

# Al-Qaeda's Odyssey to the Global Jihad

Yoram Schweitzer and Aviv Oreg



Memorandum **134**

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המכון למחקרי ביטחון לאומי  
THE INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

INCORPORATING THE JAFFEE  
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תל אביב אוניברסיטת תל אביב



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# האודיסיאה של אל-קאעדה אל הג'יהאד העולמי

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יורם שוייצר ואביב אורג

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**Institute for National Security Studies** (a public benefit company)  
40 Haim Levanon Street  
POB 39950  
Ramat Aviv  
Tel Aviv 6997556

Tel. +972-3-640-0400  
Fax. +972-3-744-7590

E-mail: [info@inss.org.il](mailto:info@inss.org.il)  
<http://www.inss.org.il>

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## Preface

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The terrorist attack perpetrated by al-Qaeda against the United States in 2001 turned global terrorism into one of the major issues on the agendas of decision makers all over the world and became a benchmark in the relations between the United States and other nations, in accordance with their participation in the war on terrorism. To be sure, modern international terrorism became a significant player in global politics and international relations as early as the late 1960s and remained so throughout the 1970s and 1980s with the appearance of nationalist, separatist, and ideological left wing terrorist organizations influenced by Marxist-Leninist worldviews that carried out acts of terrorism worldwide. Nonetheless, it is evident that the 9/11 attacks profoundly increased awareness of the threat terrorism poses to the international system and the national security of many countries. The unique status of terrorism as a major national and multinational security issue was a consequence of the massive destruction and loss of life caused by the bold and fearless attack of a handful of suicide bombers in the heart of US political, economic, and military nerve centers, an event unprecedented in any nation. Video footage of the collapse of the World Trade Center played throughout the world and was broadcast over and over again by virtually every media outlet – in the news, in documentaries, and in fictional films devoted to the attack and the organization that carried it out. This attention was accompanied by repeated threats by al-Qaeda and its affiliates that the 9/11 scenario would be played out again and again until all of the organization's demands were fully met. Thus, al-Qaeda succeeded in creating shockwaves that went far beyond physical and economic ruin and damaged morale, by presenting international terrorism as having unparalleled demonic powers that threaten to flood the world with rivers of blood.

Al-Qaeda activities dragged the United States and its allies into a number of extended military campaigns in the Middle East and Afghanistan. These campaigns demanded massive financial resources that taxed the economies

of all the countries involved and caused thousands of deaths among military personnel and hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties, both directly during military campaigns and indirectly because of rampant terrorism in the countries where the confrontations took place. Yet while during the years immediately after 9/11 the war on terrorism was the common denominator uniting all nations engaged in the campaign, recent years have seen a reversal of this trend. More specifically, the nations that were forced to bear the brunt of terrorism and the war on terror have come under harsh criticism, including the Western countries whose armed forces were involved in military activities and incurred high casualty rates. The fear of frequent attacks that resulted from the events of September 11, 2001 has abated over the years, and to a great extent terrorism is once again viewed as one of many challenges on the national security agenda. Al-Qaeda has been driven into defensive warfare as attacks on it have taken the lives of most of its leaders, the majority of whom have been eliminated or apprehended, including Osama Bin Laden. Since 2005 and despite its ongoing efforts, al-Qaeda failed to carry out any massive attack on Western soil. The center of gravity of jihadi terrorist activity has shifted away from al-Qaeda on to affiliate groups and inspired individuals that are active primarily in distant locations, though there are still sporadic attempts to carry out attacks in the West as well. Al-Qaeda, now headed by Ayman al-Zawahiri, holds a leadership position, playing primarily a mentoring and guiding role as it directs, inspires, and assists the terrorist activity of others.

The global campaign against terrorism lasted many years and was extremely costly in terms of casualties and money, amounting to several hundred billions of dollars in direct and indirect costs. In addition, the West's military intervention opened an internal Pandora's Box within states where the war on terrorism was conducted, reigniting past local, internal struggles of an ethnic, tribal, or religious nature. Thus the United States and its allies found themselves chasing groups, organizations, networks, and even individual terrorists who succeeded in commanding tremendous resources in terms of leaders' attention and time, money, and manpower – disproportionate to their true threat potential.

Al-Qaeda's success in upsetting the West's lifestyle and mentality, compelling many countries to devise defensive measures far beyond the tremendous scope of damage it inflicted, is manifested in several ways. First, al-Qaeda challenged the status of the West, led by the US, and shook

the confidence of the world's sole superpower by daring to attack it directly on its sovereign soil, in a way that was unprecedented in its audacity and damage. Second, al-Qaeda actions and threats challenged the routine in the public sphere and local and international travel, greatly complicating day-to-day life in many countries. Third, al-Qaeda has positioned itself as an international emblem and its legendary leader, Osama Bin Laden, became one of the world's archetypal terror-inducing figures on the one hand, and a widely admired symbol of resistance to the West for many Muslim youths on the other. Fourth, al-Qaeda's ideas have captivated many Muslims around the world, even if their relative number compared to the world's Muslim population is miniscule. Fifth, al-Qaeda has generated and motivated a new worldwide movement known as the "global jihad." Finally, the organization has managed to survive despite the intensive international war waged against it for more than a decade, as the vast efforts and resources invested to defeat it by many nations, chiefly the United States, remain unsuccessful to date.

Despite its substantial success, al-Qaeda's attempts to oust the military and end the involvement in Middle East affairs by Western countries, mainly the United States, has not borne fruit. On the contrary, the activity of the organization and its affiliates<sup>1</sup> has actually resulted in increasing deployment of the United States and its allies in Muslim countries throughout the world. Many countries supported the United States' retaliation after the 9/11 attack and joined the campaign against al-Qaeda and its affiliates out of concern that the threat of terrorism to their own nations and citizens had become a transnational strategic problem that demanded confrontation and required significant resources in order to completely eradicate it. In addition, al-Qaeda's stated desire to implement *sharia* (Islamic law) according to the model of the prophet Muhammad and the Salafists, as the only rule of the land, has not yet been realized. In fact, al-Qaeda was the reason that the Taliban – the first and only group in the modern era that has actually implemented *sharia* as state law, the type of rule al-Qaeda preaches – was ousted from the government in Afghanistan as a consequence of the US-led Western offensive that followed the 9/11 attacks.

Nonetheless, the weakening of the international terrorist threat posed by al-Qaeda in recent years should not be regarded as "mission accomplished," nor is the effort to prevent its return complete. In fact, understanding the near-term trends and developments of al-Qaeda, its affiliates, and inspired elements, and implementing the countermeasures necessary to contain and

stop them can, to a large extent, determine al-Qaeda's ability to survive, direct, fuel, and conduct the campaign of global jihad. The recruitment of a new generation of volunteers, some from Western countries, to the ranks of global jihad in peripheral warfare zones such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Somalia, Mali, and Yemen, and in the last two years, Syria, will probably be reflected in attempts to shift radical Islamic international terrorism into high gear. Therefore Western nations, primarily the United States, must continue their intensive counterterrorist activity at home and abroad in order to foil attempts to carry out attacks by networks, cells, or lone wolves who have adopted the global jihad worldview. The effectiveness of the West's concerted counterterrorist activity, alongside economic, intelligence, military, and security assistance to peripheral nations fighting al-Qaeda and its affiliates in their own countries, accompanied by a comprehensive, coordinated campaign to undermine the validity of the radical Salafist jihadi ideology, will largely determine whether international terrorism as championed by global jihadists will rear its ugly head again or will resume the relatively low profile it had until the 9/11 attacks in the United States.

## Introduction

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Twenty-five years after the founding of al-Qaeda and more than twelve years after the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, the organization and its affiliates remain the main target of counterattack by a wide coalition of Western, Arab, and other nations that together and separately invest significant efforts and resources in order to defeat them. Despite the serious blows they have absorbed, al-Qaeda and other global jihadist elements have survived and continue to pose a threat to the safety of many civilians throughout the world. Besides the direct impact of daily terrorist attacks around the world, the influence of al-Qaeda and the global jihad movement as players in the international arena has outstripped their numerical size and military strength. Therefore an examination of how one terrorist organization became an emblem and inspiration for others throughout the world, giving birth to a transnational phenomenon known as the global jihad movement, is pertinent, especially during this time of regional instability in the Middle East that has important ramifications for the world order.

This memorandum seeks to explain how one terrorist organization, which at its peak numbered only a few hundred militants, managed to produce a global phenomenon that was more successful than any other terrorist outfit in modern history in exhausting the only remaining superpower and causing it to withdraw into its own enclave. The heavy toll – in terms of both casualties and financial cost – of the war on terrorism declared by the United States and its allies in Afghanistan and Iraq resulted in the gradual erosion of public support for the use of US military force in crisis situations that developed elsewhere. The United States' decision to avoid military intervention in crises that developed in Libya, Mali, Somalia, and Syria reflects a new reality in American public opinion. This affects international relationships and in practice gives other players, such as China and Russia, greater influence in the international arena. These developments, in turn,

are particularly troubling given Iran's continuing efforts to attain military nuclear capabilities.

The memorandum describes and analyzes the three central stages forming al-Qaeda's odyssey to global jihad and the processes and factors that placed al-Qaeda at the head of global jihad, from the founding of the organization by Osama Bin Laden and a handful of likeminded people in September 1988, at the end of the Soviet war in Afghanistan, until today.

The first chapter surveys the ideological differences within the organization's leadership that emerged once it started to formulate its vision and doctrine, and the *modus operandi* and organizational structure needed to realize them. Documents generated by al-Qaeda members indicate that the organization's ideological path was not clearly defined from the outset but rather came into being during the course of events and in response to the changing circumstances in which the organization operated. In fact, towards the end of the war in Afghanistan, two contradictory approaches vied for supremacy in dictating the right way to conduct jihad: the first espoused exploiting the success in Afghanistan to conduct internal jihad against infidel Arab regimes in various Muslim countries, with emphasis on Arab nations in the Middle East, as the objective was to topple these regimes and establish *sharia*-based states in their stead; the second supported militant Islamic activity in various "jihad arenas" around the world, that is, in Muslim regions that over the years had been conquered by non-Muslims and where Muslims and non-Muslims are in conflict.

The decision was ultimately made by Osama Bin Laden himself, who in the mid-1990s adopted a third approach whereby global jihadist warfare was to focus on the international arena and be directed against the "Crusader-Jewish alliance," meaning in practice attacking the United States and its allies throughout the world. Bin Laden felt that attacking the United States would cause it to change its Middle East policy and end its involvement with and support for Islam's enemies at home and abroad. This would eventually result in the downfall of the infidel Arab regimes, which would then be replaced by states run according to Islamic law. In making this decision, Bin Laden was asserting that the time had come to initiate processes that would lead to a global religious war between Islam and the Christian-Jewish alliance. In this vision, al-Qaeda was the pioneer at the head of the camp that would spark, inspire, initiate, and lead the process globally. Towards this end and to restore Islam to its former glory, Bin Laden decided that al-

Qaeda would develop from an organization that focuses most of its activity on logistical support for internal jihad and warfare in “jihad arenas” and sporadic support for a small number of terrorist activities in the international arena, into an autonomous and centralized organization that would initiate and conduct a widespread campaign of terrorism against the US-led West in the global arena.

The following chapters of this memorandum deal with al-Qaeda's recent past and present. We present and analyze the circumstances confronting the organization in the decade starting with the terrorist attacks in the United States in September 2001 and ending with the death of Osama Bin Laden, the organization's founder and leader, at the hands of US Special Forces in May 2011. Al-Qaeda's survival and the activities the group and its affiliates planned and, in part, carried out during this decade are examined in light of the intensive counterterrorist campaign waged by the international coalition and the heavy blows dealt to the organization and its affiliates. The third chapter examines possible ways that al-Qaeda, now under the leadership of Ayman al-Zawahiri, along with his ideological partners, can survive and continue to promote the organization's objectives during its fourth decade of existence, given the regional upheavals in the Middle East, the dynamic changes taking place in Arab and Muslim states, and the elimination of many of the organization's senior leaders, including Bin Laden. The chapter also presents a map of the current terrorist threats, and it attempts to forecast the directions al-Qaeda and its affiliates will pursue and the policy they will adopt in the next few years. Chapter 4 focuses on the threat al-Qaeda and its affiliates have posed over the years to Israel and Jews and the future potential of this threat. Finally, the memorandum presents the conclusions derived from the analysis of al-Qaeda's threats and possible developments over the next few years and offers recommendations for confronting them.





## Chapter 1

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# Global Jihad: Religious Ideology and Historical Development

The philosophy of al-Qaeda and of the global jihadist movement it founded began to crystallize in the 1980s. It represents an amalgam of worldviews, ideologies, interpretations, and opinions that developed dynamically over the years as these groups adjusted their activity in accordance with external and internal changes occurring in various arenas of the Arab-Muslim world. As is true of the world in general, this development encompassed different, sometimes contradictory, conceptual approaches and emphases within the organization and among its affiliates. In extreme cases, especially having to do with translating ideology into policy and an operational agenda, these contradictions created ideological tensions within the organization and the entire global jihad circles.

The ideological foundations of al-Qaeda and the global jihadist camp are to be found in the Hanbali and neo-Hanbali school of Islam developed by Taqi a-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah in the fourteenth century,<sup>1</sup> and draw on the Muslim Brotherhood movement founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna, as well as the Salafist movement<sup>2</sup> that emerged from it. Among the factors involved in the founding of these movements was the increasing penetration of the Western world into Muslim countries, starting with Napoleon's campaign in the region in 1798, and the West's physical and cultural conquest of large portions of the expanse that had been under Muslim hegemony in pre-colonial times.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the Salafist school, represented by the Muslim Brotherhood, was born of the need to find a response to the challenge posed to the Muslims of the Middle East by Western superiority, evident in the Middle East for the past 200 years. The Muslim Brotherhood's ideology states that the redemption of Islam from the West is to be found in repentance and a return to the roots of Islam as

well as complete and total submission to all of Islam's clear commandments and directives, on both the interpersonal and the political levels.

The call for such a move was not actually a revolutionary, radical, or violent act. The Muslim Brotherhood and its Salafist siblings that followed<sup>4</sup> stressed persuasion, preaching, and social action from within the governmental system, cooperation with the ruler and official authorities, and recognition of their necessity as part of the required process of change. According to their worldview, Islam without an Islamic political leader is impossible. Al-Banna believed and supported various important ideas written into the secular state constitution, such as individual freedom, the principle of administration through consultation with a body of experts (*shura*), the ruler's responsibility for the people, and the separation of the powers of government.<sup>5</sup> Although the motto of the Muslim Brotherhood asserted that the Quran is the state's only and exclusive constitutional basis, al-Banna viewed these secular notions as having their origin in Islam, and felt that the Egyptian parliamentary system should continue to exist even if without political parties. In addition, he believed that given the harsh reality, and based on a precedent set by the prophet, every Muslim has the obligation of jihad in order to change the current situation. Yet in the philosophy of al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood, this obligation is relevant only vis-à-vis an external enemy, that is, an enemy that had conquered areas previously under Islamic rule and must therefore be expelled, and under no circumstance should there be an internal jihad against a Muslim ruler. This approach, suggesting that al-Banna was not a terrorist who operated violently against the internal order in Egypt, motivated the Muslim Brotherhood to send military forces to participate in the 1948 war and, later, to fight the British forces along the Suez Canal in 1956.<sup>6</sup>

In the 1960s, building on the ideological basis of the Salafist movement led by the Muslim Brotherhood, which espoused and promoted political Islam, a significantly more extreme and violent ideology began to take shape in Egypt – that of Salafiya Jihadiya. The main theorist and proponent of this new ideology was Syed Qutb, an Egyptian who had been a highly ranked leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. In the early 1960s, he harshly criticized the movement's passiveness, resigned from the movement, and called for broad-based activism, including violence and militant jihad,<sup>7</sup> to purify Muslim society and restore Islam's lost honor and the status it held during its golden era. While there is an ideological thread connecting al-

Banna with Qutb in that both worked to promote political and social Islam,<sup>8</sup> Qutb's jihad and that of his supporters is domestic, directed first and foremost against secular, infidel Muslim regimes and rulers.<sup>9</sup> In his book *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri,<sup>10</sup> an Egyptian surgeon who became the leader of al-Qaeda and replaced Bin Laden as the head of the organization after his death, refers to the critical role Qutb played in shaping the militant activism of Egypt's Salafiya Jihadiya.

According to al-Zawahiri, the new movement was greatly influenced by Qutb's writings when it launched its violent anti-government campaign during the second half of the 1960s. Al-Zawahiri claims that although the Muslim Brotherhood already existed and had been active against "the enemies of Islam" for some thirty years, its violence was not directed against the local regime but rather against external enemies. According to al-Zawahiri, Qutb and his followers saw in the local Muslim regime, which had strayed from the true Salafi version of Islam, a much bigger and more dangerous enemy than any external element. This view is driven by the belief that the regime is hostile to Islam, perverts God's path, and refuses to subordinate itself to *sharia*. Therefore, during the second half of the 1960s, Qutb's followers<sup>11</sup> started engaging in periodic attacks against the Egyptian government, which peaked with the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in October 1981. This deviation from the Muslim Brotherhood's traditional ideology was the first expression of the operational emphasis on warfare against the domestic rather than the external enemy.<sup>12</sup>

A decade and a half later, in the unstable Afghanistan of the 1980s, the two ideologies – the Muslim Brotherhood's Salafist understanding and the Salafiya Jihadiya as interpreted by Qutb – were on a collision course amidst the camps of foreign Muslim volunteers who came to Afghanistan to fight against the USSR. During the second half of the 1970s an all-out domestic war erupted for control of the state between communists, mostly from the Afghani army, and Afghani Islamic religious devotees following in the footsteps of the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>13</sup> In December 1979, when the USSR invaded Afghanistan to help its allies maintain their control of the government, its forces were confronted by various Afghani organizations that had adopted guerilla warfare tactics against the Soviet invaders. The guerilla groups' common denominator was their religious Islamic ideology. Some were graduates of the Muslim Brotherhood's al-Azhar University in Cairo. These events marked the start of the decade-long war in Afghanistan.

The war, viewed in the greater Muslim world as a religious conflict between a conquering “crusader empire” invading Muslim land and an authentic Muslim entity, inspired many Muslims to travel to Afghanistan as volunteers in order to participate in the effort to oust the Soviet aggressor.

