



JWMSG Report

November 2019

Highlights

The appointment of Sheikh **Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi** as the caliph and new leader of **ISIS**, in the wake of the **al-Baghdadi** elimination. Al-Qurashi earns a pledge of allegiance from ISIS members and supporters in its provinces (formal and informal ones): Sinai, Somalia, Pakistan, Yemen, West Africa, East Asia, East Africa, Baraqqa al-Baraqqa (Libya), al-Diyala Salah al-Din and Kirkuk (Iraq), Indonesia and Azerbaijan.

In the wake of a closure of over 2,000 of its Telegram accounts by Europol, **ISIS** responded that the enemy's efforts to hurt its propaganda campaign are doomed to failure and its operatives are determined to keep disseminating its propaganda on any available platform.

Sheikh **Qasem al-Rimi**, leader of **al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)**, wishes to reinforce Syrians and jihadists in Idlib's morale. At the same breath he asked the latter to maintain the unity within the ranks, focus on fighting the enemy and obey orders from jihadi leaders.

Sheikh **Abd al-illah Ahmad**, the head of the political and foreign affairs committee of **al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)**, clarified that his organization supports the Algerian popular uprising and wish for the fall of the Algerian regime. Per him, the regime is responsible for hurting Islam and disseminating heresy. He also implored Algerian soldiers to search their souls and defect.

Sheikh **Abu al-Fadl Iyad Ghali**, leader of **Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam**, an umbrella organization for jihadi groups in Mali (including AQIM) clarifies that the last wave of attacks executed by his organization against the Mali and Burkina Faso armies was carried out because of the military alliance of these countries and France. He said that the attacks will continue for as long as the G5 Sahel states will collaborate with France.

Shabab al-Mujahidin, the **al-Qaeda** extension in Somalia, posted a clip on its fighters' preparations for the attack they executed on Ballidogle air base that has been used by the U.S. forces in Somalia. Sheikh **Abu Obeida**, the leader, clarified that the target for the attack were the Americans and not the infidel regime in Somalia. The organization clarified that it objected the colonialist policy the U.S. has for Somalia and that the U.S. is an obstacle for peace in Somalia. Further, they called for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Somalia.

Hurras al-Din, the **al-Qaeda** extension in Syria, harshly criticizes sheikh **Abu Muhammad al-Julani**, leader of **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham**, for his efforts to reach a cease fire with the enemy and cautioned that his policy will doom all jihadists and Idlib residents. Additionally, the organization called upon all jihadists to come to their

senses, unite under the al-Qaeda flag and together fight their common enemies.

The Abdallah Azam Brigades, a Salafi jihadist organization that has operated mainly in Lebanon and Syria, announced that it was dissolving without giving any reason to the dissolution other than saying that the dissolution serves Muslims' interests. Yet, they called upon Muslims to carry on with jihad.

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Publications

Ideology

Publications by the Islamic State

- On the heels of the appointment of sheikh **Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi** to new caliph and leader of the organization, following the elimination of al-Baghdadi at the end of October 2019, ISIS provinces (either formal or informal) pledged their allegiance to al-Qurashi as follows: Sinai, Bangladesh, Somalia, Pakistan, Yemen, Huran in al-Sham, Homs in al-Sham, al-Khyr in al-sham, al-Raqqa in al-Sham, al-Baraka I al-Sham, Aleppo, Khurasan, Tunisia, Western Africa, Eastern Asia, Eastern Africa, Iraq, Baraqqa al-Baraqqa (Libya), al-Dijla al-Diyala Salah al-Din and Kirkuk (Iraq), Indonesia and Azerbaijan. In addition, media outlets that assist with ISIS propaganda pledged their allegiance as well¹.



ISIS members in various provinces pledge their allegiance to al-Qurashi

- Al-Naba**, owned by ISIS, posted in its vol. 207 an infographic depicting Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's, its former leader's² life stations.

¹ 3.11.19 Telegram

² Al-Naba, Issue 207, p.12



Al-Naba infographic depicting al-Baghdadi’s life stations

Opinion Leaders in the Jihadist Discourse

This section deals with the statements of opinion of several clerics, military commanders and publicists affiliated with Salafi-jihadist terrorist organizations seeking to shape the jihadist discourse and influence thoughts and actions in the field. The statements and their publication received a large number of views among global jihad activists, hence their importance.



The photo shows prominent ideologues affiliated with Al-Qaeda, below the words: “Follow Their Guidance”. The poster was published on social networks by the Khayr al-Umma media group, which is involved in media for Al-Qaeda

- Sheikh Abu Qatada al-Filastini (close with al-Qaeda) posted the following:³
 - An article on the attitude one must show to ISIS members following the elimination of al-Baghdadi at the end of October 2019. At the outset al-Filastini described ISIS as Khawarij, an Islamic militant

³ November, 2019. Telegram.

sect of the seventh century that allowed the killing of Muslims who didn't subscribe to its theology and has become a moniker for every Muslim who revered violence contrary to Islamic rule. Al-Filastini stressed that no one should forget the horrible murders performed by ISIS against their Muslim brethren and their interpretation of Islam and jihad which is distorted. He cautioned from having any contact with them and if one of them shows an inclination to repent and retire from ISIS then no one should accept this but rather, verify such repentance.

