

Global Jihad: Summary of Information from Arabic Media Sources

The Second Half of February 2011

This report summarizes the most prominent articles published in the Arabic media over the course of the second half of February 2011 on the subject of global Jihad. Following are the main issues raised in this report:

- In a new message, Ayman Al-Zawahiri called for more creative terrorist attacks against Western financial targets.
- An article in the "Al-Hayat" newspaper analyzed the growing participation of women in global Jihad organizations.
- Fighting resumed between the "Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen" movement and the Somali authorities and African Union Forces following threats made by the "Al-Shabab" movement against Kenya.

Afghanistan – PakistanAl-Qaeda - General

- On February 26th, 2011, the "Al-Hayat" newspaper, quoting Western news agencies, reported that, according to the SITE center, Al-Zawahiri had published a new tape. On this new tape, Al-Zawahiri called upon the Mujahideen to perpetrate attacks by using new techniques the West would not be able to figure out. He gave as an example the September 11 attacks, when aircrafts were turned into powerful weapons. He also stated that since the Mujahideen are unable to manufacture weapons of the same grade and on the same scale as the weapons made by the "Western Crusaders", the West's economic and industrial systems should be targeted and demolished, thereby destroying its power.¹

The "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper also reported Al-Zawahiri's tape and added that Bin Laden had instructed him to remind the Mujahideen not to attack civilian targets, including mosques, as Al-Qaeda condemns such attacks. Nevertheless, in the tape, Al-Zawahiri justified the attack against the Al-Qiddissin Church in Alexandria at the beginning of the year, claiming that the Coptic Church has become "a government within a government or, to be more precise, a government above a government".²

- On February 17th, 2011, the "Al-Hayat" newspaper published an article on the widespread custom amongst Al-Qaeda activists to marry local tribal girls in the areas in which they operate, as well as the custom of widows of killed activists to remarry other activists. Both customs are common in all of the Jihad arenas worldwide. According to the article, such marriages benefit the organization in several ways: 1) it facilitates the recruitment of youth who grow up in Jihadi

¹ Al-Hayat, 26.2.2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

² Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, 26.2.2011: <http://aawsat.com>

arenas, and provides them with a Jihadi education; 2) the women sometimes assist and support the activists, particularly with regards to providing shelter and food; 3) such marriages are perceived by Al-Qaeda activists as the modus operandi of the founders of Islam, whom they try to emulate; 4) such marriages oblige the local people to adopt the organization's ideals and to join the organization.

The article explained that these marriages are a "long-term" strategy. The ultimate goal is to create future generations in these Jihad arenas who "absorb the Al-Qaeda ideology from a young age, so that the wickedness becomes part of their genes and so that any advice or persuasion against following Al-Qaeda's ideology is ineffective".

The article also analyzed the development of the role women play in Jihad organizations. According to the article, during the first generation of Jihadi organizations, which developed in the 1980s and which is reflected in Abdullah Azzam's ideology, the role of women was reduced to providing logistical support. This was in contrast to their active role in the national movements, the leftist movements and the Islamic national movements. During this period, Salafi Jihadi movements did not permit women to participate in military operations. During the second generation of the armed Islamic movements, which began in the mid-90s, radical ideologists such as Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi and Abu Qatada Al-Filistini began speaking of the idea of women taking part in military activities. The first signs of the change in the role of women were seen in Chechnya and Algeria, where women played a more active role, such as by participating in "the Black Widows Brigade", which began perpetrating suicide bombings against the Russians.

At the end of the 1990s, the third generation of the Jihadi Salafi movements appeared, whose main tactic was suicide bombing. In this generation, women were partners in the military activities and the female shahids played a significant role. The article specifically mentioned the "Female Shahid Brigade" of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi.³

Pakistan

- On February 22nd, 2011, the "Al-Hayat" newspaper reported that UAV strikes had recommenced in Waziristan and that seven militants, including three Turkmen and two Arabs, were killed in the most recent strike. According to the article, the United States had halted the bombings for several weeks in order to prevent unrest in Pakistan. The paper quoted the "Washington Post", which published assessments that at least 581 militants were killed in aerial strikes last year, and that the cost of each of the 118 attacks executed was over one million dollars. As 94% of those killed were low-rank activists, questions have been raised as to these strikes' efficacy.⁴
- On February 16th, 2011, the "Al-Hayat" newspaper reported that the Taliban in Pakistan have threatened to harm the Pakistani leaders if they hand over the American diplomat, Raymond Davis, to the United States. Raymond Davis is an employee of the United States Consulate in Pakistan and has been accused of murdering two Pakistanis. The Americans are demanding his extradition to the United States.⁵