An ideological dispute developed among the foreign volunteers fighting in Afghanistan, which focused on where the warfare should continue after the Soviet forces were defeated and on the identity of the enemy against whom jihad should be waged once the Afghan war concluded. This dispute was manifested in opposing philosophies expressed by Abdullah Azzam and al-Zawahiri, two of the most prominent ideological figures who had actively participated in the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian born in the village of Silat al-Hartiyah near Jenin in the West Bank, closely identified with the political and religious outlook espoused by the Muslim Brotherhood and its founder, Hassan al-Banna, and was very far ideologically from the Salafiya Jihadiya approach of Syed Qutb and his followers. Azzam saw the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as a classic jihad arena,<sup>14</sup> where holy war is waged against an external, non-Muslim, infidel enemy that had invaded Muslim land. Azzam had arrived in Pakistan as early as 1981, and in 1984 he published a religious ruling (*fatwa*) defining Afghanistan as an arena of jihad and calling on all Muslims to join the fight against the Soviet invader.<sup>15</sup> He thereby became the ideological and spiritual guide for the Arab volunteers who answered his call and came to fight the Red Army with or under the command of the Afghani guerilla organizations. Osama Bin Laden, a young Saudi millionaire,<sup>16</sup> joined the fight in 1984 and became Azzam’s partner in founding the Maktab al-Khidamat – also known as the Afghan Service Bureau – which financed and oversaw the activity of Arab volunteers streaming into Afghanistan in response to Azzam’s call to join the war effort.<sup>17</sup>

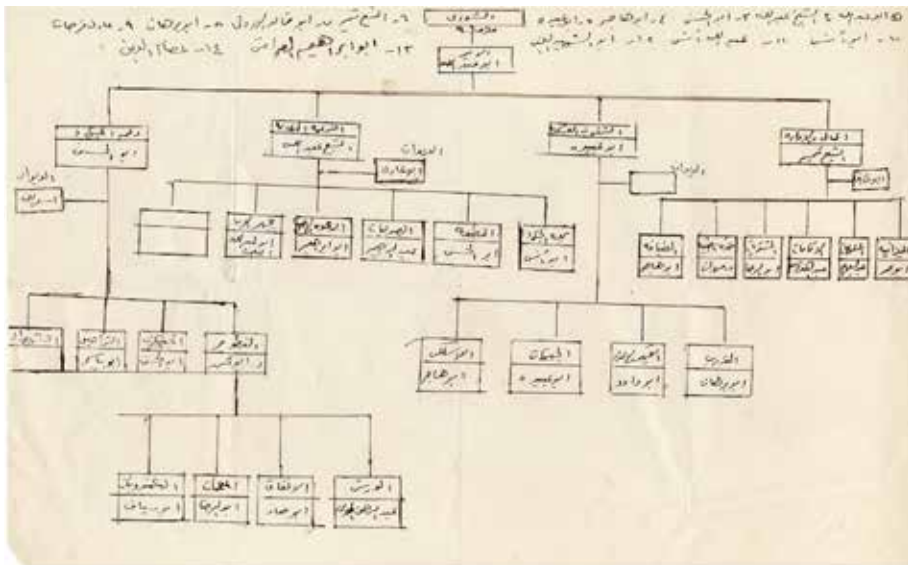
Ayman al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian physician who in his homeland had adopted Syed Qutb’s Salafiya Jihadiya ideas, came to Afghanistan in 1980 as a volunteer to coordinate the wave of Afghani refugees displaced by the war with the Soviet Union and arriving in massive numbers in the Pakistani border city of Peshawar. Al-Zawahiri returned to Egypt a year later and was jailed by the authorities as part of a roundup of Egyptian religious fundamentalists after the assassination of President Sadat. Upon his release in 1985, he returned to Afghanistan, having become one of the prominent leaders of Egyptian fundamentalists while in jail. Al-Zawahiri viewed

Afghanistan as a platform for advancing Salafiya Jihadiya in Egypt and therefore founded the organization Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) in Peshawar, working mainly to recruit new volunteers to his organization among the Egyptian citizens who had come to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets.<sup>18</sup>

As the fighting in Afghanistan drew to a close, the dispute between Azzam and al-Zawahiri grew more intense. Their disagreement centered on the question of continuation of the jihad. Azzam advocated an external jihad and a move into new arenas of jihad where Muslims were fighting foreign, non-Muslim invaders.<sup>19</sup> Al-Zawahiri urged, based on Qutb's teaching, to leverage the military victory scored in Afghanistan to open a domestic campaign and focus on jihad against infidel regimes in Muslim countries, first and foremost Egypt. Underpinning this dispute was a competition for the attention of the funder – Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden, who originally sided with Azzam, was tremendously influenced by the personality and philosophy of al-Zawahiri, who called for the liberation of Muslim nations from infidel Muslim rulers.<sup>20</sup> Senior Afghani mujahidin have testified that al-Zawahiri used a variety of techniques to manipulate Bin Laden into supporting him.<sup>21</sup> The struggle between the two factions came to a head in November 1989 with the murder of Abdullah Azzam. Many of his supporters accused al-Zawahiri of having directly ordered the assassination.<sup>22</sup>

It should be noted that the emphasis Bin Laden placed on operational activity and active participation in the campaign against the Soviets had caused a rift between him and Azzam at an earlier stage. In 1987, in complete contradiction to Azzam's teaching, Bin Laden established a special Arab force separate from the Afghani organizations.<sup>23</sup> To institute this force, Bin Laden teamed up with Egyptian activists, such as Abu Ubeida al-Banshiri and Muhammad Atef – later to become senior al-Qaeda commanders – and established the al-Masada (“the lion's den”) camp on the front line of the battle zone against the Soviets, near the village of Jaji. Bin Laden moved the new recruits who had arrived to fight the holy war in Afghanistan to this camp, where they received basic training before setting out to fight the Soviets as part of a completely autonomous group.<sup>24</sup> In April 1987, the al-Masada fighters achieved fame and glory throughout Afghanistan and the Arab world thanks to what came to be known as the Jaji battle, during which the fighters in this compound managed to hold out against Soviet forces for three weeks before repelling the attack.

The steps involved in establishing a new organization – a global Islamic army whose objective was to promote Islamic- jihadist ideas throughout the world after the war in Afghanistan ended – were carried out by Bin Laden in 1987-88. The core of the organization’s action force comprised al-Masada fighters.<sup>25</sup> From the outset, it was clear to Bin Laden that in order to ensure the organization’s long term existence, it had to have a clear, structured hierarchy and an orderly system of guidelines and working principles. Indeed, the first diagram depicting the organization’s future structure, reproduced below, was proposed as early as 1987 (figure 1).<sup>26</sup>



**Figure 1.** The Islamic Military Force – organizational structure as proposed in 1987

In August 1988, over the course of several days of discussions with senior al-Masada figures that took place at Osama Bin Laden’s Peshawar home, it was decided to make a radical change in the nature of activity of the Afghan Service Bureau and establish the organization al-Qaeda al-Sulbah, that is, “the Solid Base.”<sup>27</sup> Not knowing that al-Qaeda would become the most influential terrorist organization in the modern era, its founders defined the objective of their new organization in relatively vague and general terms: “Al-Qaeda is an organized Islamic body whose mission is to disseminate the word of God and make His religion victorious.”<sup>28</sup> Al-Qaeda’s membership requirements were also specified: willingness to stay in Afghanistan indefinitely,<sup>29</sup> full

obedience to al-Qaeda's rules and regulations, good manners, a letter of reference from a trustworthy source, and swearing an oath of allegiance (*bayat*) to the organization and its leaders.<sup>30</sup> The new organization began to operate officially on September 10, 1988. When founded, the organization consisted of 15 members, nine of whom held administrative positions.<sup>31</sup> By September 20, ten days later, the organization had doubled its membership to 30, almost all of the new members being al-Masada fighters.<sup>32</sup> By the end of 1988, the organization numbered almost 100.<sup>33</sup>

During its initial years, al-Qaeda did not have clear objectives, nor did it have a defined agenda or goal.<sup>34</sup> According to Jamal al-Fadal, an al-Masada fighter and one of the earliest members of al-Qaeda, the organization was introduced as an institution that would in the future focus on jihad and be used to carry out "additional activity beyond Afghanistan."<sup>35</sup> It did, however, have a clear organizational structure, with a leader (*amir*), Osama Bin Laden, and a subordinate advisory committee (*majlis al-shura*). The committee served as a government or cabinet of sorts and was responsible, among other duties, for the routine activity of the organization, which was conducted through several issue-specific sub-committees under the authority of the advisory committee. These included a military committee, religious law committee, media committee, and administrative committee.<sup>36</sup> Like any other organization, al-Qaeda continued to develop while adapting its missions to the new needs and the pioneering, ground-breaking mission envisioned by Bin Laden. Within this context, the organization's strategy and consequent attack policy also changed from time to time in accordance with changing circumstances.

During its early years, al-Qaeda was involved in the Afghani civil war that developed after the Soviet withdrawal. Given the circumstances, this involvement aroused harsh criticism among Arab volunteers in Afghanistan, especially among Abdullah Azzam's supporters.<sup>37</sup> In 1991, the organization and all its members moved to Sudan, after Bin Laden realized that the fight against the foreign invader in Afghanistan was over and that it was necessary to be closer to the hub of activity in the Middle East.<sup>38</sup> In Sudan, Bin Laden was able to implement his plan to use the organization as the base (*al-Qaeda*) for logistical and operational support and coordination of training camps for both internal jihad fighters in the domestic arenas of Middle East countries<sup>39</sup> and external jihad fighters in arenas of jihad.<sup>40</sup> Bin Laden's activity created – perhaps unintentionally at first – a synthesis



between Ayman al-Zawahiri's concept of internal jihad and Azzam's notion of external jihad arenas. It is unclear which of the approaches was intended by the amir at this point in the organization's development, if indeed he had a preference. Although in practice most of the organization's resources were directed towards establishing training camps for terrorists interested in internal jihad, especially the Egyptian Jihad organization,<sup>41</sup> al-Qaeda also organized and directed activity in the arenas of jihad of Bosnia<sup>42</sup> and Chechnya,<sup>43</sup> and reached new heights in 1993 when it sent its people to fight and train locals in Somalia after the United Task Force (UNITAF), a US-led, UN-sanctioned multinational force, entered the country to carry out Operation Restore Hope.<sup>44</sup>

Nonetheless, even today there is no definitive evidence of al-Qaeda's involvement, if any, in terrorist activity carried out during those years by other worldwide jihadists against American targets in the international arena, such as the terrorist campaign led by Ramzi Yousef and Khaled Sheikh Muhammad (later an al-Qaeda commander and the person responsible for the 9/11 attacks) against the United States in the early 1990s. This group was responsible for the first attack on the World Trade Center in February 1993, which killed six US citizens and injured more than 1,000, as well as the Bojinka plot in the Philippines (which was foiled at the last minute), intended to cause 11 American passenger planes to crash in a single day. These actions were carried out by a group formed in Afghanistan, whose operatives undoubtedly knew Osama Bin Laden and his men, but whose post-war activity was not linked to al-Qaeda.

In 1996, al-Qaeda left Sudan and returned to Afghanistan because of international pressure on Sudan after the previous year's attempted assassination, with Bin Laden's assistance, of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Ethiopia. In Afghanistan, Bin Laden joined forces with the Taliban,<sup>45</sup> which had just defeated the Northern Alliance – a union of Afghani groups that had fought the Soviets – and was completing its takeover of the country. Under the Taliban's protection, al-Qaeda established a widespread training infrastructure throughout the country and provided various forms of training to tens of thousands of Islamic operatives from dozens of countries.

The idea of shifting most of al-Qaeda's operational focus to the international arena, first and foremost the United States, occurred to Osama Bin Laden while he was still in Sudan. Some of the organization's members who had been active in the "Somalia Project" stayed in the Horn of Africa



even after the US withdrawal from Mogadishu. Their job was to build a sleeper operational infrastructure for al-Qaeda there, to be activated in the future against local, US, and Israeli targets.<sup>46</sup> At this point, Iran maintained a significant presence in Sudan. Thanks to mediation efforts by certain Revolutionary Guards figures – and despite the inherent tension between the Sunni al-Qaeda and the Shiite regime in Tehran – operational cooperation with Shiite terrorist elements, such as Hizbollah in Lebanon, was established. Senior al-Qaeda members traveled to Hizbollah training camps in Lebanon's Beqaa Valley, primarily for training with explosives in order to destroy physical structures.<sup>47</sup>

The international focus arose when Bin Laden accrued experience and formulated the working strategy with which to realize his vision. His public statements indicate that during al-Qaeda's early years, Bin Laden referred to the United States' growing presence in the Middle East as "a foreign invader in Islamic lands" that must be fought and ousted, an approach represented by the Muslim Brotherhood and Abdullah Azzam's ideology. According to Bin Laden, the US presence in Saudi Arabia<sup>48</sup> since the first Gulf War in 1991<sup>49</sup> and the arrival of US forces in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope in 1993 turned these countries into arenas of jihad similar to Afghanistan, making it necessary to wage jihad against the United States. For operations in Somalia, al-Qaeda built a dedicated, first-rate force, which included very senior operatives from the organization's military committee, in order to train the forces of Muhammad Farah Aidid, the leader of Somalia's civilian militias, to fight US forces. The height of al-Qaeda's activity in Somalia was the downing of the Task Force Ranger helicopter in Mogadishu, killing the 18 US Marines on board. This action and the difficulties that the US mission encountered eventually led to the withdrawal of US forces from the war-torn country.<sup>50</sup>

In contrast, the progression of al-Qaeda's activities in Saudi Arabia was slower, more measured, and almost entirely under the radar. In the first half of the 1990s, Osama Bin Laden publicly called on Saudi masses to take action against the United States and expressed support for guerrilla activities and protest.<sup>51</sup> In order to demonstrate his intention, the organization – under the name of "Hizbollah Hejaz" (possibly with operational assistance from Hizbollah in Lebanon and its patron, Iran) – blew up the residential quarters of US soldiers in Riyadh in 1995, killing five and injuring dozens.

In addition, it carried out the Khobar Towers bombing in the Saudi city of Khobar in 1996, killing 24 US Air Force personnel.<sup>52</sup>

The United States' rejection of Bin Laden's demand that it leave Saudi Arabia led him in September 1996, by means of an op-ed piece faxed to the editors of the London newspaper *al-Islah*, to proclaim a "global jihad" against the United States. In the harshly worded piece, titled "The Declaration of Jihad against the United States," Bin Laden claimed that the problems of the Muslim world were the fault of the United States.<sup>53</sup> Bin Laden explained why it was necessary to fix them and outlined a general program towards this end. In rhetoric laced with citations from the Quran, Bin Laden presented the United States and its allies as merciless creatures thirsty for Muslim blood, in love with war, and eager to annihilate the Muslim world. According to him, evidence of US barbarity in the international arena included: the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the bombing of and sanctions against Iraq; the Israeli conquest of Jerusalem; the stationing of "Christian" US forces in the vicinity of Mecca and Medina; the longstanding UN sanctions against Libya, Syria, Iran, and Sudan; and the 1996 "massacre" of civilians perpetrated by Israel at the Qana refugee camp in Lebanon.<sup>54</sup>

Two months later, in November 1996, he listed the factors that led him to declare a general jihad against the United States: "We thought that the attacks in Khobar and Riyadh were a strong enough signal to rational decision makers in the United States to desist from a comprehensive fight between the Muslim nation and U.S. forces, but they seem not to have understood the hint. Getting the hint would have been manifested by the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the Arabian Peninsula."<sup>55</sup> As a result of increased security in Saudi Arabia and the Saudis' lack of response to the call for jihad against the United States, Osama Bin Laden issued a *fatwa* in February 1998 in which he declared the establishment of "a Muslim front to fight Jews and Christians." Bin Laden announced his decision to move the fight against the United States to the international arena, while calling for attacks on the United States and its minions, the Jews.

In effect, Bin Laden created a third jihadist ideology, differing in essence from both Azzam's philosophy of jihad against the external enemy and Zawahiri's internal jihad dogma. The basis of al-Qaeda's action now became global jihad against the United States and the West. The establishment of the Islamic Front for War against Jews and Crusaders – and its consequent policy of terrorism – constituted Bin Laden's call to pursue a widespread,

international version of the violent jihad that had lasted for more than a decade against the Soviets in the Afghani arena of jihad.<sup>56</sup>

Another factor that helped Osama Bin Laden formulate his decision to declare global jihad was al-Qaeda's rapid rise in Afghanistan under the Taliban and the comfort and security the organization was enjoying there. Although by 1996 Bin Laden had already started formulating this approach, he outright rejected<sup>57</sup> Khaled Sheikh Muhammad's proposal<sup>58</sup> to carry out large-scale, dramatic attacks against the West, including a plan to hijack airplanes and crash them into selected targets. His refusal was almost certainly due to the need to reestablish al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and renew its infrastructures under the Taliban regime before embarking on international activity. But by the beginning of 1998, Bin Laden was feeling both secure enough and operationally ready to decide to put his international plans into practice.

Adopting an ideology of global jihad against the West required modification of the organizational structure to adapt it to the new strategy and the consequent change in tactics and operations. First, Bin Laden made it clear that it was necessary to bring other Islamic terrorist organizations on board for the struggle. Bin Laden believed that in the course of his organization's journey towards success, new partners would surface and they need not have the religious purity of al-Qaeda or share all its beliefs in order to become allies in the jihad.<sup>59</sup> Initially Bin Laden approached his traditional allies; foremost was Egyptian Islamic Jihad, which effectively merged with al-Qaeda.<sup>60</sup> Together the two organizations formed al-Qaeda al-Jihad, thus officially turning Ayman al-Zawahiri, head of Egyptian Islamic Jihad, into Osama Bin Laden's deputy in the leadership of the united organization.<sup>61</sup> Later other organizations from around the world that had adopted this new ideology and its implicit policy of terrorist attacks also merged with al-Qaeda.

Second, al-Qaeda became a source of inspiration and the operational model for other Muslims. Bin Laden strove to create a leadership cadre and instill the motivation that would inspire individuals and groups beyond al-Qaeda. According to him, he and his people were not in charge of all jihadists, but were there to arouse, inspire, and help ignite Muslim action.<sup>62</sup> In an interview with the ABC television network in 1998, Bin Laden said that "it is our duty to lead the people to the light," and that he and other Muslims were essentially only calling on their brothers to "obey the religious

principles imprinted in the psyche of the majority of Muslims.”<sup>63</sup> In another interview with the media after 9/11, Bin Laden claimed that “with the help of Allah, the end of the United States is close. Its end doesn’t depend on the survivor of this [or that] Abdullah [servant of God].”<sup>64</sup> Regardless of the life or death of Osama, the awakening has begun... That was the purpose of these [9/11] operations.”<sup>65</sup>

With that statement, Osama Bin Laden was in effect laying out the foundation and strategic elements of the future of jihad. His declaration that al-Qaeda’s historical mission was to arouse and enlist all Muslims to battle, which culminated in al-Qaeda’s attack on the US, was essentially an assertion that the organization’s mission had been accomplished and now the torch of jihad had been passed on to others. By pointing an accusatory finger at the United States and mentioning the operation he had carried out there, Bin Laden was trying to position al-Qaeda’s struggle as one between the entire nation of Islam and the empire of evil, which is essentially anti-Muslim. In attempting to leverage the Muslim public’s widespread antagonism to US principles, actions, and foreign policy, an antagonism that had steadily increased during the second half of the twentieth century, Bin Laden said, “I warned that if it [the United States] were to begin a conflict in the ‘land of the two holy mosques [Saudi Arabia],’ the United States would forget the horrors of Vietnam. And that is, in fact, the case, thank God. What is to come will be even greater – with God’s help.”<sup>66</sup>

Third, the operational methodology was changed, with emphasis shifting to suicide terrorism. Tactically and operationally, Bin Laden understood that he had to change the stubborn, drawn-out guerilla style of warfare that characterized the war against the USSR in Afghanistan, by adopting a more focused and dramatic type of struggle aimed at maximizing casualties and causing as much loss of morale as possible among the enemy’s forces and in domestic public opinion on the one hand, while glorifying al-Qaeda’s reputation among Muslims and thereby inspiring many others to join the war, on the other hand. Consequently al-Qaeda cultivated the concept of *istishadiya* – suicide terrorism – as its key operational and propaganda tool. At the operational level, suicide terrorism is extremely effective, intended to cause maximal losses to the enemy. In terms of propaganda, suicide terrorism gives operatives an almost supernatural aura of power because they seem impossible to deter. Thus, although other terrorist organizations had used suicide terrorism before, it was al-Qaeda that succeeding in turning it into

a solidifying organizational principle and the trademark of global jihad. Moreover, in terms of its image, al-Qaeda came to be identified with suicide terrorism, thereby persuading many of its global jihad affiliates to include this method in their own repertoire of *modus operandi*.