- Sheikh **Hani al-Sabai**, a senior Salafi cleric identified with **al-Qaeda** posted the following⁴:
 - Friday sermons condemning the Egyptian and Saudi regimes for oppressing their citizens.

- Sheikh **Abd al-Razak al-Mahdi**, close with Hayat Tahrir al-Sham posted the following⁵:
 - A call to Muslims not to celebrate Muhammad's birthday as this was against Islam. He said that this was a flawed custom started by the Fatimids who part of the Shiite-Isma'ili school of were thought in the tenth century and added that the Sufi school of thought developed the custom and disseminated it in Islamic countries.
 - Addressing hadiths that praise jihadists and promise them rewards in the afterlife.
 - Clips documenting his visits to jihadists along the front lines to boost their morale.
 - A ruling forbidding the evacuation of jihadists posted along the front lines in Hama, Aleppo and Idlib to partake in the fighting alongside Turkey in the Kurdish regions of Syria. Per him, such evacuation will expose Idlib to an existential threat and will make stopping the Syrian army and its allies much harder. Yet, fighting alongside the Turks is allowed if the jihadists are already in the area where Turks fight. Per him, there is a religious duty to fight the secular and Communist Kurds such as the PKK because the latter blatantly violate Islam and force their wives to fight alongside them. Additionally, he legitimized, from a religious standpoint, fighting alongside the Turkish army despite its secularism because it allowed the use of the symbols of Islam, such performance of the five most important commands (e.g. prayer).
 - A call to young Muslims to join jihadists to reinforce them in their fight against the enemy. He also called leaders of jihadist factions to start a recruiting campaign "as there are tens of thousands of young men in the camps [refugee camps] and villages that are ready to go to the front to liberate what we have lost. Give them weapons and ammunition".

- Sheikh **al-Mouhseini**, a senior Salafi cleric in Idlib posted the following⁶:
 - Expressing his solidarity with the armed factions in Gaza on the backdrop of the escalation that followed the elimination of a senior PIJ member by the IDF. Al-Mouhseini called the jihad factions in

⁴ November, 2019 Telegram

⁵ November, 2019 Telegram

⁶ November 2019 Telegram

Syria to earn from the Palestinian experience regarding two aspects: (i) unity of the ranks. He said that jihadi factions in Gaza joined PIJ in launching rockets at Israel; (ii) the success of the jihadi factions to scare the Israeli public and launch missiles at Tel Aviv. It should be noted, this is not the first time al-Mohseini shows support to jihadi factions in Gaza. At the beginning of 2019 he even called to donate bitcoin to **Izz al-Din al-Qasam Brigades (Hamas’ military wing)**. In another correspondence he compared between the fighting in Idlib to the situation in Gaza (see the table below) and stressed that in Gaza everyone is dedicated to fighting whereas in Idlib many young men desert their posts and return to civilian life. He cautioned that if the residents of Idlib would not wake up to reality they will be hurt, hence they need to learn from the Palestinian experience.

GAZA	IDLIB
Under siege (land and air)	Not under siege; Has more resources than Gaza and can import and export goods
“Army [the enemy] is one of the strongest in the world”	The enemy is worn down and divided. Its ally, Russia, spends fortunes on his battles
The enemy’s strategic area is protected by Iron Dome	Strategic areas (e.g. Hama air base) are exposed and the home front is in chaos
Narrow and population dense territory	Idlib’s territory is many folds that of Gaza’s
Gaza’s topography is not fortified	Idlib’s topography is mountainous and fortified
Egypt closed its border with Gaza, fights with Gaza and collaborates with the “Zionist entity”	Turkey didn’t close the border and treats Assad as an enemy



A banner showing al-Mohseini support of the jihadi factions in Gaza; A banner comparing Gaza and Idlib

- A call to Muslims to kill Zionist Jews wherever they are claiming that they act against Palestinians.
- An announcement regarding the launch of a bot enabling surfers' questions to be answered by him by November 14th, 2019.
- An announcement regarding the opening of the second stage of The Trench campaign, launched in July 2019 by **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and Huras al-Din, al-Qaeda** extension in Syria, to help excavate tunnels and trenches in Idlib to defend against enemy forces. the announcement was coupled with a clip reporting the statistics of the first stage's achievements. It was noted that within 100 days, five locations have been fortified. Within the framework of the second stage a WhatsApp number and a Telegram account were provided to facilitate donations and al-Mouhseini said that he received 15,000 Turkish Liras from an unidentified location in Syria and \$10,000 from an unknown source.
- An announcement regarding the opening of a Telegram panel account titled "Rulings From the Levant Theater" that will host Salafi jihadi clerics residing in Idlib such as al-Mouhseini, Saraj al-Din Zarqiyat (former leader of Abdallah Azam Brigades – close with al-Qaeda in Syria and Lebanon) and others, and will provide answers to surfers questions. Alongside the announcement a banner containing a scannable barcode was posted for mobile phones to facilitate an easy access to the panel.



