", 22 September 2012.

<sup>86</sup> AP, "Car bomb kills 5 in Thailand's south after warning", 21 September 2012.

<sup>87</sup> The Australian, "One arrest after Melbourne counter-terror raid", 12 September 2012.

<sup>88</sup> BBC, "Australia police arrest man on terror offences", 12 September 2012.

<sup>89</sup> Telegraph, "Australian police arrest man on suspected terror charges", 13 September 2012.

<sup>90</sup> AP, "Australian police arrest man on terror charge, seize firearms in raids in Melbourne", 13 September 2012.