Fourth, al-Qaeda's goal was to exhaust the financial resources of the United States (and the West) by engaging it in a domestic and international war against terror to the point of economic collapse.<sup>67</sup> Senior al-Qaeda personnel knew that the organization was incapable of defeating the United States in direct, confrontational warfare and therefore sought to force the United States to keep its forces engaged in a grueling, drawn-out, bloody war, at a cost of next to nothing for the organization. For example, while the damage to the United States from the 2000 attack on the USS *Cole* was close to \$500 million, the operation cost al-Qaeda only \$5,000.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, the attacks on September 11, 2001, cost al-Qaeda about \$500,000, while the direct damage to the United States was more than \$5 billion. Moreover, about a decade after the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq was launched, the estimates of military and civilian expenses (direct and indirect) varied from \$3 to \$5 trillion.<sup>69</sup> Bin Laden and al-Qaeda identified the oil and aviation industries as being the most important driving forces of the West's economy and therefore made them the main targets of their attack policy.<sup>70</sup> Bin Laden and senior al-Qaeda operatives often spoke of Islam's glory days of the seventh century, and drew an analogy between the modern oil industry and the caravans that moved through Mecca at the time of the birth of Islam.<sup>71</sup> They repeatedly called on their supporters around the world to sabotage the oil industry, on the assumption that damage to this vital artery of Western life would bring down its economy and thus hasten the collapse of the United States and its allies.

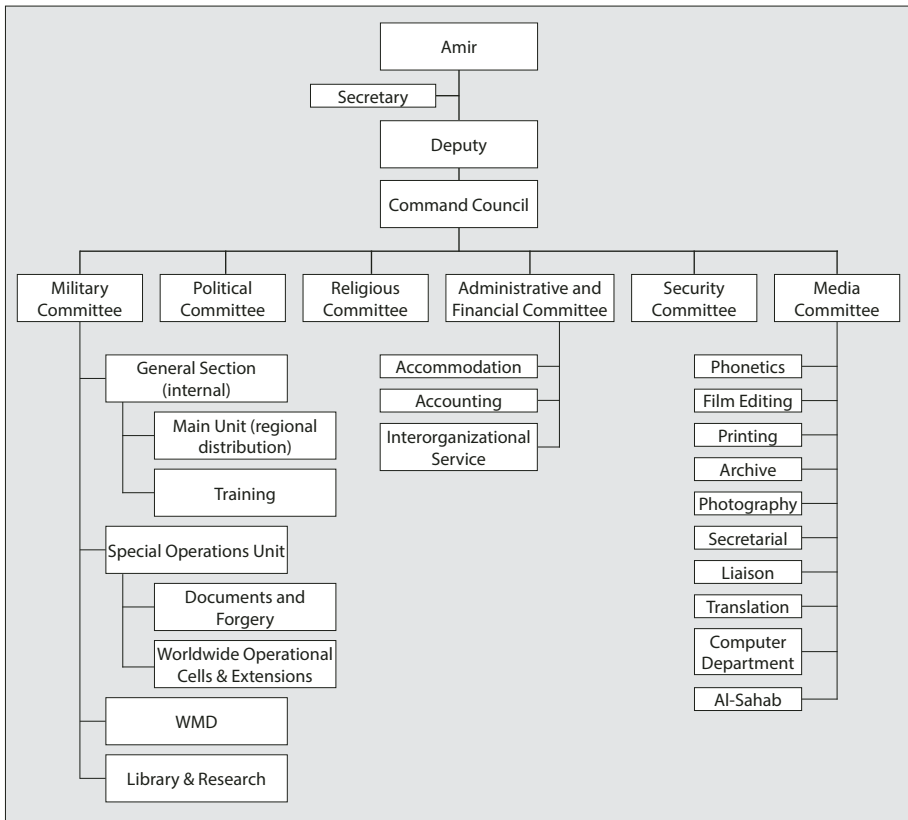
Fifth, al-Qaeda honed its propaganda machine and ideological-psychological warfare apparatus. Bin Laden attributed great importance to these, as reflected by the selected appointees to head the organization's media committee. These included Khaled Sheikh Muhammad, who was also in charge of the special ops unit responsible for attacks in the international arena. The connection between the media committee and the international special ops unit reflected the great importance al-Qaeda attributed to closely coordinated management of the campaign of terrorist attacks accompanied by a propaganda campaign, as well as control of the connection between these campaigns.<sup>72</sup> Over the years the system for disseminating and marketing

the organization's powerful image became more sophisticated. In addition to the activity undertaken by al-Sahab, al-Qaeda's production company, organization members and supporters have distributed a large number of propaganda CDs and uploaded them on hundreds of internet websites.

Finally, Bin Laden was interested in upgrading the organization's stockpile of weapons and improving its fighting capabilities. Bin Laden was of the opinion that "acquiring nonconventional weapons to defend Muslims is a religious obligation,"<sup>73</sup> and he stressed the need to attain such arms in order to oust the Crusaders from Muslim lands and subsequently eliminate Westernized Muslim regimes. In his opinion, nonconventional arms were strategic rather than tactical, because according to his ideology nonconventional weapons win wars and using them would advance a strategic victory against Islam's enemies.

While these changes were being considered and implemented, al-Qaeda remained an orderly, hierarchic organization, functioning according to an operational handbook and employing a clear division of labor among its committees and members. The *majlis al-shura* – the command and consultation council – functioned as a government or cabinet, at the helm of which were Osama Bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri. Subordinate to the council were the committees that functioned like government ministries, at a level characteristic of a sub-state organization, and were in charge of various issues: military activity, administration and finances, religion, propaganda, and so forth. As only the most senior operatives could be appointed to the *majlis al-shura*, this council was staffed by committee heads and prominent leaders of other secondary units.

After the decision was made to transition to global jihad, two additional designated bodies of the utmost importance for jihad against the West were added to the basic structure (figure 2). The first was the security committee, responsible for counter-espionage and preventing the infiltration of Western spies into the organization's ranks, and for the recruitment of new members, including from Western countries, by a well-oiled recruitment apparatus. This body – the Dawa apparatus – was directly subordinate to the organization's security committee<sup>74</sup> and consisted of a network of imams and clergymen who had been deployed in important capital cities around the world during the 1990s. The second body was the special ops unit, responsible for carrying out attacks in the international arena, which was instituted as part of the organization's military committee. The two new bodies were linked through



**Figure 2.** Al-Qaeda Structure in the late 1990s after the addition of a Security Committee and Special Ops Unit<sup>75</sup>

extensive cooperation: the Dawa apparatus was made up of organization members who had participated in fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan, and it was tasked with identifying and recruiting suitable young men from Western countries and sending them to training camps in Afghanistan. These operatives, who in essence acted as al-Qaeda's point-of-contact (POC) officers in various locations around the world and worked under the guise of clergymen and imams in mosques and Islamic centers in West European countries in particular, took advantage of the socioeconomic and personal frustrations of second- and third-generation Muslim immigrants, almost all of whom had been born in the West and were products of Western schools but had failed to integrate into Western society.

The growing trend towards extremism resulting from socioeconomic gaps evident among the immigrants' descendants – later to be termed the



Islamic radicalization process, or Islamic extremism – started spreading throughout Europe in the early 1990s and became increasingly powerful after 9/11, reaching North America and Australia as well. These young people turned their rage towards the countries and societies in which they lived and started searching for their roots through a process that involved a return to Islam and adoption of a personal and communal way of life based on religion. During this long, personal journey of young individuals to their religious Muslim roots, they came into contact with the recruitment network that al-Qaeda had established throughout Europe. For some, the process was completed when they traveled to the organization's training camps in Sudan and Afghanistan and were later sent to various active arenas of jihad such as Bosnia, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Afghanistan itself, where they fought the Northern Alliance. Moreover, Bin Laden's strategic decision to wage global jihad turned these young people into a valuable operational tool for al-Qaeda. Unlike the organization's traditional activists, most of whom hailed from the Middle East, the new members spoke the languages of the West, carried European identification papers, and had a Western education that included a deep familiarity with the Western culture and way of life. Consequently al-Qaeda acquired advanced operational capabilities on Western soil. It is no wonder that most of the operational plans of the new elite unit headed by Khaled Sheikh Muhammad depended on Western operatives, most of whom were recruited through the Dawa apparatus. On top of the list was the Hamburg cell; three of its operatives became suicide pilots on September 11, 2001.

The first assaults to be carried out in the anti-US framework of the decision to wage a campaign of terrorism against the United States were two daring and dramatic attacks (the first in 1998 and the second in 2000) conducted by the organization's new special ops unit. Relying on the terrorist infrastructure already laid by the organization in 1993 in Africa, Bin Laden chose Kenya and Tanzania as the attack sites. The targets selected for attack in 1998 were the United States embassies, thereby marking diplomatic missions, which represent the operational political arm of "American imperialism," as the preferred target for al-Qaeda's affiliates as well. The attacks were meant to destroy the US embassies and kill those inside with explosives-laden vehicles driven by suicide drivers. The two attacks, in Nairobi and Dar al-Salaam, were carried out simultaneously, a move designed to establish the practice of suicide as a unifying organizational symbol, the hallmark of



the organization, and the operational model for emulation by others. The attacks in East Africa were an unqualified success for al-Qaeda because they placed the organization's name on the global map as an active agent, not only organizer or supporter (even though the vast majority of dead in the twin attacks were locals rather than Westerners). Although the organization did not officially take credit for the attacks, its leaders, first and foremost Bin Laden, broadly hinted at their responsibility, going so far as to threaten that this was just the beginning and that the struggle against the United States would extend well into the future. Indeed, in October 2000, operatives from the Yemeni branch of al-Qaeda's special ops unit carried out a suicide attack using an explosives-packed small craft against the USS *Cole*, killing 17 seamen, injuring 39, and almost sinking the guided missile destroyer. Using simple, inexpensive means, this attack on a United States warship – a symbol of the military arm of “American imperialism” on the shores of the Middle East – succeeded in causing significant casualties and serious financial damage. The organization's ability to strike the United States was a form of propaganda through action, resulting in many Muslims around the world lining up to join the militant outfit.<sup>76</sup>

At the same time, the organization gave its blessing to some of its affiliates, particularly terrorist cells and networks established on an ad hoc basis after their leaders had received training in Afghanistan, to plan and carry out attacks in the West in accordance with their operational abilities, without direct guidance or assistance. A prominent example was Jamal Begal's network in Belgium and Holland; there were also attempts to carry out attacks on the eve of the new millennium in various locations around the world, including by Ahmad Rassam at the Los Angeles airport and by a Jordanian network (whose core consisted of graduates of Afghanistan) in Amman against American and Israeli tourists visiting Christian holy sites and the Jordanian-Israeli border crossing.<sup>77</sup>

The 9/11 attacks were, first and foremost, an expression of Bin Laden's strategy to take the war to US soil through a direct and highly symbolic strike of unprecedented scope: the World Trade Center was the physical manifestation of the world's greatest superpower's economic and commercial might; the Pentagon symbolized the United States' military might and the many tentacles of the US military; and the White House, the initial target, and its substitute, the Capitol, symbolized the US political administration.<sup>78</sup> Tactically, the strike was original, although it retained certain familiar patterns

from the past – hijacking airplanes, taking hostages, suicide bombings, using cold weapons (knives) – which were combined to transform the fuel-heavy planes into tremendously powerful flying bombs as they crashed into their targets.

The strike on 9/11 allowed al-Qaeda to portray itself as a courageous, pioneering force for global jihad. Not only was its main enemy the strongest power on earth, but it had attacked the United States on its own soil, directly targeting its symbols and seemingly shattering the asymmetry between US power and that of the Muslim world. The dramatic, spectacular attacks and the tough counter-response expected of the United States were designed to drag the superpower into a war against the Muslim world, alienate the Muslim world from the West, energize its young people, and accelerate the enlistment of new volunteers from all over the globe.<sup>79</sup> The attacks were also meant to embed a dichotomous view of the struggle in the Muslim mind – as an inevitable clash between the West’s culture of evil and the Muslim culture of justice, between the tyranny and moral corruption of the US and the purity of Islam.

In this comprehensive clash of cultures, Jews, including Israelis, were designated as a special target. The worldview guiding al-Qaeda was and remains anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli in essence. It does not differ from that of radical Islamic groups that preceded it, which regarded Jews as servants of the United States and therefore part of a worldwide plot, a “Judeo-Christian Crusader conspiracy.”<sup>80</sup> According to this outlook, the State of Israel was intentionally implanted in the Middle East to maintain a stranglehold on the Muslim world, and it represents the political embodiment of the scheme. Therefore, Muslims are obliged to wage war against this entity until it is destroyed and the Jews are expelled from the region. The way to achieve this is through terrorist attacks that will lead to the weakening of Israel’s patrons, mainly the United States, and prove to the masses of Muslims and their potential supporters that, contrary to its image as an undefeated nation, Israel is weak and transient.<sup>81</sup>

In practice, until 2001, the vitriolic rhetoric against Israel and the Jews remained merely verbal, with the exception of a small number of attempted attacks in Europe and the Middle East against Jews, planned mostly by terrorist groups and networks supported by al-Qaeda in North America.<sup>82</sup> The vast majority of these plots were foiled.

## Chapter 2

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### **A Decade of Terrorism: Al-Qaeda's Strategy of Warfare**

The impression formed throughout the world by the 9/11 attacks created a new image of al-Qaeda as the rising Islamic force, a giant terrorist group of tremendous might, holding almost supernatural sway over its supporters. This image compounded the enthusiasm that young Muslims around the world felt for the organization, led to an increase in new volunteers, and above all was the catalyst that led to al-Qaeda's extraordinary burst of activity and the pursuit of attack plans that its military leaders had conceived even before 9/11. For al-Qaeda's commanders, the success of the strike was proof that the concept of jihad was producing a change in the consciousness of the organization's operatives and supporters regarding the possibility and legitimacy of inflicting massive casualties and damage through a single attack. Therefore, in the decade beginning after the September 11, 2001 attacks and ending with the US Special Forces killing of Bin Laden in May 2011, the organization and its affiliates placed operational emphasis on planning and executing unique, dramatic, spectacular, deadly, and strategically worthwhile strikes, while implementing the strategy of waging war on the West and its allies according to the principles outlined by Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan in the mid-1990s.

The organization's operational activity in the international arena was conducted by the special ops unit, which was in charge of carrying out strikes abroad, and under the command of the organization's senior leaders, such as Khaled Sheikh Muhammad,<sup>1</sup> commander of the 9/11 strike. This unit financed, initiated, steered, and tactically managed most of the large scale attacks and attempted attacks during this decade on especially desirable targets, such as airports and seaports, naval straits, oil tankers, power stations, aviation targets, energy infrastructures, tourist attractions, and hotels. The

unit also refined its methods of mass killings using explosives and firearms, and engaged in planning strikes against other financial and commercial targets. Like the attacks in the United States, subsequent attacks and the plans behind them were innovative and designed to kill large numbers of people. These included four distinct attempts to recreate the successful operational scheme of the 9/11 attacks, on the west coast of the US and in Great Britain, the Far East, and the Persian Gulf; an attempted radioactive attack in the United States; several attempts to bring down US, British, and Israeli passenger jets in flight; and an attempt to cause the simultaneous crash of nearly a dozen US, British, and Canadian trans-Atlantic flights over the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>2</sup> Had a larger percentage of the unit's planned attacks been realized, the number of casualties would have been inestimably higher than the actual number, totaling several thousand or even several tens of thousands of victims.

The action strategy guiding these attempts was based on four pillars: suicide terrorists, psychological warfare, economic jihad, and the desire to carry out nonconventional terrorism. During the decade under discussion, dozens of suicide attacks causing more than 50 deaths per attack were carried out by al-Qaeda and affiliated groups. The number of deaths from the September 11, 2001 attack was about 3,000.<sup>3</sup> The use of suicide attackers in the international arena became terrorist organizations' preferred method some 15 years before al-Qaeda's emergence, but al-Qaeda turned the ethos of self-sacrifice in the name of God and Islam into an end in and of itself<sup>4</sup> and elevated the status of suicide terrorism while also expanding and refining the way it was used in order to increase the number of victims. Moreover, this pattern was adopted by a large number of global jihad organizations and supporters, spreading its use to areas and countries that had not encountered this threat previously.<sup>5</sup> Compared to the two preceding decades, the number of suicide attacks in the world carried out by organizations identified with global jihad grew 15-fold during this period, accounting for 85 percent of the 3,500 suicide attacks carried out in total through the end of 2013.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to suicide attack, al-Qaeda adopted psychological warfare and propaganda to promote its ideology. Technological developments in the media, especially the internet and the means of producing independent videos of operations filmed live, have given rise to thousands of websites identified with al-Qaeda and global jihad. Through these sites, sophisticated visual productions showing military actions and attacks carried out by

various factions have been distributed throughout the world, accompanied by ideological and strategic messages celebrating and praising the power of the organizations while denouncing the weakness and vulnerability of their enemies.

The third pillar of the warfare strategy of al-Qaeda and its affiliates during this decade was the economic aspect, which became a key component of global jihad's terrorist doctrine against the West: during the decade, al-Qaeda and its affiliates concentrated extensive efforts in different channels aimed at causing as much damage as possible to the global economy, as part of an overall campaign meant to impoverish the West by attacking hubs of industry, commerce, and energy, and by exhausting its militaries through warfare in many different, distant arenas.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the direct and indirect economic ramifications of 9/11 for the West, especially the United States, include security costs as well as the deployment and financing of armed forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, which were estimated to cost trillions of dollars annually.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the attacks also changed the way of life in the West. It has been estimated that the economic implications of this change had much to do with the severe economic recession experienced by the world since 2008 and from which Western economies are still trying to recover.<sup>9</sup> The key industries driving the West's economy, such as oil, tourism, public transportation, and aviation, were all singled out for attack, and special efforts were made to block straits that serve as important maritime routes by means of terrorism, as illustrated by the plans to attack British and US ships in the Straits of Gibraltar in the spring of 2002, the attack of a French oil tanker in the Bab al-Mandeb strait in the spring of 2003, and the attack of a Japanese oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz in August 2010. In addition, attacks – most of which were never carried out – were planned against international financial targets, including large banks and various stock exchange buildings around the world, including Wall Street.<sup>10</sup> Beyond the direct economic damage, the organization and its affiliates also viewed the indirect economic damage resulting from their actions as an objective in itself. Thus, for example, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) declared that one of the goals of the attacks carried out by the organization against US cargo planes in October 2010, codenamed Operation 4200 (for the dollar amount of the cost of the action), was to cause the United States to invest tens of millions of dollars in developing new security systems and implementing them as a response to the new threat.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, in addition to its investments in conventional attacks and economic jihad as described above, the organization also put great efforts into acquiring or producing nonconventional capabilities. Alongside some amateurish and failed attempts to produce WMD,<sup>12</sup> al-Qaeda implemented a unique, clandestine project to produce anthrax spores, which was directly overseen first by Ayman al-Zawahiri and later by Khaled Sheikh Muhammad. The activity was conducted under the professional supervision of Yazid Suffat, a Malaysian microbiologist associated with Jamma'a al-Islamiyah, and assisted by pharmacology and microbiology students (mostly Palestinians studying in Pakistan, foremost among whom was Samer al-Barq, who was born in Kuwait and was eventually arrested in Israel in 2010<sup>13</sup>). During the course of the project, the organization managed to create anthrax spores in dedicated labs built in Kandahar and later in Karachi. When the labs were discovered by coalition forces in 2002, the spores were already being replicated.<sup>14</sup> Other reports, from 2004, whose reliability is not entirely clear, indicate that al-Qaeda received a mid-sized nuclear device from the Pakistani nuclear project headed by A. Q. Khan, known as the father of the Pakistani bomb.<sup>15</sup> According to these sources, the device was in the possession of senior al-Qaeda member Saif al-Adil<sup>16</sup> and was supposed to be used by the organization in a retaliatory attack on US soil if Osama Bin Laden was targeted. Furthermore, according to this unverified report, organization operatives were in the process of transferring the device to the United States.<sup>17</sup>

Despite these efforts, it seems that al-Qaeda's attempts to put its hands on nonconventional weapons or produce them independently failed. Currently it appears that the risk of the organization succeeding in making or buying WMD, and specifically nuclear or lethal biological arms, is not close to realization. But al-Qaeda has also invested in the development of cyberspace capabilities. Khaled Sheikh Muhammad instructed an organization agent in the United States to examine the possibility of breaking into the computer systems of leading US banks in order to raid private and commercial accounts.<sup>18</sup> In 2002, an al-Qaeda cyberspace presence was discovered in SCADA systems, the infrastructure systems managing primarily sanitation and electricity in the United States.<sup>19</sup> Around the same time, it emerged that al-Qaeda agents were looking into the cyberspace operating systems of a large dam project in the United States.<sup>20</sup> So far there has been no indication of success of such a program. But even if there is no concrete evidence of

al-Qaeda's cyber endeavors, one cannot ignore the potential vulnerability inherent in cyberspace and its rapid rate of development, including from the perspective of al-Qaeda and its affiliates.