A banner with a scannable barcode to facilitate access to Salafi jihadist clerics' panel

- Sheikh **Abu al-Yuqhdhan al-Masri**, a prominent independent Salafi jihadist cleric, who has retired from **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham** following disagreements with the leadership posted the following⁷:
 - An article criticizing jihadists who have expressed joy and support of the Turkish army in light of the latter's invasion to northern Syria to clear it from Kurdish militias. Per him, the Turkish incursion was intended, at the end of the day, to fight jihadists.
- **Abu Basir al-Tartusi**, a Syrian Jihadist, posted the following⁸:
 - Addressing the popular uprising in Lebanon against government corruption. Per him, Lebanon's main problem is the fact that Hezbollah controls its state institutions, which led it to be a part of Iran. He added that the uprising will not solve this main problem.

⁷ November 2019. Telegram; YouTube.

⁸ November 2019 Telegram.

- Criticizing the Syrian Islamic Council that doesn't address women's stature in Syria.
- Addressing the importance of forming a political party in Syria that will rule after the fall of Assad and implement Sharia.
- Criticizing the attack carried out by al-Julani and his group against the resident of the village of Takharim. Later he compared al-Julani's brutal behavior to al-Baghdadi's.
- **Abu Hafs al-Maqdisi**, leader of **Jaysh al-Ummah al-Salafi fi Bayt al-Maqdis**, a Salafi jihadist faction in Gaza close with **al-Qaeda**, posted the following⁹:
 - A call to all cells to get prepared and rally to defend the land of Gaza and its residents from the Israeli impending attack. He said that the campaign against the Jews in merely a preparatory stage for an all-inclusive Islamic nation war on forces of the Jews, Christians, Persians and Arabs which have strayed from the righteous Islamic path.

Manual and Tutorials

- **ISIS** supporters disseminated on social media manuals by **Al-Saqri lil-Ulim al-Askariya Foundation** media outlet, assisting ISIS with its propaganda and focuses on warfare advice, as follows¹⁰: (i) tutorial titled "Using Laser to Temporary Neutralize Camera Sensors. Originally written in English by Michael Naimark and translated to Arabic for its above dissemination;(ii) a tutorial on manufacturing poisoned bullets to increase killing effectiveness; (iii) a tutorial on manufacturing a silencer; (iv) tutorial on posing as another person;(v) Advice for "lone wolves" to evacuation techniques post attack. For example, avoid contact with loved ones as they are under security services surveillance; (vi) a tutorial on tunnel excavation; (vii) a tutorial on the preparation of explosive that will adhere to vehicles; (viii) advice on hiding places for knives; (ix) suicide vest preparation tutorial; (x) explosive and IED preparation tutorial; (xi) advice on hitting passers-by from the trunk of a car; (xii) toxic gas (e.g. Phosphine) preparation tutorial to maximize casualties.
- **ISIS** supporters disseminated on social media manuals by **Hashd al-Himmam** media outlet, assisting ISIS with its propaganda and focuses on warfare advice, as follows:
 - Advice on forming terror cells in western cities. For example, the cell should consist of a few teams, intelligence gathering team, technical team etc.
 - A tutorial on providing first aid to fighters injured on the battlefield.
- **Quraysh Media**, assisting with **ISIS** propaganda, reported that on November 23rd, 2019, Telegram removed thousands of ISIS supporters accounts to hurt its propaganda efforts. In response, Quraysh suggested to have at least two Telegram accounts, use one of them and keep the propaganda materials in an inactive account and contact ISIS media team. They even sent a message to Telegram

⁹ November 2019 Telegram.

¹⁰ November 2019, <https://ia903103.us.archive.org/>

management clarifying that the current campaign will only complicate things and ISIS supporters will keep disseminating propaganda clandestinely. In another correspondence Quraysh reported on a similar account removal on Riot¹¹.

It should be noted that these messages were posted in light of the Europol campaign to remove ISIS supporters accounts off Telegram, during which, 2,096 have been removed¹².



Quraysh Media announcement on the continuation of ISIS propaganda dissemination despite the Telegram accounts removal

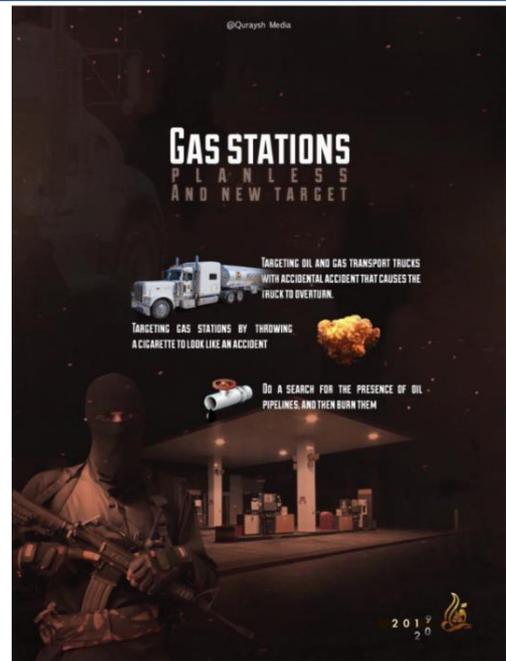
Strategy

- **Quraysh Media**, assisting with **ISIS** propaganda, posted a few banners containing advice for “lone wolves” on planning attacks on western targets. The first banner recommended torching forests claiming that this will lead to weakening the enemy’s economy because the enemy will have to allocate many resources to fight forest fires; another banner titled “How to Assassinate Leaders” recommended that disguising as journalist will be effective, inter alia, due to the fact that that one can hide weapons in a camera case and get in close proximity with the targeted leader; another banner recommended throwing burning cigarettes in gas stations and ram into gas tankers on the road¹³.