³ Al-Hayat, 17.2.2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

⁴ Al-Hayat, 22.2.2011: <http://www.daralhayat.com>

⁵ Al-Hayat, 16.2.2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

Iraq

- On February 27th, 2011, the "Al-Hayat" newspaper reported that militants attacked a large oil refinery in Iraq 180 kilometers north of Baghdad, killing four of its employees. The militants detonated explosives in the refinery, causing a large fire and the closure of the refinery. The Salah Al-Din District Governor in Iraq stated that the militants concealed bombs in two units, which produced benzene and diesel fuel in the refinery, and that the refinery had ceased working. On the other hand, the Iraqi Minister of Oil stated that the attack only damaged one production unit, which was under maintenance and that the remaining units were unharmed. According to the Minister of Oil, the attack was part of a terror campaign against the Ministry of Oil.⁶
- On February 25th, 2011, the "Al-Sumaria News" Iraqi news website printed an announcement made by the Iraqi defense forces, in which it was stated that they had succeeded in killing the Minister of War of the "Islamic State of Iraq", Naaman Salman, whose alias Nasir Lidin Allah Suleiman, in a military operation.⁷

The Arabian Peninsula

Yemen

- On February 15th, 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network's website reported that the American government plans to allocate an additional 75 million dollars for the war on Al-Qaeda in Yemen, using a 300-man unit of Yemen's defense forces, which would be subordinate to the Yemeni Interior Ministry. According to the report, this will be in addition to the amounts revealed in the 2012 budget.⁸

⁶Al-Hayat, 27.2.2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>

⁷Al-Sumaria News, 25.2.2011: <http://www.alsumarianews.com>

⁸ Al-Jazeera, 15.2.2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

Saudi Arabia

- On February 16th, 2011, the Saudi Arabian press published the Saudi Grand Mufti's response to a religious ruling issued by the Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta. According to the ruling, the Committee supports Osama bin Laden and Ayman Al-Zawahiri and contends that Al-Qaeda is an Islamic Caliphate. In response, the Saudi Arabian Grand Mufti made his own religious ruling and declared that the first religious ruling was a forgery and that the fact that a fake ruling was published and was attributed to another person is a sin. The Grand Mufti's ruling stated that Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda have strayed from the righteous path and have brought calamities on Islam. It further stated that it is forbidden for Muslims to join Al-Qaeda or to express approval of its actions.⁹
- On February 22nd, 2011, the "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" newspaper reported that the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Interior has called for an increase in the supervision of medical, industrial, and agricultural research as well as of educational activities, in order to ensure that radioactive materials do not fall into the hands of terrorists.¹⁰
- On February 18th, 2011, the "Al-Arabiya" network published a video of an Italian female tourist who was kidnapped in Algeria in February by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. In the video, the tourist, Maria Sandra Mariani, stated that she was kidnapped on February 2nd by the Tariq bin Ziyad Brigade, which belongs to Al-Qaeda and is led by Abd Al-Hamid Abu Zayd, and that she was asking the "Al-Arabiya" network to publish this message.¹¹

⁹ Al-Watan, (Saudi Arabia), 16.2.2011: <http://www.alwatan.com.sa>, Al-Riyadh, 16.2.2011: <http://www.alriyadh.com>

¹⁰ Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, 2.2.2011: <http://www.aawsat.com>

¹¹ Al-Arabiya, 18.2.2011: <http://www.alarabiya.net>

Africa

- On February 19th, 2011, the "Al-Jazeera" network reported that fighting between the "Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen" and the government and African Union Forces had started again in Mogadishu and that 16 people had already been killed.¹² The article further reported that the "Al-Shabab" organization has claimed responsibility for a suicide attack against a police station.

According to the police spokesman, four suicide bombers, including one woman, drove a booby-trapped truck full of cartons of oil and vegetables, and detonated the truck near the gate of the police station. The explosion caused the death of seven policeman and one passersby. The "Al-Shabab" organization claimed responsibility for the attack but declared that it was carried out by two, not four, of the movement's activists. According to the "Al-Shabab" movement, this was a "foiling attack" because the policemen were training to participate in attacks again the "Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen" movement.¹³

The "Al-Jazeera" network also reported that the Burundi Brigade of the African Union had succeeded in taking over the road leading to the Bakaara market, which is considered to be one of the largest hiding places for the rebels. Moreover, it was reported that fighting is also taking place in areas close to the border with Kenya.¹⁴

- On February 28th, 2011, the "Al-Hayat" newspaper printed comments made by the "Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen" spokesperson at a press conference. According to the spokesperson, "Kenya has for a long time been involved in a plot to prevent a government which would act according to Islamic Sharia Law in Somalia", and it had also opened training centers for infidels and has aided the

¹² Al-Jazeera, 19.2.2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

¹³ Al-Jazeera, 22.2.2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

¹⁴ Al-Jazeera, 24.2.2011: <http://www.aljazeera.net>

Ethiopian forces who are taking over the Gedo region. He declared that his movement would not accept Kenya's oppression and that "the responsibility for the results of this attack would fall on the Kenyan authorities, who carry out these maneuvers", hinting to the fact that the Kenyan authorities were responsible for the "Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen" movement's response.¹⁵

¹⁵ Al-Hayat, 28.2.2011: <http://international.daralhayat.com>