### **The Organization's Attempts to Cope with Local and International Counterterrorism Warfare**

In tandem with the momentum al-Qaeda reaped thanks to the 9/11 attacks and activity in 2001-2003, the organization was forced to confront intensive counterterrorism activity directed specifically against its base and infrastructures, first in Afghanistan and later in Pakistan and along the border between the two countries. In the period between late 2001 and mid-2003, organization commanders were forced to fight for personal survival and evade manhunts and massive bombings by the coalition forces led by the United States. By the end of 2001, the organization was forced to abandon its key locations in Afghanistan and seek new ones in the hinterland along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The Taliban too, al-Qaeda's sponsor in Afghanistan, was also forced to retreat in battles with coalition forces and completely – albeit temporarily – lost its power bases in the country. Northern Alliance members, headed by Hamid Karzai, convened a new government in Kabul with the support of the US military.

The continuous, systematic international campaign against the organization waged by a coalition of Western, Arab, and other nations was an outcome of their recognition that the challenge of terrorism posed by al-Qaeda went beyond the borders of individual nations and that only cross-border cooperation of an unprecedented scope could help reduce the threat of the global jihadist camp headed by al-Qaeda. And, indeed, as a result of this joint effort, only a few of the many terrorist activities planned by the organization were carried out.<sup>21</sup> Of particular note is the campaign of drones conducted by the US military, which targeted organization commanders and senior operatives in their hiding places in the tribal areas of Pakistan. This program, designed to foil attacks, first put into practice during the administration of George W. Bush and greatly expanded during President Barack Obama's administration, became the most effective and deadly weapon in the counterterrorism campaign against the jihadists. Osama Bin Laden himself, in letters discovered in the stronghold where he was eliminated, warned his agents about the program. Despite its effectiveness, the increased use of drone attacks aroused a great deal of domestic opposition



in the United States and in the countries where attacks took place, especially Pakistan. Notwithstanding this criticism and President Obama's response,<sup>22</sup> it seems that – other than increasing supervision and shifting responsibility for use from the CIA to the US armed forces, enabling Congressional oversight – the use of drone attacks will continue to be the primary tool in the counterterrorism campaign and the most potent threat to al-Qaeda and company in the future as well.

Because most of the planned attacks were foiled, the misleading impression formed during the decade under review was that neither al-Qaeda nor its affiliates managed to carry out terrorist attacks on a scale comparable to the concerns about terrorist success that prevailed after the attacks on US soil. In practice, however, the organization and its followers never abandoned their operational and practical preparations. In fact, the main reason for the lack of terrorist success in recreating the 9/11 attacks did not stem only from the pressure against it, but also from the organization being disbursed over large areas and engaged in brutal fighting on at least three fronts (Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan). A good portion of the organization's energies were redirected from the West to other fronts, as manifested in al-Qaeda's adoption of various guerrilla and insurgency modes of operation. Consequently, the organization and its affiliates usually encountered difficulties when trying to implement elements of their operational planning.

### **Recruiting Additional Islamic Participants to the Struggle**

The year 2003 marked the beginning of al-Qaeda's recovery. The American campaign in Iraq, which started in April 2003, diverted a significant portion of US resources and the attention of its leaders from the campaign in Afghanistan, giving al-Qaeda breathing room from the military attacks on it and allowing it to regroup in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region. This meant not only that most of al-Qaeda's commanders and operatives were rid of the intensive manhunt directed against them by US forces, but also that the relationship with the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan grew closer, the infrastructure and training bases were reinstated in the Waziristan tribal areas, and the attack targets of the United States and its allies were reaffirmed. Iraq became a central focus in the revived agenda of al-Qaeda and its affiliates, as violent activity intensified there. Furthermore, Iraq was used as an arena for propaganda, recruitment, and training of new members, as well as a means to accrue combat experience. These developments helped



the organization integrate terrorism and guerrilla fighting against the US military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq into its arsenal, alongside other organizations such as the Taliban and various regional groups, including the al-Haqqani network in Afghanistan.

The strategic shift in al-Qaeda when it decided to mark the West, especially the United States, as its main foe and the operational ramifications of this strategy positioned the organization at that point as a vanguard and a model for identification and operational emulation. In the eyes of other organizations, networks, and even individual jihadists, as well as the media and the public at large, al-Qaeda was seen as the authority in charge of global jihadists, directing them to act according to its objectives, goals, and worldview. Now both old and new partners to its philosophy sought to adopt the al-Qaeda brand name. Some that demonstrated high capabilities and the willingness to adopt the organization's action strategies even received approval to add "al-Qaeda" to the name of the region where they were active, while also expanding their activities to adapt them to the al-Qaeda doctrine. Although al-Qaeda's leadership had full control only over the organization's organic units, it simultaneously became involved in providing general directives for the attack policies of its close affiliates throughout the world and in various arenas of jihad.<sup>23</sup> The attacks and plots carried out during this decade indicate the conceptual and operational changes that al-Qaeda's affiliates – whether fully established or less structured – underwent, primarily the adoption of suicide terrorism as an integral part of their *modus operandi*. This development contributed significantly to the worldwide exponential growth of suicide terrorism that occurred during this decade compared to the preceding two decades, increasing the number of countries that had to confront the grim phenomenon of suicide terrorism.<sup>24</sup>

### **Affiliated Organizations**

The basis for operational cooperation with local organizations sharing the same ideology was formed in the 1990s, before al-Qaeda's great successes and emergence as a role model. Al-Qaeda was already providing training services and much assistance to the internal jihad being waged in Muslim countries with the aim of toppling infidel governments and in their stead establishing fundamentalist regimes with *sharia* as their constitution. Traditionally, these organizations operated within their own homelands against government targets, such as the police, the military, and tourism,

while also carrying out attacks against civilians in order to destabilize the countries and undermine the existing regimes' control of the country. The personal relationships that had been forged between leaders of local organizations and al-Qaeda senior personnel during their joint struggle against the Soviets in Afghanistan were maintained even after the war against the USSR concluded and everyone went on his own path of jihad, whether as part of al-Qaeda or a local group.<sup>25</sup> When Khaled Sheikh Muhammad was appointed to head al-Qaeda's special ops unit around late 1998 or early 1999, he still had connections with graduates of Abed al-Rasul Sayyaf's Sadah camp. Specifically, Khaled Sheikh Muhammad, who had been one of the most senior personnel at Sayyaf's camp, maintained operational contacts with Radwan Assam a-Din, also known as Hambali, who had been appointed to head the military wing of Jamma'a al-Islamiyah in Southeast Asia; with Abed al-Razak Janjalani, the founder and first commander of the Philippine Abu Sayyaf organization;<sup>26</sup> and apparently also with Hafez Sae'd, who would later founded the Kashmiri organization, Lashqar e-Toyba (LeT).<sup>27</sup>

As a result of al-Qaeda's success during the early part of this century, these operatives, whose organizations had until then focused only on internal jihad, began to devote some of their operational infrastructures to missions against Western targets within the latter's traditional theaters of operation, in accordance with al-Qaeda's policy of global attacks. Their aim was to ease the pressure al-Qaeda was facing in Afghanistan by diverting attention away from the organization and compelling Western nations to distribute their military, intelligence, and security resources and efforts in order to deal with other locations around the world. To date, about a dozen globally active organizations (out of the several dozens with a Salafist jihadist orientation) focused on terrorism against local targets have expanded their activity to include Western targets as well, with emphasis on massive attacks against economically strategic targets, such as the oil, aviation, and tourist industries.<sup>28</sup> Examples include international attacks and attempted attacks in Southeast Asia by the Jamma'a al-Islamiyah and Abu Sayaf organizations, such as the attacks on the nightclubs in Bali; in the Indian subcontinent by Lashqar e-Toyba, such as the attacks in Mumbai that left 170 dead, including many foreigners, six of whom were Israeli; and in Australia by Jamma'a al-Islamiyah and Lashqar-e-Toyba.<sup>29</sup>

In the spirit of al-Qaeda's basic policy mandating joint efforts, as manifested in the establishment in 1998 of the International Front for

Jihad against the Crusaders and the Jews, the organization started in the middle of the first decade of this century to establish unions with various terrorist organizations that until then had operated only domestically. By means of these unions al-Qaeda hoped to expand its activity, building on the relative advantages enjoyed by local groups in their traditional arenas of activity, glorify al-Qaeda's brand name and image of power, and promote the agenda of global jihad. These unions were also meant to upgrade the local organizations' operational capabilities and focus them on targets selected by al-Qaeda as priorities. During this decade several such unions emerged, the most prominent being al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP);<sup>30</sup> an official union that occurred in 2006 between the Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) and al-Qaeda that resulted in changing its name to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM);<sup>31</sup> the establishment of other local organizations such as al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), in the context of which Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (leader of the Tawhid Wal-Jihad, which had operated in Iraq since March 2003 against invading US forces) was appointed as the amir of al-Qaeda in Iraq.<sup>32</sup> These organizations adopted al-Qaeda's style of attacks and elevated some of their efforts to attacking Western targets.

For example, whereas before the unification AQIM had focused its activity against the Algerian army and the regime of Abed al-Aziz Bouteflika, afterwards the organization started to target United Nations bases and embarked on a wave of abductions of foreign citizens (British, German, Italian, and French) who happened to be located in the organization's areas of activity. It also carried out an assault by gunfire against the Israeli embassy in the Mauritanian capital of Nouakchott on February 1, 2008.<sup>33</sup> AQAP, relying on the base of activity of the veteran Saudi cell that operated under the direct orders of al-Qaeda's special ops unit and its then-commander Khaled Sheikh Muhammad, went even further and started carrying out attacks against Western, especially US, targets beyond its traditional domain in the Arabian Peninsula. The organization relies on the operational legacy left by several veteran operatives, such as Yousef al-A'yari, Hamza al-Jawfi, and Abed al-Aziz Muqron, who planned international terrorist attacks in addition to their activity inside Saudi Arabia.<sup>34</sup> AQAP's commander, Nasser al-Wuhayshi, better known as Abu Bassir al-Yamani, became a very highly placed leader within al-Qaeda itself in the 1990s and for many years served as Osama Bin Laden's personal secretary and assistant in Afghanistan.<sup>35</sup>

This legacy also played a part during the unification, when AQAP became al-Qaeda's most prominent affiliate in terms of international acts of terrorism. On Christmas Eve 2009, Farouk Abed al-Mutaleb, a Nigerian citizen and economics student in London, was dispatched as a suicide terrorist to blow up a US passenger plane over Detroit, Michigan, using explosives hidden in his underwear.<sup>36</sup> Another attempt by the organization to blow up two US cargo planes – by means of explosives hidden in printer boxes loaded onto the planes in the Persian Gulf – also failed when Saudi Arabian-US-British intelligence cooperation exposed the plan and foiled it in advance. The explosives were devised so as to cause the cargo planes to crash in US airspace, potentially amplifying the damage on the ground. In this context, it should be noted that the organization, which publicized the details of the affair quite extensively and took great pride in the idea of attacking cargo planes as an operational innovation, claimed credit for the downing of a third US cargo plane, which had in fact crashed two months earlier above the Persian Gulf; at the time, this crash had been attributed to a technical failure.<sup>37</sup>

The threat potential from the activity of local organizations is huge. Still, it is evident that the determining factor in a local organization's decision to adopt an attack policy that includes Western targets (be they within its natural zone of operations or elsewhere), and the extent to which it opts to implement this decision, is a tradition of personal relations between its leaders and al-Qaeda and its operatives. For example, it seems that AQIM has desisted from exploiting the entire arsenal at its disposal, especially the extensive infrastructures the organization enjoys in Europe and North America (Canada), and has limited its operations to sporadic attacks on Western targets in the margins of its sphere of activity in the Sahel region. This has led to dissatisfaction by al-Qaeda's leadership with the Algerian group's very limited contribution to al-Qaeda's agenda and policy of attack. The explanation for the differences between this organization's activities and those of AQAP, for example, may be found in the absence of any al-Qaeda operatives within AQIM's leadership and the lack of any special or traditional relationship between its leaders and those of al-Qaeda.

Two additional organizations that expanded their activities to include Western targets are the Abdullah Azzam Brigades and the Somali outfit, Shabaab al-Mujahidin al-Somali. The first also relies on the Saudi infrastructure of al-Qaeda and includes many of the 85 members on the

most-wanted list published by the Saudi Arabian authorities. On this list are many al-Qaeda operatives who were apprehended but managed to escape. The organization established various extensions throughout the Middle East and started to operate through them in the local arena. For example, on several occasions the Lebanese extension, the Ziyad Jarah company,<sup>38</sup> carried out rocket attacks on settlements in northern Israel. At the beginning of August 2010, the Yousef al-A'yari company,<sup>39</sup> the Saudi extension of the organization, dispatched a terrorist to carry out a suicide attack on a Japanese oil tanker sailing through the Strait of Hormuz.<sup>40</sup>

The second organization, Shabaab al-Mujahidin al-Somali, was founded in 2005 and operated within the framework of the Somali civil war against the local government's militias and the Ethiopian army, which had entered the country in order to put an end to hostilities and stabilize the ravaged country. Later, the organization changed its tactics, specifically in light of the inclusion of senior al-Qaeda operatives from the region among its ranks (senior personnel of the Horn of Africa affiliate of al-Qaeda's special ops unit). In this context, Sallah Ali Nabahan stood out. He was an al-Qaeda operative who had participated in the attacks against Israeli targets in Mombasa in November 2002 and fired one of the surface-to-air missiles at an Israeli passenger jet that took off from the city's airport. Another prominent figure was Harun Abdullah Fazul, the commander of the Mombasa attack and operationally in charge of blowing up the two US embassies in Nairobi and Dar al-Salaam in August 1998. The fact that these two figures – especially Nabahan who was eliminated in the spring of 2009 by the United States – joined the organization deeply affected the members of the Somali organization, who admiringly adopted their warrior legacy and incorporated it into their attack policy. Thus the Somali organization started to provide operational training in its camps in Somalia to new recruits from the United States, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, Australia, and Belgium.<sup>41</sup> Some were integrated into units fighting internally against the Ethiopians, but at the behest of Fazul most were trained specifically to establish active terrorist cells in their Western countries of origin.<sup>42</sup> The operatives of the Somali organization placed particular emphasis on the Israeli dimension of their activity. Based on Nabahan's legacy and the attack against Israeli targets in which he participated, in the summer of 2009 the organization announced the establishment of a specially designated force, named al-Quds (Jerusalem), to fight Israel.<sup>43</sup> In late 2009, two Israeli citizens of Arab origin, on their way

to the Shabaab al-Mujahidin training camps in Somalia, were captured at the Somali-Kenyan border crossing. Both were members of a terrorist cell made up of Israeli Arab citizens from the Nazareth area, which had been set up to carry out attacks in the name of global jihad and was responsible for the murder of an Israeli taxi driver in northern Israel.<sup>44</sup> Once Harun Fazul joined the group, in order to reinforce its operatives and operations, further improvements to the Shabaab's operational capabilities became evident, as did its decision to pursue the path of international terrorism. Fazul, who was killed in the summer of 2011,<sup>45</sup> was apparently the man in charge of the simultaneous suicide attacks carried out by the Somali organizations at a popular bar frequented by Western tourists in the Ugandan capital of Kampala in June 2010 during the broadcast of the World Cup soccer final.<sup>46</sup> More than 70 soccer fans were killed in the attacks, most of them Western citizens who had been watching the game on large television screens.<sup>47</sup>

At the start of 2012, al-Qaeda and Shabaab al-Mujahidin announced their merger and the subordination of the Somali organization to al-Qaeda's command.<sup>48</sup> In September 2013, the organization carried out a martyrdom mission<sup>49</sup> involving live fire and hostage-taking in a large Nairobi shopping center frequented by foreigners and wealthy locals. The four-day attack, involving Somalis who resided in Norway, the United States, Sudan, and Kenya, resulted in at least 67 deaths. According to the organization's announcement, the attack was a reprisal against Kenya for its activity against the organization in Somalia.

In addition to the local groups mentioned above that already include attacks against Western targets as part of their attack policy, there are some 25 additional Islamic fundamentalist local organizations that still focus all of their efforts on the local arena, but the possibility exists that they will join the global jihad movement and start including Western targets in their attack policy.<sup>50</sup>

### **The Strategy of "Death by a Thousand Cuts" and its Realization via Individual Jihad**

At the end of 2004, Mustafa Satmariam Nasser, better known by his nom de guerre of Abu Musab al-Suri, one of the important military strategists of the global jihad movement, formulated a warfare doctrine called "Death by a Thousand Cuts," which was published in a 1,600-page essay titled "The Global Islamic Resistance Call." Al-Suri noted that the United States'



control of airspace and the extensive cooperation between the United States and other nations after the 9/11 attacks were making it much more difficult for jihadists to maintain control over territory in which they can build an organizational base than in the past. According to al-Suri, the solution to this problem was the establishment of jihad activity at the individual level or the level of small, isolated cells. In this type of jihad, Muslims all over the world would operate independently of one another against Western targets and interests so that random and occasional violence would be perceived as a coordinated mass movement. According to al-Suri, the current scope of attacks is not enough to cause effective damage to the West. But continuous activity by many cells, with each operating perhaps only once a month, would allow global jihad to reach an unprecedented number of attacks, many more than a single organization could ever hope to achieve. The sheer number would make life untenable for enemy countries and their citizens, and would encourage many other Muslims to join the struggle.<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, al-Suri called on all Muslims, regardless of their geographical location, to join the struggle, thereby spreading the battlefields everywhere and making it impossible to identify the arena of struggle.<sup>52</sup> In al-Suri's view, this method would make every country and every city a potential target for attack and would overload the security establishment with security events and information about security events, while diffusing the variety of operative profiles, targets, and methods of attack.<sup>53</sup>

The doctrine of individual jihad preached by al-Suri was recognized and adopted by Ayman al-Zawahiri<sup>54</sup> and Anwar Awlaki.<sup>55</sup> It became the official warfare doctrine of the global jihad movement, whose most prominent feature is reliance on the capabilities and initiative of small terrorist cells and individuals operating as lone wolves in any and every arena in the world, without having been inducted into an orderly setup of command and control and without external help from al-Qaeda or one of its established affiliates.<sup>56</sup> As a result, there was a dramatic increase in the number of attacks, attempted attacks, and plots uncovered in North America, Western Europe, and Australia that had been planned or carried out by small groups or lone terrorists subscribing to a radical Islamic ideology and operating in the context of global jihad.<sup>57</sup> This phenomenon, known in the West as home-grown cells, predates 9/11 but developed significantly during the decade thereafter, representing a fulfillment of al-Suri's doctrine of death by a thousand cuts.<sup>58</sup>

The goals of this warfare doctrine are, on the one hand, to exhaust the West operationally and financially by increasing and varying the threats facing it,<sup>59</sup> and on the other hand, to promote the organization's propaganda message to the Muslim public worldwide. In addition to perpetuating attacks from many different sources, this strategy was also designed to draw the attention of security services away from al-Qaeda's activities and those of its established affiliates throughout the world.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, although in most cases individual jihadists have shown poor operational capabilities, often leading to failed missions, the organization still benefits from their actions for recruitment and propaganda purposes. By conducting small, sporadic attacks, even those that failed or were foiled, groups and individuals keep the war against global jihad in the headlines,<sup>61</sup> sustain the fear they seek to instill,<sup>62</sup> and preserve the relevance of al-Qaeda and global jihad for the Muslim public for whom they are fighting and the cause to which they are trying to enlist others. Moreover, organization propagandists know that attacks on Western soil, most of which are perpetrated by home-grown groups and loners, arouse greater anxiety than does fighting on distant fronts. Television networks, isolationist politicians, and a terrified public amplify – to their own detriment – the scope of the threat and unintentionally end up intensifying the psychological warfare being waged by the organization.<sup>63</sup>

Individual jihad involves the concept of home-grown terror, that is, attacks carried out in the West by Western citizens or residents who become radicalized and adopt global jihad as a worldview. Home-grown operatives differ from citizens and residents of Arab or Muslim countries who infiltrate Western countries in order to carry out acts of terrorism. We discern several modes of operation of home-grown operatives:

1. Remote operation: Home-grown terrorists who, at the end of their long radicalization process, contact al-Qaeda or one of al-Qaeda's partner groups in order to fulfill the jihadist destiny by carrying out a terrorist act in a Western country, under the direct supervision and control of the dispatching organizations. The four Britons who carried out the July 7, 2005 attacks in London established contact with al-Qaeda at the end of their radicalization process and received mission-specific training from al-Qaeda operatives in Waziristan, as well as close supervision and assistance from al-Qaeda's special ops unit throughout all the preparatory stages leading to the attacks. The July 7, 2005 attack that they eventually executed is therefore considered an al-Qaeda attack.