¹¹ 22.11.2019; 26.11.2019. <https://ia903103.us.archive.org>

¹² 22.11.2019. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/referral-action-day-against-islamic-state-online-terrorist-propaganda>

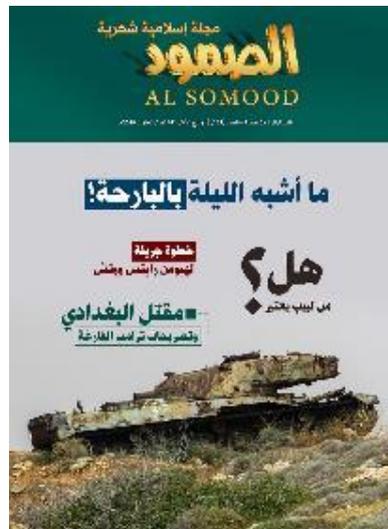
¹³ Nov 2019. Telegram



Right to Left: recommendation to hit gas stations and tankers; advice on disguising as journalists to hit enemy leaders; advice on starting forest fires

Magazines

- Vol. 165 of **al-Sumud, Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's (Afghani Taliban)** saw light. Among others, it contained articles on the following: (I) addressing al-Baghdadi's death and Trump's statements as well as greetings to Human Rights Watch that exposed crimes against civilians committed by U.S. supported military forces in Afghanistan¹⁴.



Al-Sumud cover page

- Vol. 31 of **al-Nafir**, published by **al-Sahab** media outlet, owned by **al-Qaeda** saw light. The current issue dealt with the importance of keeping virtue and cautioned Muslims not to criticize jihadists but rather praise them¹⁵.

¹⁴ 9.11.19. <https://www.mafa.world/2019/11/08/165-مجلة-الصمود-الإسلامية-عدد-165>

¹⁵ 15.11.19 Telegram.



Al-Nafir front page

- **Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS)** published November 2019 issue of **Nawai Afghan**¹⁶.



Nawai Afghan front page

- Vols. 2017-210 of **al-Naba**, owned by **ISIS**, saw light. They contained reviews on the progress of the organization’s fighting in the various theaters. Also included were editorials on the following:
 - An editorial titled “The Reformer of the Community of Abraham is Dead” in memoriam of **Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi**, the former ISIS leader. In the editorial, al-Baghdadi was described as a role model who has fought the crusaders and the Shiite to purge the Islamic territories of polytheism and pagan symbols and the renewal of monotheism and the belief in the singularity of Allah. ISIS clarified that their activity will carry on even after al-Baghdadi’s death and they will continue their jihad. They added that now the organization embarks on a new stage of its jihad until the land will be cleansed off the filth of the polytheism. Further, the joy of Allah’s enemies at the death of al-Baghdadi will be short lived and ISIS will demonstrate its might, expand into additional territories and will install Sharia, because history has proven that the enemies’ joy at the death of former leaders such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was also

¹⁶ November 2019, Telegram.

short lived¹⁷.

- The editorial of vol. 208 dealt with the effect of the popular uprising of the Shiite against the Iraqi regime (started in November 2019) had on the armed Iraqi Sunni factions. ISIS assessed that the Sunni wouldn't assist the demonstrators since their position vis a vis the regime is static. Per ISIS, history teaches that during the Nur al-Malaki's tenure as prime minister (2006-2014) the latter harshly oppressed any such demonstrations and the Sunni stayed silently on the sidelines. In light of the above ISIS harshly criticized the Sunni and stressed that the regime was infidel and corrupt that served the Iraqi interests but not the Iraqi ones and it wouldn't hesitate to hit them. Further, ISIS called the Sunni to repent and stop supporting the regime or they will pay dearly for that. At the end of the editorial the writer called ISIS members in Iraq to follow in the footsteps of al-Baghdadi and sheikh Hassan al-Muhajir (ISIS' leader and spokesman respectively) and continue the jihad against the crusaders, Shiite, PKK and other enemies¹⁸.
- Vol. 209 dealt with god's creature who strayed off the righteous path. For example, the Jews distorted god's teachings and went on a wrong path that put materialism on a pedestal. The same applies to Muslim clerics that, in the name of Islam, disseminate heresy and lies and incite against ISIS' members¹⁹.
- Vol. 210 dealt with ISIS' propaganda apparatus in light of the enemies to hit the organization's power base. ISIS stressed it was determined to use the internet to disseminate propaganda on any possible platform. Per it, the enemies are using every possible tactic to disrupt ISIS' propaganda such as via removal of supports' online accounts, eliminating propaganda activists, issuing fatwabs that one should not listen to jihadist songs and more. Yet, all of this is destined to fail, and ISIS will shortly renew and expand its propaganda. The writer added that the cost of building infrastructure for the propaganda apparatus is minimal whereas the enemy's consumes fortunes. At the end the writer recapped that the propaganda apparatus will continue in full force and that all the enemy's efforts to hurt it will fail²⁰.



The article discussing ISIS' propaganda apparatus

¹⁷ Al-Naba, Issue 207, p.3.
¹⁸ Al-Naba, Issue 208, p.4.
¹⁹ Al-Naba, Issue 209, p.3.
²⁰ Al-Naba, Issue 210, p.3.

- Vol. 11 of **Ibnat al-Islam**, a **Bayt al-Maqdis** media outlet publication. The latter is owned by Palestinian Salafi jihadists who are close with **al-Qaeda**. It contained articles on topics such as: (i) the virtues of extremely religious women in KSA; (ii) sexual relations and more²¹.



Ibnat al-Islam cover page

- Vol. 22 of **Baytuki**, published by **Khayr al-Ummah**, assisting with **al-Qaeda** propaganda, saw light. Among the articles posted: (i) advice on child rearing; (ii) a ruling per which anyone who dismisses wearing a vale by a Muslim woman is an infidel; (iii) domestic violence under Sharia law²².



Baytuki cover page

- Vol. 73-77 of **Ibaa**. They contained reports, banners and interviews with the organization’s activists on the fighting in Syria and in other jihadi theaters²³.

²¹ 13.11.19. Telegram.

²² November 2019 Telegram

²³ 2.11.19 Telegram



Ibaa (vol. 77) cover page

- Vol. 5 of **al-Balagh**, published by the supporters of sheikh **Abu Yaqdhah al-Masri**, an independent Salafi jihadi cleric in Idlib and a former senior member of **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham**. Among the articles posted: (i) analysis of the fighting in Idlib in light of the Turkish military incursion; (ii) addressing the killing of Abu Bake al-Baghdadi and expressing a wish that ISIS members will repent; (iii) the importance of renewing the popular uprisings and the use of violence against infidel regimes claiming that their replacement is not achievable in a peaceful manner²⁴.
- **The Syrian Rescue Government (SRG)** launched a new weekly titled **Nabdh al-Muharir** (“The Liberator’s Pulse”). SRG is a government institution formed in 2017 by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and other jihadi factions and its role is serve as the administrator for the Idlib region. During November 2019 it published three volumes that dealt with administrative, economic and educational issues as well as the security threats to Idlib posed by the enemy²⁵.



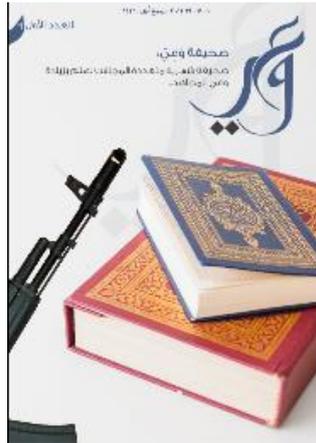
A banner announcing the launch of Nabdh al-Muharir

- Salafi jihadists in Idlib launched a new monthly titled **Waei**. The publication contained advice to

²⁴ 1.11.19 Telegram

²⁵ November 2019 Telegram

jihadists on proper decorum such as how to treat their comrades in arms²⁶.



Waei cover page

²⁶ November 2019 Telegram

Reports from the Field

Afghanistan-Pakistan

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

- The **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Afghani Taliban)** posted the following:
 - Addressing the Joint Chiefs Gen. Mark Milley’s statement that the occupation of Afghanistan will last for a few more years. The Taliban’s response said that the Emirate condemns this policy and added that the U.S should realize that its occupation policy has failed and achieved nothing. Further, the Afghans will not accept the presence of foreign forces in their country and will continue their jihad until the occupation would be over²⁷.
 - A banner on prisoner release which said that three Emirate mujahidin were released in return for the release of a U.S. citizen, A Canadian citizen and 10 Afghani soldiers. The announcement said that similar good will gestures will assist the peace process. The organization thanked the Emir of Qatar and his foreign affairs ministry that assisted with the process²⁸.

The Arabian Peninsula

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

- **Al-Malahim** media outlet, owned by **AQAP** posted the following:
 - A video titled “Our People in the Levant”, by sheikh **Qasim al-Rimi**, **AQAP**’s leader. In the video al-Rimi identified with the suffering sustained by Syrians as a result of the civil war and stressed the importance of the mujahidin’s role in defending civilians. He said that same as they did in Syria, the mujahidin defended the civilians in the Afghani theatre when the U.S. invaded the country in 2001. Per him, the mujahidin fulfil a very important religious command (i.e. jihad) and they are ready to confront the Jewish, Christian and allies in the Arab and Irani regime’s aggression. Further, he stressed that the Muslims have a duty to assist the mujahidin in their jihad, especially in the Syrian theatre and addressed several messages to Muslin in Syria as follows:
 - To the fighters – fighting must be for the benefit of Allah and not a certain person or group. There is an irrevocable duty to obey the commanders’ orders;
 - To the leaders of jihadi factions in Syria – the leadership’s job is to maintain the unity of the ranks, manage the jihad against the enemy, show solidarity, beware of operative leaking classified information to social media and more.
 - A third message dealt with the importance of religious ruling, getting clerics’ advice (those clerics who support the mujahidin) and follow their religious rulings. Al-Rimi also addressed

²⁷ 11.11.19 Telegram

²⁸ 19.11.19 Telegram

students of Islamic theology and stressed their obligation to adhere to perform jihad and maintain the unity of the mujahidin's ranks.