2. Local initiative: Home-grown operatives who, at the end of their radicalization process, decide to carry out attacks based on their own personal capabilities, initiative, and timing of choice. The Spanish terrorist network that carried out the March 2004 train attacks in Madrid acted at the initiative and through the operational capabilities of its own members, without any assistance from or contact with any external elements. However, their attack had been inspired by the Salafist jihadist ideology and was therefore considered a local initiative.
3. Lone wolves: Individuals active in the West whose connection with organized terrorist groups, such as al-Qaeda or its affiliates is tenuous or non-existent. These people carry out their attacks without any external help and on the basis of their personal initiative and capabilities. At times, lone wolves are able to establish a link with terrorists in an arena of jihad outside their own areas of activity for very basic training and preparation, after which they return to their home countries to carry out an attack of their own, drawing on the operational training they had received, without direct orders or assistance from any particular group. Nidal Malik Hasan, who by himself and at his own initiative carried out the deadly shooting attack at the US Army base in Fort Hood in November 2009, received religious backing for his plans from the radical preacher Anwar al-Awlaki, a US citizen of Yemeni heritage. Malik is considered a lone wolf.

Given the difficulties al-Qaeda has encountered in carrying out dramatic mass-casualty attacks in the West, the activity of home-grown terrorists – both those who have trained at global jihad training camps and those operating entirely on their own – has become the operational spearhead of global jihad outside the arenas of warfare in the Middle East and South Asia. Local operatives are the ones who eventually pull the trigger, hold the knife, or detonate the explosive device. In fact, out of the thousands of attacks and plots that may be attributed to global jihad carried out on Western soil during the 12 years since 9/11, only a single instance entailed external operatives.<sup>64</sup> The vast majority of these attacks were carried out by locals and involved arson, violent riots, the throwing of Molotov cocktails, and in extreme cases attempted murder and murder by stabbing.<sup>65</sup> Other attacks comprised somewhat more complex schemes involving explosives and firearms. Most attempts were foiled by local security services.<sup>66</sup> In some cases, the plans failed because of operational or technical malfunction resulting from improper technical or operational training.<sup>67</sup> In this sense,

the mass-casualty attacks in Madrid in March 2004 and its repercussions were an anomaly.<sup>68</sup>

Other prominent home-grown acts of terrorism include the following: the preparation and placement of a car bomb in Manhattan's Times Square in April 2010 by Faisal Shahzad, a US resident of Pakistani descent, which failed for technical reasons; a gunfire attack at the Frankfurt airport on March 2, 2011, carried out by Arif Uka, a 21-year-old Albanian Muslim from Kosovo, which left two US servicemen dead and two others gravely injured;<sup>69</sup> the actions of Ziyad Merah, a French citizen of Moroccan descent who killed seven in the Toulouse region in the spring of 2012, including four Jews (three of whom were children); the attack at the Boston Marathon in April 2013 during which three US citizens died and hundreds were injured, carried out by two brothers, US residents originally from Chechnya; and an attack in Great Britain in May 2013, in which two British citizens originally from Nigeria decapitated a British soldier in a South London neighborhood.

## **Funding and Financial Support**

The source of funding for global jihadist activities is, for the most part, still unknown. Over the years dozens of sources have been named in various contexts as possible financiers of global jihadist activities, but further research did not support, or indeed disproved, the vast majority of these reports. Nonetheless, considering these reports as a whole, one must conclude that since Osama Bin Laden lost the fortune he had inherited from his father in the course of his activities in Sudan in the mid-1990s, al-Qaeda has relied on donations as its primary source of funding. Most of the donors are private individuals, almost all from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, who donate money to specific operations. It seems that most of the terrorist elements joining al-Qaeda's struggle over the years also rely on donations as the main source of financing for their operations.

Other sources include Islamic charity funds and organizations, through which global jihadists somehow manage to manipulate contributions and redirect some of the funds to themselves, and self-financing by the operatives, especially in the context of individual jihadists and local, home-grown cells. In addition, global jihad organizations finance some of their activities by criminal means, such as credit card fraud, check forging, blackmail, and abductions of foreigners for ransom, especially in remote areas of the world, such as the edge of the Sahara Desert, the Hadramaut Governorate

in Yemen, and the Mindanao Peninsula in the Philippines.<sup>70</sup> The means for transferring the funds are many and varied, from official methods, such as using international bank transfers (SWIFT)<sup>71</sup> and international money transferring companies like PayPal and Western Union, to traditional and sometimes primitive methods, such as the Hawala system,<sup>72</sup> especially in remote regions. It seems that the primary means for transferring funds used by global jihadist organizations over the years is the use of couriers and other envoys.<sup>73</sup>

### **The Effect of Counterterrorism Efforts on al-Qaeda and its Affiliates**

In light of increased terrorist activity around the world, the United States and its allies continued their unceasing pursuit of al-Qaeda leaders and senior operatives. The counterterrorism campaign, which includes law enforcement and legal and economic sanctions as well as intelligence, military, and commando efforts against the organization, has had an evident effect on the way al-Qaeda operates and its ability to continue carrying out attacks around the globe. In recent years, the most prominent activity in this context has been the intense use of targeted assassinations by the United States against al-Qaeda commanders and senior personnel in various countries, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, and Somalia. As a consequence of these strikes, arenas of conflict have been cleared of many al-Qaeda leaders, including military unit commanders, heads of the international attack apparatus, and other senior personnel in the administrative division.<sup>74</sup> Among the successes are the removal of the top three leaders of the military branch – Muhammad Atef (also known as Abu Hafs al-Masri), Abu Faraj al-Libi (in detention), and Khaled Habib – and three of the four heads of the international attack apparatus, al-Qaeda's special ops unit – Khaled Sheikh Muhammad (in detention), Hamza Rabi'a, and Sallah a-Somali.<sup>75</sup> Many senior members who sat on the Shura council were similarly taken out, including Mustafa Abu Yazid (Sheikh Sai'd) and his replacement, Sheikh Atiya Allah, as well as dozens of military commanders and other militants of various ranks in the organization's internal department in Pakistan who dealt with routine warfare along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, first and foremost the internal unit commanders Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi and Abdullah Said, along with dozens of field and logistical personnel from different al-Qaeda extensions all over the world.

Despite these not-insignificant achievements on the part of the West, over the years al-Qaeda has managed to fill its ranks and rapidly rebuild its damaged command structure, drawing on organized configuration and codes of activity. Thus, the organization has managed to retain continuity of activity and sustain its threatening image in the international arena. Nonetheless, there has also been a certain gradual reduction in its capabilities; some terrorism experts even claim that the relentless program of targeted assassination has resulted in a situation in which the quality of the organization's leadership and the number of active veteran commanders still within its ranks are a shadow of the previous leadership,<sup>76</sup> essentially representing the "bottom of the barrel."

Western nations have made special efforts to combat Islamic radicalization in Muslim communities and the development of home-grown terrorism, a phenomenon requiring particular attention. The fact that all the attacks and plots in the West since 9/11 were perpetrated by home-grown elements has forced Western countries to address this threat before it is realized as an actual attack and to adopt an appropriate policy regarding their Muslim citizens and residents. The process of formulating such a policy in the West has raised many ethical, social, and constitutional questions related to basic concepts of civil rights and to profiling on the basis of origin, religion, and race, which is at odds with the constitutions of all Western nations. After a long process involving the examination of all the parameters, two distinct approaches emerged regarding the formulation of a policy for supervising, confronting, and foiling home-grown terrorism.

The first approach, adopted in the United States, stresses foiling. Accordingly, individual Islamic radicalism is usually identified through the oversight and monitoring of known radical Islamic websites and forums that glorify global jihad and by the use of relevant search words such as jihad, Salafist, and al-Qaeda. The moment a red flag is raised – that is, when the relevant oversight criteria are met – US law enforcement, primarily the FBI, attempts to carry out a sting operation<sup>77</sup> that will generate enough legal evidence to arrest the individual or the group, try the suspect(s) on charges of intent to commit acts of terrorism, and sentence the guilty to long prison terms.

The second – European – approach stresses communal and social aspects. The operational foiling of attacks is only an outcome of this approach in action. Identification of the processes that radicalize individuals takes

place in cooperation with the voices of restraint from within the Muslim community, such as clerics, principals, and teachers at Muslim schools, and even relevant police officers. Once an individual is identified, there is intervention in an attempt to “save the lost soul,” mostly through education and social activity directed at that individual.<sup>78</sup>

The differences between these approaches are due to the large number of Muslim communities in European countries and their influence on society as a whole, as opposed to the relatively small number of Muslims in the United States, who usually do not unite as a community and whose influence on US society as a whole is therefore marginal. In any case, the effectiveness of the policy of counterterrorism on home-grown terrorism is hard to assess: although there are operational and communal success stories, a steady stream of Western terrorists continues to arrive in arenas of jihad for training and combat experience, and they continue to engage in attacks. For example, the attack at the Westgate shopping mall in Kenya in September 2013, which killed more than 70 civilians, was carried out by citizens of the United States, Norway, and Kenya operating in the name of Shabaab al-Mujahidin, a Somali terrorist organization.

The height of the global counterterrorist campaign came with the targeted assassination of Osama Bin Laden by the United States. Being in hiding in Pakistan for five years greatly curtailed Bin Laden's ability to maintain direct, unmediated contact with al-Qaeda members whose base was located in Waziristan, and it forced him to transition to command and control from afar. Despite these difficulties, it is evident – on the basis of the few writings he left in Abbottabad, published after his death – that Bin Laden continued to serve as al-Qaeda's leader and was particularly significant in the organization's activity. He managed to remain commander by dispatching instructions via messengers from within his circle. The writings that survived show that Bin Laden continued to supervise al-Qaeda's conduct, plan strategy, instruct commanders on the ground, and even advise al-Qaeda's affiliated groups' commanders on how to behave. The areas that received the benefit of Bin Laden's personal involvement included appointments,<sup>79</sup> media policy,<sup>80</sup> formulation of the attack policy needed by al-Qaeda and its affiliates such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula<sup>81</sup> and the Somali Shabaab.<sup>82</sup> Bin Laden also involved himself in planning the psychological propaganda activities marking the tenth anniversary of the attacks in the United States.<sup>83</sup>

On May 1, 2011, some four months before the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and about a year after he had come under the close surveillance of US intelligence, US Navy Seals identified the hiding place of the man regarded by the United States in recent decades as public enemy number one. When they stormed the compound, Bin Laden, one of his wives, one of his sons, his bodyguards, and his hosts were killed. Bin Laden's body was removed and, after identification and a brief funeral service, it was buried at sea. Despite the lack of absolute certainty about the identity of the senior al-Qaeda member hiding in the Abbottabad compound in Pakistan, the US President had ordered the raid, thereby taking a calculated risk that a blatant violation of Pakistani sovereignty would hurt US-Pakistan relations, including existing joint counterterrorism efforts, should the individual prove not to be Osama Bin Laden. The President's decision, however, reflected the view that the raid was necessary and the assessment that revealing it to members of Pakistan's security establishment and regime officials would result in leaks and the escape of the world's most-wanted man. The assassination of Osama Bin Laden was a watershed for al-Qaeda, particularly because of the major role he played in the organization he headed since its inception more than 20 years earlier. The removal of the figure so venerated by al-Qaeda members and global jihadists was an operational challenge of great practical and symbolic value in the ongoing effort to reduce the concrete danger he and his movement represent to global security, and hence the great importance attributed to the success of this mission.

## Chapter 3

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### **Al-Qaeda and Global Jihad: Quo Vadis?**

The elimination of Osama Bin Laden and the attacks wages by the coalition forces against al-Qaeda since the start of the war in Afghanistan have generated widely varying assessments of the risk presented by the organization. The full range of opinions and interpretations of the organization's plans and capabilities as well as the possible directions of global jihad was evident in the 2012 presidential campaign in the United States. Senior administration officials, headed by President Barack Obama, who was running for his second term in office, voiced the opinion that al-Qaeda had been mortally wounded and was on the verge of total defeat and that therefore the level of threat posed by the organization had fallen dramatically.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney contested this claim, pointing to the attack on the US embassy in Libya on September 11, 2012, in which Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens was killed, in support of his opposing position.

There is a great deal of validity in both views. Al-Qaeda's status as a major instigator of terrorism was indeed undermined significantly in the past decade and its international activities have decreased significantly. But as Osama Bin Laden asserted as long ago as late 2001, the reverberations of 9/11 would be so strong and all-encompassing that it would cease to matter whether terrorist acts specifically attributable to al-Qaeda itself were to continue, because the torch of jihad would be carried by others who would join the struggle. In fact, the notion underpinning the founding of the organization and its operational offshoots – namely, the establishment of an Islamic caliphate by militant jihad – continues to be an important draw for a great deal of terrorist activity. Over the years, new ideological affiliates adopted the battle strategy and operational model laid out by al-Qaeda, even as the organization's direct involvement waned. This trend is



demonstrated by post-9/11 developments: during the years 2001-2005 most victims of jihadist terrorism in the international arena were casualties of operations carried out by al-Qaeda's core group, whereas in the years that followed it was al-Qaeda's ideological affiliates and other global jihadists that perpetuated the vast majority of deadly attacks around the world.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, after the events of the so-called "Arab Spring" in early 2011 led to the collapse of certain Arab regimes identified by al-Qaeda as infidel, Osama Bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri praised these developments and even claimed credit for them on behalf of al-Qaeda. Both called on the masses to continue the revolution until all corrupt regimes were toppled, even though much of the process was non-violent, without the involvement of al-Qaeda operatives or supporters, and was conducted under liberal slogans at odds with the organization's Salafist jihadist orientation. The two encouraged the masses not to be tempted by slogans contrary to the spirit of Islam and to work towards the establishment of Islamic regimes that operate according to *sharia*.

The momentum in the Middle East that Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri tried to leverage for their own benefit was interrupted with the killing of Bin Laden, which occurred soon after the start of the Arab Spring and forced the organization to cope with the loss of its legendary founder and leader. In June 2011, shortly after Bin Laden's death, his deputy, Dr. al-Zawahiri, was elected to replace him in accordance with the procedures described in the organization's articles of association, which were designed to ensure the continued functioning of al-Qaeda. In light of the clear, orderly ideological legacy of Bin Laden concentrating the organization's operations on global jihad,<sup>3</sup> and given the turbulent events in the Middle East, al-Zawahiri – the originator of the notion of internal jihad – was forced to map out the organization's ideological path. Al-Zawahiri faced (and continues to face) several new, complex challenges that affect his personal future and the future of his organization: first, the need to establish himself as al-Qaeda's new leader; second, the task of stabilizing and rebuilding the rank and file and the organization's operational capabilities; third, the preservation of al-Qaeda's dominant role as guide and role model to its affiliates in the global jihad movement; finally, the need to shape the organization's new path in light of upheavals in the Arab world, given the threats and opportunities they pose to the organization's future. Al-Zawahiri's approach to confronting these challenges has been fraught with problems that are liable to destroy



the organization and bring into question its legitimacy among supporters in the Arab and Muslim world. Al-Zawahiri was not gifted with a charismatic personality and status in any way similar to Bin Laden's. Throughout his years in al-Qaeda, al-Zawahiri – unlike his predecessor – has not enjoyed the image of a warrior who participated in battles in Afghanistan against the Soviets. Rather, as an opinionated and articulate man, his gifts lie in his rhetorical skills and his ability to contribute at the ideological level. Al-Zawahiri is usually described as a divisive figure who ascended to the post of Osama Bin Laden's deputy largely because of the formal merger in mid-2001 between al-Qaeda and the Islamic Jihad in Egypt. Although he continued to rise steadily within the organization, there was no doubt that Bin Laden was the dominant voice in determining al-Qaeda's strategy. It was Bin Laden who decided that the organization would focus on war against the West, especially the United States, in contrast to al-Zawahiri's policy, which championed concentrating resources on internal jihad against corrupt Arab regimes.

Accordingly, the organization's strategy during al-Zawahiri's tenure was one of organizational survival, stabilization of the rank and file, reinforcement of his personal position, and exploitation of opportunities to regroup and lead the organization and the movement towards realization of the Islamic vision that the Arab Spring – so he said – allowed it to fulfill, with preference for domestic, local jihad over global jihad. Al-Zawahiri has sought to establish religious Islamic regimes in the important states of the Levant, and he views Syria as the first historical opportunity in this respect. He also regards the chaotic situation in Egypt as an opportunity to inflame the local population against the new-old regime, which showed its true face when it overthrew a pragmatic Muslim government (Mohamed Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood, which sought to use the democracy path to promote Islam to the governing role) and thereby reinforced al-Qaeda's claim that only aggressive jihad against the local regime and its Western allies can lead to a revival of Salafist Islam and a return to Islam's former glory.

Since his appointment as Bin Laden's replacement, al-Zawahiri has worked to rebuild al-Qaeda, stressing restaffing of the organization's leadership. He is helped by several senior operatives who had found asylum in Iran (although, in practice, most were placed under some form of house arrest under the Iranians' watchful eyes) and rejoined the organization in Waziristan after their release from Iran.<sup>4</sup> Top leaders who were assassinated

were replaced by new operatives who gained seniority and command and management experience during the years of fighting. Apparently, most of the important committees in charge of the whole gamut of al-Qaeda's activities are still staffed by veterans who were members of the organization's Shura council in the past and filled key positions even before the US invasion of Afghanistan. In addition, the organization's Dawa apparatus managed to reconstruct itself despite the many blows it suffered in the past decade.