At the end of his speech al-Rimi wished to encourage the Syrians and boost their morale and said that Allah destined them to be victorious and called upon Allah to show his benevolence and assist the Syrians²⁹.



A banner for al-Rimi's speech

Iraq

The Islamic State (ISIS)

- ISIS posted the following:
 - A clip titled “The Fate of the Criminals” which documented armed ISIS activity against security forces and Shiite militias in Iraq³⁰.

Al-Sham [The Levant]

Syria

Hayat Tahrir al-Sham

- Hayat Tahrir al-Sham posted the following:
 - Propaganda clips to boost the members' morale. For example, one of the clips dealt with the importance of the organization's fighters in defending Idlib from the Syrian-Russian aggression, with the popular support of the residents. Said support manifested itself by financial support and the fighters' success in thwarting the enemy's wishes to eliminate the Sunni fighters. Per the organization, the war on Idlib is in fact a religious war between the Sunni Islam and its enemies³¹.
 - A clip documenting award ceremony for 120 Idlib children who won a reciting the dawn prayer contest. The ceremony was held by **Markaz al-Huda al-Dawai**, an Islamic studies institute operating under the auspice of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and is responsible for their indoctrination as a preparatory stage for their acceptance as members³².

²⁹ 2.11.19 Telegram

³⁰ 6.11.19 Telegram

³¹ 11.11.19 Telegram

³² 14.11.19. <https://videos.ebaa.news/watch/D3nPKADcA5s5cPd>



The Markaz al-Huda al-Dawai award ceremony

Hurras al-Din

- **Al-Bayyan** media outlet, identified with **Hurras al-Din (al-Qaeda extension in Syria)** posted the following:
 - A banner titled “Idlib the Shameful Deed”. In the banner the organization stressed that Idlib faces an existential threat, in light of the enemy’s preparation to invade its territory and cautioned jihadists not to sit idly by or they will fall prey to the enemy. The organization harshly criticized Abu Muhamad al-Julani, leader of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham for his efforts to arrive at a cease fire agreement with the enemy and warned that his policy would lead to death. In light of that the organization called upon Hayat Tahrir al-sham members to come to their senses, repent and adhere to jihad as Huras al-Din are doing³³.
 - An article titled “The Traitors’ Sharia” addressing the unity of the ranks among the mujahidin in Syria and the belief in Allah. The writer distinguishes between Muslims who present themselves as adhering to jihad and blurt slogans of unity but de facto hurt Muslims and those who actually perform jihad for Allah. Later, the writer calls the mujahidin to set aside their personal interests, unite and fight together under the banner of Allah for the Muslims in Syria³⁴.
 - An article titled “Save What’s Left of Idlib”. At the outset, the writer emphasizes the importance of the unity among the ranks of the mujahidin to win the support of the besieged Muslims in the city. Later, the writer criticizes the formation of the New National Army in Syria and claimed that it consisted of lapsed infidels. The writer questioned whether those who left Islam and joined that army are still Muslims or infidels and claimed that al-Julani’s extreme fanatic group gave a vague answer on that subject and had a fatwa issued, one that fit their interests. The writer added that the solution is by forming a Shura council that will discuss and decide on the issue. Further, the writer criticized al-Julani’s decision to break from al-Qaeda which ultimately led to the defeat of the

³³ 4.11.19 Telegram

³⁴ 7.11.19 <https://bayaan.info/archives/4017>

mujahidin. The writer called the mujahidin not to heed calls from groups such as al-Julanis’ or al-Baghdadi’s³⁵ that only led to their defeat but rather unite under the banner of al-Qaeda.

- **The Duwat al-Twahid Institution**, charged with the indoctrination and Islamic teachings at Huras al-Din, posted a video with a speech on the attack on Idlib by Russian and Syrian forces as well as allies given by **Abu Hurayra al-Shami**, a cleric within the organization. Al-Shami stressed the importance of the unity of the ranks of the mujahidin and concentrating efforts in fighting the enemy, including Russia³⁶.

Abdallah Azam Brigades

- **Abdallah Azam Brigades**, a Salafi organization in Lebanon, Syria and other regions such as Gaza, close with **al-Qaeda** posted the following:
 - A banner announcing the dissolution of the organization without giving reasons for the above save for stating the fact that the dissolution will serve the Muslims’ public interest. At the same breath the organization called all Muslims to carry on with jihad³⁷.
 - The organization was formally established in 2009 by **Saleh al-Qaraawi**, a Saudi national eliminated in 2012 while en route to Pakistan from KSA. In its first years the organization had close ties with **AQAP** and Salafi jihadists in Gaza. With the eruption of the Syrian popular uprising it put a lot of effort to establish itself in this theatre. The reasons for the dissolution are unknown.



The announcement on the dissolution of the organization

The Gaza Strip-Sinai Peninsula

Jaysh al-Ummah al-Salafi fi Bayt al-Maqdis

- **Al-Raya** media outlet, owned by **Jaysh al-Ummah al-Salafi fi Bayt al-Maqdis** (The Salafi Umma Army in

³⁵ 19.11.19 <https://bayaan.info/archives/4104>

³⁶ 4.11.19, Telegram.

³⁷ 20.11.19 Telegram.