Even though his appointment as the organization's leader followed an orderly process that adhered to all the regulations, al-Zawahiri's need to establish his status as the leader of al-Qaeda and global jihad compelled him to risk his own safety in order to make frequent public statements about various issues on the Muslim and pan-Arab agenda. Thus, for al-Zawahiri the Arab Spring was an opportunity to change al-Qaeda's priorities and direct the organization towards internal jihad in order to steer the new regimes in the Middle East and the Maghreb in a Salafist direction. In fact, al-Zawahiri continued to issue calls of support and encouragement and offer help to revolutionaries in Yemen, Libya, and Syria, believing that the political vacuum in those locales resulting from the collapse of the old regimes and the dramatic rise in the power of Islamic parties and other Salafi factions would make it easier for al-Qaeda and global jihad supporters to operate within the political systems that would develop after the upheavals in the Arab world. For global jihadists, the emergence of ungovernable areas in various nations in the region, allowing freedom of movement and activity, the accessibility of advanced weapons plundered from the armies of former regimes, and the escape of many jihadi operatives from prisons to the arenas of action combine to create a unique opportunity. Under al-Qaeda's guidance, these entities can strengthen their ranks, arm themselves, and operate virtually unhindered to entrench themselves, take over large frontiers, and prepare for terrorist operations. For example, al-Qaeda helped global jihadists in Libya who were active in the campaign that toppled Qaddafi's regime.

In the aftermath of the campaign in Libya, and even though Libya's government is not part of the jihadist movement, these entities continue to operate there with the aim of establishing a religious Islamic nation. Furthermore, the conflicted Libyan arena has become a base for the reinforcement of global jihadist efforts outside of Libya: operatives who escaped from Qaddafi's jails have joined jihadi forces as well as Salafist jihadi groups active in Sudan, Somalia, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Gaza

Strip, having acquired vast amounts of advanced weaponry stolen from Libyan military arsenals. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and its affiliate in Yemen took advantage of the Arab Spring and temporarily seized control of major cities in Yemen, especially in Abyan Governorate and along the Gulf of Aden, where they conducted guerrilla operations and terrorist acts against the Yemeni army and tribal chiefs. AQAP has been exploiting the government's instability to plan terrorist attacks in the country while enlisting the support of separatist groups that are especially active in the south.<sup>5</sup> This activity is ultimately intended to divide the country or at least to enable control of a portion of it, where a nation run according to Islamic religious law will be established.

Another key arena is Syria. Al-Qaeda and its affiliates view the struggle against the infidel Alawi regime and transformation of Syria into a religious Islamic nation as a goal of the utmost importance. Al-Zawahiri, who as early as 2005 published a step-by-step program in which Syria was noted as one of the major arenas for al-Qaeda's future activity in the Levant,<sup>6</sup> has declared Syria to be a central arena of jihad.<sup>7</sup> The war being waged between President Bashar al-Assad's Alawi regime and insurgents put an end to cooperation between Assad's regime and al-Qaeda during the US invasion of Iraq, when Assad allowed global jihadists to cross through Syria en route to Iraq. With al-Zawahiri's encouragement and by making use of the same logistical infrastructures that helped smuggle thousands of global jihadists into Iraq, an organization known as the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) was enlisted in the struggle. ISI is a coalition of Salafist jihadist movements in Iraq, the most prominent of which is al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), which recruits, organizes, trains, and dispatches global jihadists from many countries to Syria in support of the battle against the regime.

The most dominant and effective force among the insurgents and global jihadists active in Syria, estimated to number many thousands, is a Syrian Salafist jihadist organization named Jabhat al-Nusra. This organization, which adopted the modus operandi – including suicide tactics – that it had acquired in Iraq and implemented in Syria, is responsible for some 60 suicide attacks in Syria since the start of the civil war (as of this writing). Moreover, from al-Qaeda's perspective, Syria is to serve as a hothouse for raising new cadres of terrorists with combat experience and a close affinity for the idea of global jihad. Al-Qaeda seeks to absorb some of them into its ranks, assign some to participate in religious or ethnic conflicts, and have

some establish ad hoc terrorist cells and networks or operate as lone wolves in various countries, including in the West.

In Egypt, too, the removal of President Hosni Mubarak and the governmental vacuum resulting from the revolutions were exploited by the Muslim Brotherhood, whose representative Mohamed Morsi won the general election and became president of the Egyptian republic. However, a year later, in June 2013, Morsi was deposed by the Egyptian army, which assumed the reins of power, if only temporarily (at least officially). The military counter-revolution led to serious clashes in the streets of Cairo and Alexandria between Morsi's supporters and his opponents, in which many were killed and injured, especially Morsi supporters, members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Given Egypt's integrated society and historical legacy, it appears unlikely that Egypt faces the threat of a civil war such as the one being fought in Syria. This assessment is also based on the Muslim Brotherhood's traditional stance, which champions persuasion, primarily through the *dawa* system and social action, and rejects every form of internal violence. Nonetheless, in light of the overthrow of their leader in what is seen as a military coup – and considering the extreme views of Egyptian Salafist jihadists, including the heirs of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad Movement and the Gamma'a al-Islamiyah – it is possible they will choose terrorism in response to the repressive steps taken by the army. If this happens, one may expect their activity to focus on efforts to damage the Egyptian economy through attacks against tourist destinations and government (especially military) entities, including attempted assassinations of prominent military and civilian leaders. The main infrastructures of these organizations, which were significantly strengthened when operatives exploited the chaos of the riots at the beginning of the uprising and escaped from jail, are located in the provinces of Upper Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula.

Local jihadists, enjoying the growing support of al-Qaeda, have been operating in Sinai for about a decade and with greater momentum since the fall of the Mubarak regime. In addition to al-Zawahiri's calls of support for the jihadists in Sinai who sabotaged the natural gas pipeline running from Egypt to Israel and Jordan, thus cutting off the supply of gas, al-Qaeda focuses its activity on supporting the operational and logistical infrastructures being built in the peninsula. Many organizations associated with al-Qaeda and global jihad operate there. Prominent among them is Ansar Bait al-Maqdis, which is connected to global jihadist entities outside

of Sinai<sup>8</sup> and whose activity has been singled out for public praise by al-Zawahiri himself.<sup>9</sup> Backed by al-Qaeda's support and encouragement, these entities – together with Bedouin groups that have adopted the Salafist jihadist worldview – cooperate with global jihadists in the Gaza Strip, such as Tawhid Wal Jihad, Jaysh al-Islam, Ansar al-Sunna, and Jund Ansarallah (all of which came together in June 2012 under one umbrella organization calling itself the Shura Council of Holy Warriors in the Environs of Jerusalem or Majlis al-Shura al-Mujahidin fi Aknaf Bait al-Maqdis),<sup>10</sup> and with the Popular Resistance Committees and others. Cooperation between the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula allows free passage of operatives from Sinai to Gaza for refuge and operational and logistical help from Palestinian partners as well as relative freedom of action for training in Sinai and carrying out terrorist attacks against Israel from that area.

While maintaining support for local organizations throughout the Middle East, al-Zawahiri has continued to strengthen his leadership by trying to unite other entities in the global jihadist movement under al-Qaeda's wings, and he succeeded in bringing about the official merger between al-Qaeda and Shabaab al-Mujahidin al-Somali.<sup>11</sup> In April 2013 al-Zawahiri's status was further improved when he served as the mediator in a conflict that arose between Abu Baker al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI), and Muhammad al-Julani, the leader of Jabhat al-Nusra operating in Syria. The former had unilaterally declared a merger between the two organizations without consulting his counterpart in Syria,<sup>12</sup> and even though al-Qaeda in Iraq was and remains the patron of Jabhat al-Nusra, the head of the Syrian organization rejected the union, preferring to publicly swear allegiance to al-Zawahiri.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to providing support and activity in Middle Eastern arenas, another important challenge al-Zawahiri faces is that of renewing the organization's operations and carrying out spectacular, dramatic, mass-casualty attacks on Western soil. Since the July 2005 attack in London, and despite many attempts, al-Qaeda has failed to carry out any attacks in Western countries. It has also failed to exact revenge for the death of Osama Bin Laden. But despite these failures, the organization is undoubtedly working on a dramatic attack in the West, first and foremost in the United States that would avenge the assassination of the legendary leader.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, official reports from Western intelligence sources indicate that in 2009-2010 several hundred citizens of Western countries (home-grown terrorists)

completed special training provided by al-Qaeda's special ops unit in charge of international attacks and were dispatched back to their home countries in order to begin preparing for attacks.<sup>15</sup> Although during recent years numerous home-grown cells have indeed been discovered while they were engaged in operational preparations, one should assume that many others, which still intend to carry out their mission, have not yet been identified and caught. Moreover, a new operational cadre for the organization's international missions is under construction, drawing on radical groups in Muslim communities all over the world that seek to participate in global jihad activities. Members of this cadre have been arriving in the traditional arenas of jihad, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Chechnya, and Somalia, as well as new arenas of jihad in the Middle East and at the edges of the Sahara Desert. These arenas allow the new recruits to obtain operational experience as preparation for later activity that is likely to serve al-Qaeda in the home nations of the operatives. New arenas of jihad created in the Middle East as a result of the Arab Spring, such as Libya, Mali,<sup>16</sup> and especially Syria, are attracting jihadists from all over the world. It has been reported, for example, that in Syria there are hundreds of citizens of Western countries, including France, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, the Scandinavian countries, Australia, the United States, and Canada. These reports are confirmed by occasional statements assuming responsibility for attacks, including suicide attacks in which volunteers from the West killed themselves.<sup>17</sup> The nations mentioned are aware of the serious threat posed to them by the return of these operatives to their countries of origin.<sup>18</sup>

These trends give rise to concerns that the efforts of al-Qaeda and global jihadist groups to carry out dramatic, mass-casualty attacks will continue, in both traditional and new arenas of jihad as well as the West. In addition, terrorist attacks carried out by lone wolves or at the initiative of local home-grown cells, following the doctrine of "death by a thousand cuts," are also to be expected. These methods of action have been backed and blessed by Ayman al-Zawahiri and preachers such as Anwar Awlaki and have received much exposure in the Salafist jihadist media such as the magazine *Inspire*.<sup>19</sup> Al-Qaeda or its affiliates are likely to play a part in the attacks, whether by directly ordering and overseeing them, by providing ideological inspiration, or by supplying basic training or general advice regarding activity in the West without direct command. One should note that in light of reduced activity on the part of al-Qaeda itself, there is likely to be an escalation in the activity



of its affiliates. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula is likely to continue its attacks outside the Arabian Peninsula, which began in 2009 with several attempts to down Western airplanes using suicide terrorists and sophisticated explosive devices. In 2012-2013, al-Qaeda in the Maghreb was also involved in the abduction of Western citizens and dramatic attacks on Western targets, the most recent being a multi-pronged attack on a large oil field in Algeria that involved terrorists barricading themselves with hostages and resulted in the deaths of dozens of civilians, including Westerners. The activities of these organizations against Western targets in their traditional areas of operations,<sup>20</sup> where they enjoy virtually unlimited logistical freedom from the authorities, is expected to continue, and the function these locales play – as magnets for jihadists from the West for training, guidance, financing, and instructions relating to activities on Western soil and against Western objectives – will be reinforced. One may expect that some of the attacks are liable to be carried out as suicide missions in line with the operating strategy transmitted by al-Qaeda to its affiliates, whereas others may take the form of simultaneous armed attacks involving mass killings and terrorists barricading themselves, not in order to negotiate with authorities but so as to intensify the shock effect that a prolonged mass-casualty event draws in the global media.

Accordingly, one can expect that all global jihad entities will continue to focus their operations on soft targets with many civilians. Future targets are therefore likely to include infrastructures and means of transit, such as airplanes and airports, trains and train stations, buses, ships, seaports, and more. Other potential targets are cultural and sports venues, theaters, mass sporting events and stadia, tourist sites and leisure and entertainment spots, shopping centers, hotels, clubs, and mass events such as festivals, outdoor concerts, and large exhibitions. The physical damage resulting from attacks on such targets would be further compounded by direct economic warfare on the West, which can be expected to continue through attacks on gas and oil reserves, tankers, and even the blocking of straits. Damage to these targets would cause a significant spike in the cost of energy and disrupt global trade. The objective of global jihadists is to perpetuate the economic burden on Western countries and exhaust them to the point that they reassess their willingness to maintain military forces in Muslim countries and to continue investing vast resources in the global antiterrorism campaign declared after 9/11.

Global jihadists' participation in warfare within nations that have stockpiles of nonconventional weapons – especially those whose central governments have been weakened because of the Arab Spring, such as Syria and Libya – is likely to help them acquire these weapons should they be intent on doing so. At the same time, the actual use of WMD is by no means a simple matter, especially when the intent is to cause massive death. Moreover, despite Muslim religious rulings that permit using weapons of mass destruction against infidel enemies of Islam, this method of operation is still not part of the agenda of most global jihad organizations.

In sum, al-Qaeda as an organization has been substantively weakened as a result of the global counterterrorist campaign, and its present condition is worse than it was on the eve of 9/11. But given the growth of its affiliates in recent years and its increased potential to recruit volunteers and new supporters for operations in their countries of origin and elsewhere, it appears that al-Qaeda is returning to the pattern of its early years – providing behind-the-scenes support by means of logistical assistance in various forms of training and preparation for groups, terrorist cells, and agents that identify with its views and operate in Arab and Western countries. In addition, al-Qaeda's prestige and Ayman al-Zawahiri's leadership – which are based on the name the organization made for itself when it was at the operational vanguard and succeeded in striking at the very heart of its enemies' cities by means of dramatic terrorism – enable al-Qaeda to influence and steer the campaign of global jihad from a position of recognized authority. Because of the prolonged counterterrorism offensive by the United States and NATO in Afghanistan and Pakistan against al-Qaeda and in order to compensate for its own current weakness, the organization prefers to operate this way. It is waiting patiently, applying the Islamic virtue of historical endurance (*sabr*), for the moment when pressure on it eases, as foreign forces withdraw from Afghanistan in 2014, after which it will once again be able to initiate an international campaign of terrorism. Indeed, the expected withdrawal of Western forces from Afghanistan in 2014 is liable to give al-Qaeda the time and space it needs to recover from the blows it has suffered in recent years. Until the withdrawal, global jihadists will concentrate their activity in the Middle East, the Maghreb, West and East Africa, and countries in the West. Amidst this activity, the Syrian arena is likely to emerge as the main center of operations for global jihadists receiving encouragement and active



support from al-Qaeda, and the outcome of the civil war in Syria can be expected to have a tremendous impact on the stability of bordering states.

These trends indicate that as long as senior al-Qaeda leaders survive and work to realize the organization's vision, as long as experienced commanders remain available to al-Zawahiri and continue to operate in accordance with the organization's strategy – which views the West, headed by the United States, as a major arena for deadly terrorism – and as long as al-Qaeda continues to be a source of and focus for the cultivation of terrorist military subversion aimed at fomenting long-term instability in the Middle East, the Maghreb, and Africa, then we can expect al-Qaeda to remain an active threat to the international system.



## Chapter 4

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### **Israel, the Jews, and the Threat of Global Jihad**

Most of the operational activity of al-Qaeda and global jihad groups was directed against targets belonging to the coalition members, that is, Western countries, Arab nations, and nations in Asia, with the United States and Great Britain singled out for special treatment. These are seen as leaders in the worldwide struggle against the global jihad movement in general and al-Qaeda in particular and have therefore become the main targets in terrorist and guerrilla attacks in the context of the battle against coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and as part of the global campaign of terrorism. At the same time, there has been a significant increase in the number of attacks, especially the number of al-Qaeda and global jihad attacks planned against Israeli and Jewish targets in Israel and elsewhere.

Among the prominent attacks and plots carried out or planned against Israel are the following: Richard Colvin Reid, the so-called shoe bomber who in December 2001 tried to blow up a US passenger plane over the Atlantic, had in the summer of that year been sent to conduct a reconnaissance mission in Israel and to collect operational information about Ben-Gurion International Airport, El Al airplanes, and Israeli cities; a suicide attack was carried out in April 2003 at the entrance of a bar on the Tel Aviv beachfront named Mike's Place, by Muhammad Sharif and Assif Hanif, two global jihadists from Great Britain, killing three Israelis and injuring more than 50; and in 2010 a global terrorist cell composed of Israeli Arabs was discovered in villages near Nazareth. The cell killed an Israeli taxi driver and tried to kill others. Two of the members were caught at the Kenyan-Somali border as they were heading for training with the Somali Shabaab al-Mujahidin. In addition to these attacks and attempted attacks, global jihadists carried out a number of standoff fire attacks on Israel's hinterland from the soil of Israel's neighboring countries.

Unlike the relative increase in the number of attacks and attempted attacks against Jewish and Israeli targets in the international arena in the last decade, most of the attempts against Israel's borders and on its soil failed. The effectiveness of the Israeli security services is one significant reason, but Israel's neighbors must also be given credit for contributing substantially to the failure of these attempts. In fact, most efforts to breach Israel's borders were prevented by a defensive cordon surrounding Israel, created by its neighbors in the Arab world, especially Jordan and Egypt, and even – paradoxically – its enemies, such as Syria and Hizbollah in Lebanon. The domestic security interests of these countries and their concern about a possible confrontation with Israel should the latter's citizens suffer attacks originating in their own territory motivated them to try to foil the intentions of groups that pose concrete threats, thereby creating a security belt protecting Israel against attacks planned by global jihadists.

Because of the difficulty in crossing Israel's borders and operating on Israeli soil, global jihadists' post-9/11 operational efforts have mainly been aimed at Israeli and Jewish targets in the international arena. Dozens of Israelis and Jews have been killed or maimed in attacks carried out by global jihadists in Tunisia, Kenya, Turkey, Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula, India, the United States, and France. Furthermore, global jihadists planned many dramatic attacks that failed to be carried out against Israelis and Jews in the United States, Thailand, Singapore, Morocco, Turkey, Jordan, Canada, Switzerland, Mauritania, Uzbekistan, and elsewhere. A partially foiled attack in Mombasa, Kenya, is indicative of the level of death and destruction that could have happened to Israelis had the grandiose plans of al-Qaeda and global jihad operatives been realized: In November 2002 an al-Qaeda cell in the Horn of Africa had two squads operating in tandem. One attacked a hotel popular with Israeli tourists and killed 15 individuals, including three Israelis, while the second launched two ground-to-air missiles at an airplane operated by the Israeli airline Arkia, which had just taken off from Mombasa's international airport and was carrying several hundred Israeli vacationers returning home. The attack failed only because a technical and operational glitch caused the missiles to miss their target.

In addition to its ongoing attacks and attempted attacks in Israel and abroad, al-Qaeda continues to call for violent jihad against Israel and the Jews. For example, on July 31, 2013, a new video clip produced by the al-Zawahiri film studios was uploaded to al-Qaeda and global jihad online

platforms. The video is dedicated to the 46<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *nakhsa*, the defeat of the secular regime of Nasser in Egypt and the Baathist regime in Syria by the State of Israel in the 1967 Six Day War. In the video, al-Zawahiri attacks the United States, which according to him is responsible for the greatest crimes in the history of humanity, including the war in Syria, which he labels “a jihad war.” In the clip, al-Zawahiri calls on Muslims in Iraq, Syria, Palestine, the Arabian Peninsula, Somalia, and other Muslim countries to continue jihad against the United States in order to restore the Islamic caliphate – the only just government capable of liberating the al-Aqsa mosque and the occupied Islamic lands in Palestine.<sup>1</sup> Al-Zawahiri’s call fits with his vision as articulated in the middle of the last decade, whereby it is necessary first to devote all efforts to forcing the United States out of Iraq, then to direct jihad towards the Persian Gulf countries and the countries bordering Iraq, and finally to focus jihad on Israel.<sup>2</sup> The fact that this call was issued against the background of the Arab Spring, which allowed al-Qaeda and its affiliates to draw closer to Israel’s borders and conduct violent jihad against it from directly across its borders and on its soil, has bolstered the vision of the final jihad, in which the organization’s leader envisions a frontal assault against Israel. When waves of protests broke out in the Arab world in 2010, the borders became more porous and the regimes in Egypt and Syria and their security establishments were each struck a blow – and in the case of Egypt, fatal – rendering them less able to handle the challenges posed by global jihad. It is also possible that this shockwave has not spared Jordan. Moreover, while activities of al-Qaeda and its supporters against Arab nations (which result in Muslim deaths) is considered illegitimate by the public at large in the Muslim and Arab world, acts of terrorism and raids aimed at hurting the State of Israel and its citizens, whom they view as occupying Palestine and killings its residents, are much more likely be viewed as legitimate by the same public. The geographical proximity to Israel’s borders also meshes well with the vision and the plan of action, which regards preparation for action on the enemy’s border (*ribat*) as a requisite pre-jihad stage towards the liberation of Muslim lands from infidel rule.

### The Syrian Sector

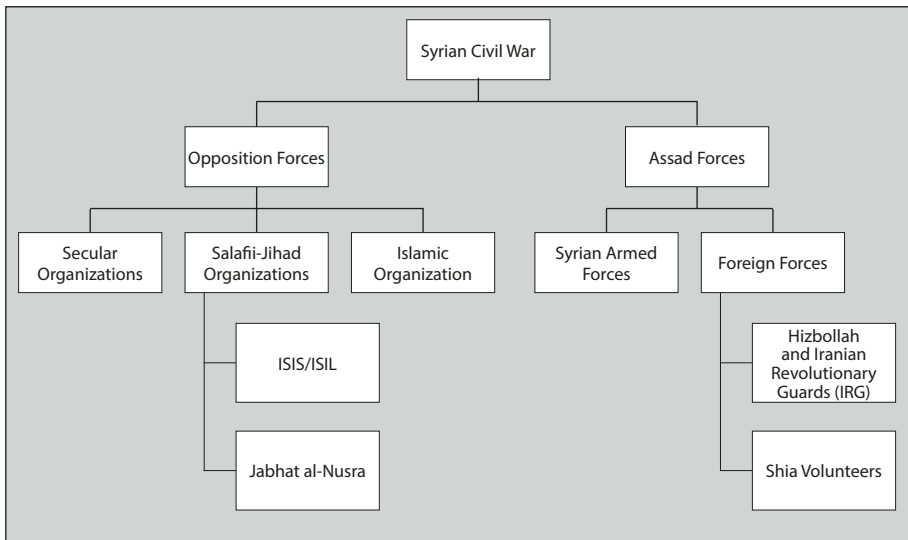
In another video clip released by Ayman al-Zawahiri,<sup>4</sup> on the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, he asserted that jihad against Israel is a religious obligation for every Muslim in the world, whether Palestinian

or not, and that after the liberation of Palestine Muslims must establish an Islamic theocracy, with Islamic religious law as its constitution, on this land. According to al-Zawahiri, to attain this objective, Muslims must gather on Syrian soil, as Syria will serve as the point of origin for jihad operations in Israel. According to him, as soon as the Assad regime falls, the conditions will be optimal for establishing an Islamic regime in Syria, inspiring many Muslims and drawing them there to participate in the jihad against Israel. In his vision the Islamic nation to arise in Syria will receive logistical, economic, and military aid from al-Qaeda's affiliate in Iraq. Al-Zawahiri continued to call on the jihadists in Syria to refuse to lay down their arms until Syria becomes an Islamic theocracy that will restore the caliphate, thoroughly uproot the corrupt Assad regime, and liberate all of Palestine. On the basis of this one can expect that the Syrian Golan Heights and Sinai will be declared official arenas of *ribat*, and that supporters of global jihad will be called upon to place themselves along Israel's borders and from there to launch attacks against it and infiltrate its borders, exploiting the weakness of central governments in the region.

Thus, in addition to the steady flow of many types of arms into Sinai and Syria, turning Israeli borders into security challenges, more global jihadists are likely to arrive in the region, responding to al-Zawahiri's call to enlist in a campaign along Israel's borders as a potential arena of *ribat*, especially if al-Zawahiri does indeed declare Israel the next arena of jihad. According to al-Zawahiri's overall plan, the jihad focused on Israel is expected to take place after the current stage, during which all efforts are being devoted to the establishment of an Islamic state in Syria. Therefore, the official declaration of jihad against Israel might be issued only after the Assad regime is toppled. Still, although Assad remains in control, jihadist actions against Israel are already on the permanent agenda of jihadist groups operating in the states along Israel's borders. Presumably, considering previous isolated attempts, these groups are likely to seize any operational opportunity that might arise in order to perpetrate attacks against Israel, even in the midst of their struggles against various Arab regimes.<sup>5</sup>

The challenge in Syria is most complex, especially given the absence of factors that might restrain global jihadist groups. These groups lack the restraint of previous, state-sponsored terrorist organizations that imposed limitations on themselves, in line with the interests of their host states. Moreover, these entities operate on the basis of uncompromising zealotry

and religious conviction, and they are willing to harm Arab and Muslim soldiers and civilians. Currently there are several insurgent factions fighting the Assad regime in Syria, covering a rather broad ideological spectrum. At one extreme are the Syrian nationalists, led by the Free Syrian Army and its subordinate military councils, fighting to topple Assad's dictatorship and establish a secular, pluralist state uniting all its ethnic groups and streams. At the other extreme are two Salafist jihadist organizations – Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) – both of which are connected to al-Qaeda and view the fighting in Syria as part of an overall struggle for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate and the imposition of Islam as the constitution of the Middle East. Between the two extremes are various insurgent groups with some level of affiliation to one of them (figure 3). Despite their differences on many internal issues, such as the vision for governance after the fall of the current regime,<sup>6</sup> the rebel groups in Syria see the toppling of Assad's regime as their common and most important goal, often leading them to logistical and operational cooperation.



**Figure 3.** Insurgent Groups in Syria by Ideological Affiliation

Still, given that the war in Syria is a manifestation of the broader struggle in the Arab world between Sunnis and Shiites – a struggle that worsened when Sheikh Yusuf al-Qardawi, considered one of this generation's leading scholars of Muslim law with the authority to issue religious rulings, stated

that it is permissible to kill Shiites<sup>7</sup> – it is hard to imagine Sunni-Shiite cooperation anytime soon, even on the subject of fighting against a clear common enemy, i.e., Israel.

Unlike the situation at the Israel-Sinai border, where several attacks have already taken place, there has not yet been any attempt at direct attack by global jihadists against Israel from Syria, with the exception of some sporadic fire at IDF soldiers and outposts on the Golan Heights; in fact, it is not at all clear whether these incidents were intentional or even involved global jihadists. As of the time of this writing, opposition members, including global jihadists such as Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS<sup>8</sup> and others, are concentrating on action against Assad's regime and supporters. Nonetheless, despite this focus on Assad forces, the increasing presence of global jihadists – who have many different types of weapons and a worldview based on Ayman al-Zawahiri's declarations that the war in Syria is but a step on the road to liberating the Golan Heights and Jerusalem – means that they clearly intend to act against Israel in the future.

The civil war in Syria, especially the Sunni-Shiite conflict as manifested in the Syrian arena, is liable to spill over into Lebanon. Global jihadists in Lebanon, some of whom are taking part in the fighting in Syria and are enraged by Hizbollah's siding with Assad and its involvement in the brutal oppression of the opposition in Syria, are intensely critical of Hizbollah and have threatened the organization and its Iranian patron directly and publicly. These threats have already been transformed into operational activities as several suicide attacks, rockets, and Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) attacks against Hizbollah targets in Beirut and the Beqaa valley were executed during the summer of 2013. An escalation of this conflict is liable to move the conflict from Syria to Lebanon, and at some point it is likely to be directed towards Israel as well, in order to draw Hizbollah, and possibly all of Lebanon, into an armed conflict with Israel. Therefore, one may safely assume that developments in Syria will directly affect the manner and scope of global jihadists' activities against Israel from both Syria and Lebanon. One should note that in the past al-Qaeda leaders already tried to use Lebanon as a springboard for activity against Israel but were immediately stopped by Lebanese security.



## The Sinai Peninsula and the Egyptian Sector

In Sinai, global jihadists, led by Ansar Bait al-Maqdis, are trying to draw Israel into a direct confrontation with Egypt. The goal of the terrorists in Sinai is to provoke Israel into taking action against them, thereby violating Egypt's sovereignty over the peninsula and causing military friction between Israel and Egypt, a goal overriding even their desire to harm Israel. This policy creates a security challenge of the highest order for Israel, especially when Israeli forces must respond quickly to terrorists infiltrating from Sinai because there is insufficient time to employ the liaison cooperation apparatus with Egypt, which is intended to thwart the attackers and enable their capture on Egyptian territory. The governmental instability in Egypt means Israel must be doubly sensitive because the current Egyptian regime already faces harsh criticism from the Muslim Brotherhood opposition, and the Salafists are waiting for the opportunity to denounce it for its security ties with Israel.

Another challenge is the cooperation between global jihadists in Sinai and their partners in the Gaza Strip – a challenge not only for Israel but also for the Hamas government, which has been the de facto ruler of Gaza since the summer of 2007. Hamas keeps its hold over the Gaza Strip by maintaining contact with Salafist jihadist elements. At times Hamas uses force against these groups in response to operations that threaten to draw it into a confrontation with either Egypt or Israel, or that directly challenge its rule. Given the opportunity, Hamas recruits these factions to its own needs and turns a blind eye to their activity on the Gaza Strip-Sinai axis, thereby circumventing the danger of a direct confrontation with Israel but at the same time maintaining the operational nuisance factor. The main Gaza Strip Salafi jihadi terrorist organization that also operates from the Sinai sector is the Shura Council of Holy Warriors in the Environs of Jerusalem (or Majlis al-Shura al-Mujahidin fi Aknaf Bait al-Maqdis). This umbrella organization, uniting smaller groups that have been active in Gaza since the mid-2000s,<sup>9</sup> was founded in June 2012 and carries out sporadic attacks along the Israel-Egypt border.

The immediate significance for Israel is the need to prepare for possible terrorist attacks against its soldiers and civilians along its borders in the south and the north, while resisting the attempt by the global jihadists operating near the border to draw it into provocations. Israel has long been preparing for these threats, having already adopted various defensive measures such as the construction of technologically enhanced fences and patrol systems

by units highly trained and skilled in routine security, the deployment of Iron Dome batteries, and other necessary changes.<sup>10</sup> However, it is necessary for Israel to focus on and prioritize intelligence coverage of the threats, beginning with the al-Qaeda echelon that guides and helps these elements and culminating with the specific factions preparing for direct activity along Israel's borders with Egypt and Syria. Furthermore, it is of utmost importance to prepare for the possibility that additional threats forming against Israel on the Lebanese and perhaps even Jordanian borders might be realized.

Alongside all the threats detailed above, the threat posed by al-Qaeda and its various affiliates in the international arena is credible and powerful. Al-Qaeda has not abandoned its intentions to act against its enemies outside of the Middle East, including Israeli and Jewish targets abroad. The United States' planned withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014 will allow al-Qaeda's international attack apparatus to start operating there again while making use of new recruits, some with operational experience acquired in different arenas throughout the world, including Western operatives. The organization's affiliates, especially but not only those that have committed acts of terrorism outside of their arenas of activity, are liable to act on their own or activate operatives they trained against Israeli and Jewish targets, widely considered in the Muslim world to be legitimate targets for attack.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

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In this memorandum we sought to describe and analyze the conceptual foundations and development of the global jihad led by al-Qaeda and those subscribing to its worldview, in its ideological and practical contexts, and to present the map of threats posed by these terrorist elements, in an attempt to identify the objectives of the organization and its affiliates over the coming years. In summarizing, we would like to present some conclusions and recommendations for action.

Al-Qaeda's journey from its origin as a small organization consisting of a handful of determined operatives with a particular vision to its emergence as an international household name was a 25-year-long obstacle course that consisted of three main stages. Contrary to various assessments of recent years – to the effect that the organization was dealt a mortal blow and is on the verge of collapse as a result of the worldwide counterterrorism offensive directly targeting al-Qaeda and its affiliates – our conclusion, drawing on the analysis presented here, is that the leaders of al-Qaeda and its affiliates in the global jihad movement have in fact succeeded in exploiting various events, especially the political upheavals in the Arab states, to advance their cause. The organization has, for example, managed to expand the circle of its operative and ideological affiliates in the Middle East and the Maghreb, who help it continue its violent activities in order to realize its local and global vision. Furthermore, upon the withdrawal of US forces, pressure in areas of strategic importance, such as Iraq (from which US forces have already withdrawn) and Afghanistan (where forces are expected to withdraw in 2014), will ease. Moreover, the shockwaves felt throughout the Middle East and the Maghreb, al-Qaeda's uncompromising ideology in conjunction with organizational flexibility, and the fact that the old guard of leaders (who are inseparably linked to the aggressive strategy begun by Bin Laden) are still around, alongside new leaders who have amassed combat and command

experience in various regions of warfare – are all factors that point to new opportunities for al-Qaeda and its affiliates.

As described in the third chapter, the strategic goal of Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda's new leader, is above all organizational survival, stabilizing the rank and file, cementing his own leadership position, and taking advantage of opportunities to regroup and lead the organization and the movement once again towards realization of the organizational vision in accordance with his strategic perspective. Al-Zawahiri wants to exploit the Arab Spring to turn it into an Islamic Spring, while at this stage giving preference to domestic, local jihad over global jihad in order to establish religiously observant Islamic regimes in the major nations in the Levant. Al-Qaeda's main affiliates in the various arenas in the Middle East and Africa, alongside organizations and entities associated with global jihad, can be expected to support its attempts to achieve that goal. For its part, al-Qaeda can be expected to encourage and nurture this activity in order to further destabilize sovereign states, and entrench in them regions controlled by Salafist jihadists, as it has done to date. One must not ignore the formation of new forces in active warfare zones in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Middle East, the Maghreb, and African states. These forces, consisting of operatives with operational experience, are liable to expand the reserve of fighters of the organization and the broader global jihad movement. To these, one must add operatives from Western countries who can serve the organization and its affiliates in the construction of an infrastructure to carry out acts of terrorism throughout the world.

The war in Syria and the instability in Egypt represent first-rate historical opportunities, where periodic changes in government make it possible to inflame and incite the local oppositional population against the new-old regime. This regime ousted the so-called pragmatic Muslim Brotherhood, which thought it was possible to use the democratic route to put Islam in charge but failed and, in fact, reinforced al-Qaeda's claim that only an aggressive military jihad against the local, corrupt regime and its Western allies could restore the lost glory of Islam and the institution of Salafist Islam. At the center of this activity, the Syrian arena can be expected to be a major focal point of operations for global jihadists, with al-Qaeda's encouragement and active support via its local and regional affiliates and with Arab and Western volunteers from all over the world. The outcome of the hostilities in Syria is likely to have a decisive effect as well on the

stability of bordering countries. In al-Qaeda's view, Syria is intended to serve as a hothouse for new cadres of terrorists with combat experience and a close affinity to the organization's worldview. Al-Qaeda intends to have some of them join its ranks, encourage some to join the fighting in locales where there is religious or ethnic strife, and designate others to establish ad hoc terrorist cells and networks or act as lone wolves in various countries, especially in the West.

Indeed, in the international arena and in Western states, where most of the manifestations of jihadist terrorism are perpetrated by home-grown terrorists, counterterrorism encounters a twofold challenge: in addition to the legal obstacles they face, Western authorities are required to abide by the law and the rules of democracy while waging war against marginal minority elements living and operating amidst large Muslim communities, without discriminating against the greater peaceful, law-abiding Muslim majority.

Antiterrorism steps focused on Muslim communities sometimes arouse antagonism and a strong sense of discrimination on racial or religious grounds among young people. These feelings are liable to lead to the radicalization of members of Muslim communities and play into the hands of global jihadists. Moreover, because in most Western countries (other than the United States) Muslim communities are quite large, the authorities in charge of counterterrorism must take into consideration more than narrow security interests; they must also weigh the likely ramifications of counterterrorism measures that are seen by Muslims as overly intrusive and offensive.

In light of emerging trends in the development of the organization, it appears that salient threat al-Qaeda and its affiliates pose to the West is their potential resumption of extremely deadly terrorist attacks in Western countries, especially against strategic targets. Should al-Qaeda's intentions be successfully realized, it would renew the atmosphere of fear felt by Western societies during the first half of the decade and would thrust al-Qaeda and global jihad back into the international limelight, thereby enhancing the status of global terrorism as a key contributing element in the international arena.

Nonetheless, like every organization with global aspirations that is active on an international scale, al-Qaeda and its affiliates, as well as their decision making processes, are affected by current political, military, and economic events. Thus, in order to confront the phenomenon of global jihad, the international community must neutralize the momentum that the

organization and its ideology are liable to enjoy as a result of long-term instability in the Middle East and its impact on other regions in the world. It is necessary to prevent peripheral areas where al-Qaeda's affiliates have been active in recent years from becoming bases for the active presence of global jihadists, and to thwart potential revolts aimed at establishing Taliban-style religious Islamic regimes in their host countries.

In order to address the phenomenon of global jihad effectively, it is also necessary to continue striking at al-Qaeda's leadership – the ideological engine driving and sustaining the idea of global jihad and international terrorism. This means continuing to hunt down the organization's leaders and senior operational agents. The major difficulty in this context lies in the high costs – in terms of lives, finances, and of course, public opinion – for the United States and its allies stemming from the activity of US and European forces in Muslim nations. These forces are viewed as foreign occupiers, directly responsible for the violence suffered by civilians in those countries, even though the violence is often perpetuated by global jihadists seeking to heighten the friction between the citizens and the foreign troops. Thus the United States and its allies play into the hands of al-Qaeda and its affiliates, who ascribe the responsibility for all the evil in the Muslim world and beyond to the West. For this reason, the withdrawal of US and multinational forces from Afghanistan in the summer of 2014 is of great importance. Agreements between the United States and the multinational force on the one hand, and the local government and Pakistan on the other, must require the latter two to prevent or at the very least reduce al-Qaeda's ability to plan operations against the West on their soil.

It is also important that as part of these agreements the United States and its allies retain the freedom of action that will allow them to foil terrorist activity in the locales where terrorists gather to organize and plan their actions, and to continue hunting down the leaders of al-Qaeda and its active affiliates in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This freedom of action will enable the West itself to thwart and disrupt the ability of global jihadists to carry out attacks on US soil and against its forces deployed throughout the world. Furthermore, despite the public criticism voiced in Afghanistan and Pakistan – and sometimes in the West as well – it is critical that the US administration continue the program of targeted assassinations against al-Qaeda's leaders and senior agents, first and foremost Ayman al-Zawahiri and the few organizational veterans still alive. To do so, it is necessary to

retain and improve the capabilities of targeted assassinations using drones, as well as the capabilities needed for special units to conduct the ground-based raids necessary to arrest and remove senior terrorist operatives and commanders of al-Qaeda and its affiliates in the countries where they are active, even if this means violating the sovereignty of foreign states. While it is clearly best if such action is coordinated with the local authorities (as was the case in Somalia, Libya, and Yemen), the West must not hesitate to act even without informing the local authorities in advance or securing their authorization when circumstances demand that it do so (as was case with the assassination of Osama Bin Laden).

Another way to deal with the tension between placating the local population on the one hand, and the imperative to destroy the organization and its affiliates on the other, is through international investment in enhancing the autonomous ability of the local military, security establishment, and law enforcement services in the states where global jihadists are active, rather than continuing to maintain the presence of Western troops there. Significant resources must be devoted to training the security services of these states and improving the warfare capabilities of the local population, so that they can meet the challenges of fighting terrorists effectively and efficiently. It is important in this context to support special counterterrorism forces in those states and prepare them to confront the various operational aspects of terrorism.

Within the Western countries themselves, the main tactical challenge for the security establishment is to identify individuals who are undergoing a process of radicalization and thus are on the fast track to global jihad. Counterterrorism personnel in the West can take advantage of the length of the radicalization process, which leaves many tell-tale signs and indicators throughout and can be identified without great difficulty. Thus, regarding home-grown terrorism, we recommend continuing and expanding voluntary cooperation with Muslim communities and deepening relations with authority figures in the community (clergy, teachers, communal leaders) who reject the actions of those radicals who give a bad name to Islam and Muslim beliefs.