Jerusalem), a Salafi jihadi organization in Gaza close with al-Qaeda, posted the following:

- Claiming responsibility for launching three rockets at southern Israel civilian populations, which per the organization came as a retaliation for Israel's aggression against Gaza³⁸. The announcement was posted on the backdrop of Israel eliminating a senior terror leader of PIJ which escalated tension between Israel and Gaza.
- An article titled "[What Would Have Happened] Had the Israeli Aggression Against Gaza Continued?" by **Abu Mulhim al-Ghazi**, a member of the organization. The writer was critical of the ceasefire arrangement between Israel and Hamas after the escalation that succeeded an elimination of a senior PIJ leader by Israel. Per him, the Palestinians could have credited themselves for many achievements had the campaign continued, on two levels: (i) Political – the Palestinians would have been able to lift the public's spirits everywhere and specially in Gaza; put a burden on Netanyahu by him not knowing when the campaign would end; promoting the Palestinian agenda to the top of the international community's agenda and especially the Islamic and Arab ones; inciting the Arab populous and applying pressure to the Arab regimes that publicly announce normalization with Israel; force Israel to remove the blockade on Gaza; a chance to terminate the "parades of return" to the fence with Israel; strengthening political and military ties among the various Palestinian factions. (ii) Military – increasing jihad activity and instilling the values of love for the resistance in the Palestinian souls; forcing Israel to stop its elimination policy; studying the strengths and weaknesses of the resistance' military deployment; strengthening ties among the faction; inciting the west bank and Arabs inside Israel. Per the writer the ceasefire brought unwanted outcomes with it: (i) Politically – distancing the factions from one another, increased chaos and decision makers; increased anger and despair on Gaza's streets; regression of the Palestinian stature and continued Israeli-Arabic normalization; continued blockade on Gaza; "continued parades of return" as the resistance's goal has not been achieved and subsequent injuries to people and the economy. (ii) Militarily – Israel continues its elimination policy; continued decline of the status of the joint operation center when PIJ would stand by in the next escalation and would only step in when his people will be hit³⁹.
- Photos of the organization's fighters next to maps and laptops planning mortar attacks on Israeli cities.

³⁸ 12.11.19 Telegram

³⁹ 16.11.19 Telegram



Photos of the organization’s fighters next to maps and laptops planning mortar attacks on Israeli cities

- A call to Muslims to donate to the organization claiming these would help in arming it and better preparing it to fight the Jews. The call was posted within the “Arm a Warrior” online campaign which has been going on for years. The organization provided a Telegram account to contact for making said donations.
- **Thubat Agency**, operating on behalf of the organization posted the following:
 - A banner announcing a decision made by the leadership following the escalation with Israel to launch rockets at Israeli civilian population despite the difficulties involved and the organization’s adherence to jihad⁴⁰.

Africa

The Maghreb

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

- **Al-Andalus** media outlet, owned by **AQIM** posted the following:
 - A clip featuring a speech by sheikh **Abu Abd al-Allah Ahmad**, the head of the Political and Foreign Affairs committee for the organization. In his speech al-Allah stressed that he supported the Algerian popular uprising and wished that it would lead to the fall of the military Junta that took over Algeria. Further, he blamed the regime for hurting Islam and disseminating heresy. At the end of his speech he called upon Algerian soldiers to defect and repent⁴¹.



A banner for al-Ilah’s speech

⁴⁰ 17.11.19 Telegram

⁴¹ 20.11.19, <https://emaad.net/> كلمات-بين-يدي-الأضراب-في-الجزائر

Algeria

ISIS

- A new media outlet called **Agence Quest Afrique** started assisting with **ISIS** propaganda. It posted a banner that claimed responsibility for an attack carried out by ISIS against the Algerian military in Tamanrasset, close to the border with Mali. The new media outlet focuses on posting propaganda in French on Mali related issues⁴².



Agence Quest Afrique banner

Mali

Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen

- **Al-Zallaqa** media outlet owned by the above organization posted the following:
 - A speech by **Abu al-Fadl Iyad Ghali**, leader of the organization. Ghali stressed that the latest attacks carried out by his organization against Mali and Burkina Faso militaries were made because of the latter's alliance with France. Per him, his organization's ability to cause death and damage to the above militaries attests to the failure of the G5 Sahel States alliance (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania and Chad), formed with French support to eradicate terror in the region. Further, he threatened the regime in Mali and all others in the region that as long as they collaborate with France his organization will fight and destabilize them⁴³.
 - Claiming responsibility for: (i) a raid on an army post in Arso, Burkina Faso, and killing dozens of soldiers; (ii) an attack of an army vehicle in Basiago, Mali which killed two soldiers. The organization stressed that its fighters continue their mission to rid the Sahara from any French presence and that French support the Mali regime to fight the mujahidin⁴⁴.
 - Claiming responsibility for the success of the organization's raid on a prison in Timbuktu, Mali, on November 11th, 2019 and free dozens of prisoners. The organization stressed that liberating prisoners, either via raids or ransom payment, is considered a religious command in Islam and clarified it was committed to liberate all Muslims who are imprisoned in the jails of the tyrant

⁴² 20.11.19 Telegram

⁴³ 8.11.19 Telegram

⁴⁴ 13.11.19 Telegram

regimes and they didn't forget them⁴⁵.

- Claiming responsibility for an attack on a military post in Kaya, north east Burkina Faso. Per the organization the attack and the ones that preceded it were carried out during and in response the visits of Sahel states leaders in Paris “to wake Macron from his dream and highlight the [mujahidin’s] determination to purify the good land from the filth of the crusading occupation and its looting allies”⁴⁶.
- Claiming responsibility for taking over a military center in Kelbo, Burkina Faso⁴⁷.

ISIS in West Africa

- **ISIS in West Africa** province active in Nigeria, Mali and the Sahara posted a banner and an article in **al-Naba**, where it claimed responsibility for setting an ambush on French troops on board two helicopters in eastern Mali. Per ISIS, its raid on the two helicopters led to the latter’s mid-air collision and the deaths of 13 French troops and three Nigerian soldiers⁴⁸.



Al-Naba article claiming the ISIS killed 13 French troops

Somalia

Al-Shabab-Al-Mujahidin

- **Shahada** news agency, identified with the above organization, **al-Qaeda’s** extension in Somalia, posted the following:
 - A clip featuring a meeting between sheikh **Abu Ubaydah**, the leader of that organization and its fighters prior to the September 30th, 2019 attack on Ballidogle, the air base that used by the U.S. forces active in Somalia. The clip shows Abu Ubaydah calling the fighters to hit U.S. forces. Per him, the goal for al-Shabab are the Americans and not the infidel regime in Somalia. The clip starts with a highlight of atrocities performed by the U.S. and its allies against the people of Somalia which

⁴⁵ 16.11.19 Telegram

⁴⁶ 17.11.19 Telegram

⁴⁷ 25.11.19 Telegram

⁴⁸ Al-Naba Issue 210, p.7.

include hurting and injuring civilians, rape and infrastructure destruction. Further, the organization clarified that they objected the U.S. colonialism. They further mentioned that the U.S. is being defeated in Afghanistan and therefore it is possible to defeat it in Somalia. The clip added that the U.S. is an obstacle for peace and stability in Somalia and called for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Somalia. In addition, the clip demanded that the Americans would immediately stop their bombings of civilians, stop training the Somali military and stop supporting the African Union forces. Later in the clip the organization presented itself as Somalia's best option for peace and stability⁴⁹.

- An announcement of a takeover of a village in Somaliland without a fight. The announcement said that the villagers welcomed the fighters and added that this was the first village under the organization's control in northern Somalia which attests to the fact that the organization increases its hold on Somalia⁵⁰.
- Part 15 of the video series "Punish them Severely to Disperse Those Who Are Behind Them". The series documents the takeover of a Somali military base close to the city of Baidoa in southern Somalia. It ends with the organization's former leader, **Abu al-Zabir**, claiming that the mujahidin protect the Sharia with their actions and calls upon them to believe in Allah and continue their jihad as this is the only way victory will be achieved⁵¹.
- A booklet by **Jamal Abu Hidra** describing the jihad in Somalia since the beginning of Islam through the formation of al-Shabab and its modern-day achievements. In the beginning the writer addresses the jihad against the Portuguese and Ethiopians in east Africa at the beginning of Islam and later against the British and the Italians as well as the Americans. Later the booklet describes the formation of al-Shabab and the big attacks it carried out in Somalia and Kenya against the enemies of Islam⁵².
- A news report on the attacks carried out by the organization during October 2019. For example, it reported on an attack against an U.S. military base in southern Somalia, assassinations of various military and government figures and more⁵³.

The West

- **Amaq** news agency operating on behalf of **ISIS**, claimed responsibility for the knifing attack on London Bridge. According to the announcement, one of ISIS fighters carried out the attack in response to the leaders of the organization to hit western citizens⁵⁴.
- Unofficial media outlet assisting with **ISIS** propaganda such as **al-Taqwa Institute** posted a series of

⁴⁹ 5.11.19 Telegram

⁵⁰ 17.11.19 Telegram

⁵¹ <https://shahadanews.com/?p=5421>

⁵² https://ia803105.us.archive.org/13/items/45893436248193762999_201910/4_5893436248193762999.pdf

⁵³ 13.11.19 Telegram

⁵⁴ 30.11.19 Telegram.

banners threatening to hit western targets, the U.S. in particular⁵⁵.



Banners posted by various ISIS supporting media outlets threatening to hit the west, the U.S. in particular

⁵⁵ Nov 2019 Telegram.

ABOUT THE ICT

Founded in 1996, the International Institute for Counterterrorism (ICT) is one of the leading academic institutes for counter-terrorism in the world, facilitating international cooperation in the global struggle against terrorism.

ICT is an independent think tank providing expertise in terrorism, counterterrorism, homeland security, threat vulnerability and risk assessment, intelligence analysis and national security and defense policy.

ICT is a non-profit organization located at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, Israel which relies exclusively on private donations and revenue from events, projects and programs.

ABOUT THE JIHADI MONITORING GROUP

The Jihadi Websites Monitoring Group (JWMG) is a specialized research and analysis team at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). Composed of researchers fluent in Arabic, the JWMG monitors websites that support and serve the Global Jihad organizations. The

unique characteristic of JWMG publications is the team's integration of diverse materials from a wide variety of Arabic sources. JWMG connects each source to larger trends, providing a complete understanding of events on both a local and a global scale.