In states such as Syria and Egypt and in other Middle Eastern and Maghreb countries where upheavals continue, the international community faces a dilemma over how to relate to regimes that are not familiar with Western-style democracy. For example, when assessing how best to approach the campaign between the Assad regime, which is supported by the radical axis



of Iran and Hizbollah, and the Syrian insurgents, the answer is complex and not unequivocal. Among Assad's opponents are global jihadists openly supported by al-Qaeda. The reluctance displayed by the United States and its Western allies regarding active military intervention in Syria to stop Assad's slaughter of Syrian citizens and topple Assad stems in part from the fear that global jihadists will take control of Syria or large parts of it. We feel that at this stage, it is best for the West, especially the United States, to adhere to a policy aimed at facilitating a regime change in Syria without taking military measures, but rather as part of the international diplomatic effort with Russia's cooperation that succeeded in disarming Syria's chemical weapons. The goal is to replace Assad with a pragmatic entity capable of ruling the country while also preventing al-Qaeda and its affiliates from assuming control of Syria or turning large parts of it into terrorist bases and staging grounds to advance global jihad. Should that happen, military intervention could become necessary.

As for Egypt and the regime changes there, sources in the United States expressed their displeasure at the military's overthrow of Mohamed Morsi, a democratically elected president, even going so far as to suspend some US aid to Egypt. We feel this response was a mistake because, even if democracy was temporarily violated, the continued rule of the Muslim Brotherhood's brand of political Islam would have provided a tailwind to all those who support Islamic political rule, including al-Qaeda and its global jihad affiliates. In our opinion, the Egyptian military should be allowed to try to stabilize the country and hand it back to civil society by means of a general election, with the hope that the secular camp manages to agree on a candidate who can leverage the real balance of power between the secular organizations and political Islam in Egypt to win such an election.

The final campaign one must consider entails fighting the ideology of al-Qaeda and the global jihad movement. The ideological terrorism of the radical left that spearheaded international terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s completely vanished with the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Just as acts of terrorism ceased with the disappearance of the ideology that motivated them, we feel that by means of widespread media and pragmatic action delegitimizing the Salafist jihadist ideology and those carrying its messages, specifically Ayman al-Zawahiri, this type of terrorism can also be brought to its knees. Another important component is the ability of Western countries, led by the United States, to act courageously, honestly,



and firmly to neutralize tensions and disagreements when it comes to global relations between Muslim and Arab nations and the nations of the West. These tensions are the ever-present fuel that fans the flames of Salafist jihadist ideology, serving both as the main source of legitimacy among Muslims for the actions of al-Qaeda and its affiliates and as an attractive draw for new recruits and operatives. Resolute and consistent efforts to resolve territorial conflicts involving Muslims, such as the conflicts in Chechnya and Kashmir and, of course, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with the agreement of all sides, are likely to bear real fruit, lead to greater calm, and perhaps even prevent al-Qaeda and global jihadists from achieving popular support and general legitimacy for their actions.

How the international community chooses to address the challenges that al-Qaeda and the global jihad pose will determine whether assertions about the organization's demise will prove to be valid, or whether the organization and its affiliates – and the international terrorism that has served as their physical and propaganda tool – will rear their heads again.



## Appendix

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### **Selected Global Jihadist Activity against Western Targets in the Decade following September 11, 2001**

#### **Al-Qaeda**

- December 2001: An attempted attack to crash two US passenger planes using suicide bombers with explosives hidden in their shoes was foiled. One of the would-be suicide bombers, Sajid Badat, changed his mind at the last minute, whereas the so-called shoe bomber, Richard Reid, managed to board the plane targeted for attack but failed to carry out the attack because of technical malfunction.
- December 2001: An attack supervised by al-Qaeda, to be carried out in cooperation with the Singapore cell of Jamma'a al-Islamiyah, was foiled. It was to have involved several simultaneous attacks using truck bombs against Western targets in Singapore, including the embassies of the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and Israel.
- December 2001-December 2003: Al-Qaeda's special ops unit, headed by Khaled Sheikh Muhammad, planned several attacks similar to 9/11. In the United States, it was discovered that the organization was planning such an attack on the West Coast; the organization's Saudi cell planned to hijack planes in Eastern Europe and crash them into selected targets in Great Britain; using Jamma'a al-Islamiyah operatives, al-Qaeda planned on carrying out a 9/11-style attack in the Far East; an ambitious al-Qaeda plan to carry out an attack similar to the 9/11 outline at the enormous oil terminal in Port Rashid in the UEA was foiled.
- April 2002: The explosion of a truck bomb at the synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia killed 18 tourists, almost all from Germany.
- Spring 2002: Al-Qaeda's special ops unit worked to stage simultaneous mass-casualty attacks in New York and Washington. The plan involved

demolishing the Brooklyn Bridge by severing its suspension cables, an attack on a passenger train in Washington, D.C., and a gunfire attack at a Washington shopping center.

- April 2002: A dirty bomb attack was foiled in the United States. It was supposed to have been carried out by US citizen and al-Qaeda operative Jose Padilla, in early 2002.
- Spring 2002: An attempt to carry out suicide attacks against US and British ships sailing through the Straits of Gibraltar was foiled.
- October 2002: An explosives-laden boat was detonated near the French oil tanker *Limburg* sailing in the Gulf of Aden.
- Fall 2002: A cell composed of Bahraini al-Qaeda agents operating in New York planned to carry out an attack on the New York subway, an attack that would have involved the use of cyanide gas.
- November 2002: A twofold attack: one part targeted Israeli tourists in Mombasa, Kenya, involving a car bomb at a hotel lobby popular with Israelis – resulted in the deaths of 15 people, of whom three were Israelis. While this was happening, surface-to-air missiles were fired at an Arkia airplane that was just taking off from Mombasa's airport. They missed their target.
- 2002: A plan to carry out an attack on a hotel in the Israeli resort town of Eilat, by crashing a Saudi Air force fighter jet flown by an al-Qaeda suicide RAF pilot into the hotel building, was foiled.
- 2002: A sophisticated attempt to carry out an attack against gas reserves and gas stations in the United States was foiled by US law enforcement authorities.
- November 2003: A double suicide attack carried out using truck bombs against synagogues and British targets in Istanbul killed more than 50 civilians.
- Summer 2004: An attempt to carry out a radioactive attack in London (Operation Crevice) was foiled.
- Summer 2004: An attempt to carry out a dramatic attack in New York's financial district was foiled.
- July 2005: A multi-pronged attack on the London transit system, involving four suicide attackers, all British citizens, who blew themselves up on three different underground trains and on a double-decker bus, led to the deaths of more than 50 British citizens.

- Summer 2006: A dramatic plot meant to crash half a dozen to a dozen US and British passenger planes at the same time above the Atlantic Ocean was foiled.
- June 2008: A truck bomb driven by a suicide terrorist blew up the Danish embassy in Islamabad.
- September 2008: A major attack using a truck bomb targeting the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad resulted in the death of hundreds of hotel guests.
- Early 2009: An attempt to carry out a suicide attack on a passenger train in Long Island, NY, was foiled.
- Spring 2009: A plan to attack large shopping centers in Liverpool and Manchester was foiled.
- Late 2009: An attempt to carry out a suicide attack on a New York subway was foiled.
- Spring 2010: An attempt to carry out an attack in Norway was foiled.

### **Al-Qaeda Affiliates**

- January 2002: *Wall Street Journal* journalist Daniel Pearl was murdered in Karachi by Pakistani terrorists connected to Khaled Sheikh Muhammad.
- October 2002: Jamma'a al-Islamiyah carried out a multi-pronged suicide attack on the Indonesian resort island of Bali. A total of 202 people, mostly Australian vacationers, were killed.
- Spring 2003: Using a French citizen, Willie Brigitte, Lashqar e-Toyba collected pre-op intelligence about a civilian nuclear power plant near Sydney.
- May 2003: A cell belonging to Asirat al-Mustakim in Morocco carried out simultaneous suicide attacks against five different targets in Casablanca. More than 80 people died in the attack.
- June 2003: Jamma'a al-Islamiyah planned attacks on an El Al plane and the ASEAN conference in Bangkok. Both were foiled.
- August 2003: Jamma'sa al-Islamiyah carried out a suicide attack at the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta.
- July 2004: The Uzbek organization Islamic Jihad Union carried out a multi-pronged suicide attack against the US and Israeli embassies in the Uzbek capital of Tashkent.
- September 2004: A plan by the Abu Sayaf group to attack the US and Israeli embassies in Manila was foiled.

- October 2004: Jamma'a al-Islamiyah carried out a suicide attack using a car bomb at the Australian embassy in Jakarta.
- 2005: An attempted attack in Denmark by Lashqar e-Toyba and Harakat al-Jihad al-Alami, another Pakistani organization, was foiled.
- October 2005: Jamma'a al-Islamiyah carried out a suicide attack against tourist spots in Bali.
- February 2006: AQAP attacked the oil refineries in Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia, considered the largest refineries in the world, using four suicide terrorists and two vehicles crammed with explosives. The attack was foiled by on-site security guards.
- December 2007: AQIM carried out an attack using a car bomb at the UN site and the Supreme Court building in Algeria.
- February 2008: AQIM carried out a gunfire attack against the Israeli embassy in Nouakchott, Mauritania.
- April 2008: AQAP attacked the residential complex of the US embassy in Sana'a.
- September 2008: AQAP attacked the US embassy building in Yemen.
- November 2008: Lashqar e-Toyba in Kashmir carried out a multi-pronged, mass-casualty attack in Mumbai, India, in the course of which more than 170 people of different nationalities, including six Israelis, were killed.
- June 2009: The Lebanese extension of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades fired rockets at the northern Israeli city of Nahariya.
- July 2009: Jamma'a al-Islamiyah carried out two attacks by suicide terrorists against two hotels (the Marriott and the Ritz-Carlton) in Jakarta.
- December 2009: An attempt to blow up a US passenger plane in the air by AQAP using Nigerian suicide terrorist Farouk al-Mutaleb, an economics student in London, was foiled.
- April 2010: AQAP carried out a suicide attack on the convoy of the British ambassador to Yemen.
- July 2010: Shabaab al-Mujahidin al-Somali carried out simultaneous suicide attacks at cafés in Kampala, Uganda, in the final minute of the world soccer championships game, killing 76.
- August 2010: The Saudi branch of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades carried out a suicide attack on a Japanese oil tanker sailing in the Strait of Hormuz.

- October 2010: The IJU's plans to attack international airports throughout Germany were foiled.
- October 2010: AQAP's attempt to blow up two US cargo planes, using explosives packed into printer boxes, was foiled. As the story came to light, the organization claimed responsibility for the crash of a third US cargo plane two months earlier in the airspace above the Persian Gulf; up to that point, the crash had been attributed to technical failure.
- August 2011: The Nigerian terrorist organization Boko Haram blew up a car bomb at the UN compound in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, resulting in the deaths of 23 people.
- January 2013: Some 40 Western citizens were killed when a radical Islamic group operating in the Sahara Desert seized an oil refinery operated by Great Britain and Norway.
- July 2013: Abdullah Azzam Brigades fired rockets at northern Israel.
- September 2013: An attack carried out by Shabaab al-Mujahidin al-Somali at the Westgate shopping center in Nairobi killed at least 67 civilians.
- November 2013: A suicide attack was carried out by two suicide bombers of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades against the Iranian embassy in Beirut, located within the Hizbollah controlled quarter of the city. A total of 25 people were killed, including one Iranian diplomat.

### **Local Initiatives by Groups and Individuals Inspired by Radical Islamic Ideology, without External Help**

- July 2002: An Egyptian carried out a gunfire attack at the check-in counter of an El Al flight at the Los Angeles airport.
- January 2003: A chemical attack planned by a British citizen residing in London was foiled. In the course of his arrest, a British police officer was killed. A search of the terrorist's apartment revealed large quantities of raw materials for making poisons resembling cyanide in their chemical structure and effects.
- March 2004: A terrorist cell operating in Madrid without any operational ties to any organization set off seven explosive charges hidden on passenger trains in the city, killing 192.
- August 2004: The plans of a pair of US citizens to attack a subway station and Herald Square in Manhattan were foiled.

- October 2004: A terrorist cell consisting of radical Islamic militants carried out a multi-pronged attack at Israeli tourist sites in Sinai.
- November 2004: Muhammad Boyari, a member of a terrorist cell in Amsterdam, murdered Theo van Gogh, a Dutch media personality.
- July 21, 2005: An attempt to carry out a multi-pronged suicide attack by four Muslim residents of London against the London underground and a double-decker bus in the city, emulating the attack carried out two weeks earlier (7/7), was foiled.
- July 22, 2005: Another triple attack in Sinai was carried out against hotels in Sharm a-Sheikh.
- December 2005: A terrorist cell formed in a Zurich mosque planned to fire an RPG rocket at an El Al passenger plane at the Geneva international airport. Swiss security forces foiled the attempt.
- January 2006: An attack at JFK airport in New York was foiled.
- April 2006: Another triple attack in Sinai took place, in which three car bombs exploded at tourist attractions full of people in the tourist resort of Dahab on the Red Sea coast in Sinai.
- July 2006: A US citizen of Pakistani descent carried out a shooting attack on the Jewish Federation building in Seattle.
- June 2007: Plans to carry out a dramatic attack on the PATH tunnel under the Hudson River, linking New York and New Jersey, were foiled by US law enforcement authorities.
- 2007-2008: The plans of a North Carolina terrorist cell to attack Israeli and US targets were foiled.
- January 2008: The plans of a terrorist cell in Spain to attack Barcelona underground trains were foiled by Spanish security services.
- June 2009: A US citizen carried out a gunfire attack at a US Army recruitment center in Little Rock, Arkansas.
- November 2009: Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, a US Army psychiatrist, killed 13 soldiers at Fort Hood.
- 2010: A British citizen of Pakistani origin intended to attack Heathrow airport in London. His plan was foiled.
- May 2010: Roshonara Choudhry, a British citizen, stabbed and injured a former member of the British cabinet.
- March 2011: Nadil Olak, a refugee from Kosovo, carried out a gunfire attack on a US Army bus at the airport in Frankfurt.



- March 2012: Muhammad Merah, a French citizen, carried out several gunfire attacks in Toulouse, killing seven, including a Jewish teacher and three Jewish school children.
- April 2013: Two brothers of Chechnyan origin placed several explosives among spectators at the Boston Marathon, killing three and injuring hundreds.
- May 2013: Two British citizens decapitated a British soldier in South London.

## **Export of Terrorism from Arenas of Jihad**

### Afghanistan

- June 2011: With the help of al-Qaeda and Lashqar e-Toyba operatives, terrorists from the Taliban and the Haqqani network attacked the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul the night before a conference on the redeployment of foreign soldiers in the country was scheduled to open.

### Tribal Area of Pakistan

- May 2010: Under the instructions of the Pakistani TTP, Faisal Shahzad, a US resident of Pakistani origin, placed a car bomb packed with hundreds of kilos of explosives in Times Square in the heart of Manhattan. The explosives failed to detonate because of a technical glitch in the operating system.

### Iraq AQI/ISI

- April 2004: Several truck bombs packed with many tons of explosives as well as chemical weapons were stopped at the transit terminal on the Iraqi-Jordanian border. An investigation revealed that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's organization intended to carry out a multi-pronged, mass-casualty attack using the trucks against government targets in Amman, including the parliament building, the royal palace, and the kingdom's intelligence staff center, while simultaneously attacking central foreign targets, including the Israeli and US embassies in the city. According to Jordanian law enforcement estimates and given the large amount of explosives discovered, the attacks, had they been carried out, would have killed tens of thousands of citizens.
- August 2005: An al-Qaeda cell in Iraq, directed and dispatched by al-Zarqawi, was apprehended in Turkey as it was in the final stages of

preparation for a large suicide attack on an Israeli cruise ship sailing through the Mediterranean basin. At the time of their arrest and in the raid of the terrorists' apartment, many explosives were discovered as well a new rubber dinghy that was to have played a role in the attack.

- August 2005: A terrorist cell of al-Zarqawi's network in Iraq managed to cross into Jordan and fire rockets from Aqaba towards a US destroyer and the Israeli city of Eilat.
- July 2008: A car bomb was discovered and the explosive device in it neutralized in London's nightclub area. A second car bomb exploded 24 hours later at the international airport in Glasgow, Scotland. A rare statement by Abu Ayyub al-Masri, the head of al-Qaeda in Iraq, assumed responsibility for the attack.
- December 2010: A Swedish citizen of Iraqi origin carried out a suicide attack in the center of Stockholm without harming anyone but himself. In the investigation of the incident it transpired that he had undergone suicide training at the AQI training camp in Iraq.

## Libya

- September 2012: A multi-pronged attack by radical Islamic militants against the US consulate in Benghazi resulted in the deaths of four US diplomats, including Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens.

## Notes

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### Note to Preface

- 1 In this memorandum the authors use the term “affiliates” to describe those who embrace, cooperate, and identify with al-Qaeda’s ideology. That includes partners that officially merged with al-Qaeda and inspired organizations, networks, cells, and individuals.

### Notes to Chapter 1, Global Jihad: Religious Ideology and Historical Development

- 1 Islam comprises four *madh’habs* (literally “pillars”), different schools of interpretations of Sunni Islam. The Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi’i, and Hanbali are the main ones, and in practice their reach extends over all of Sunni Islam. The Hanbali school, named for Ahmad Bin Hanbal (780-855), is the smallest but also the most conservative and extreme one. The Hanbalis and neo-Hanbalis, such as Taqi a-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328), are considered among the most hardline of Muslims, who regard every statement or verse in the Quran or Hadith (the oral law) literally, without any room for interpretation or discretion. Hanbal was most extreme in his approach, asserting that the Hadith and the Quran were the only sources of reference for governance and jurisprudence. The Hanbali school supports instituting *sharia* (Islamic religious law) as a state’s constitution. The Hanbali school is also the original source for Wahhabism, the exclusive school of thought in Saudi Arabia and the only source for the Saudi constitution. See Assaf Maliah and Shaul Shay, *From Kabul to Jerusalem* (Tel Aviv: Matar, 2009), p. 83.
- 2 The literal meaning of *salaf* is “early ancestor.” The term refers to the faithful followers (*sahaba*) of the Prophet Muhammad who joined him in his emigration (*hijra*) from Mecca to Medina, which symbolizes the founding of Islam. In the Muslim tradition, this community (the prophet and his followers, the Salafists) symbolizes the ideal community that created and maintained pure communal life. Every Muslim community, wherever it is located, should emulate and the pure way of life towards which it should aspire. The Salafist way of life strives to emulate the way of life of the original Salafists, which in essence means living

- according to the written word of the Quran and the Hadith.
- 3 The stagnation of the Muslim Ottoman Empire, which ruled over the entire Middle East for hundreds of years, led to the deterioration and dissolution of the empire, whereupon broad swathes were seized by large colonial states of the West (Great Britain, France, and Russia), until it eventually collapsed in 1917.
  - 4 Hizb al-Tahrir, the Tabligh movement and the Deobandi school in the Indian subcontinent.
  - 5 Olivia Qare, "From al-Banna to Qutb," *Z'manim* No. 32 (Fall 1989): 49.
  - 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.
  - 7 Qutb's ideas were couched in vague terms and did not call directly for jihad, leaving much room for interpretation, which his supporters (Qutbites) exploited to promote violent domestic jihad against the "infidel regime."
  - 8 Qare, "From al-Banna to Qutb," p. 48.
  - 9 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
  - 10 One of the first and most important of Qutb's followers, al-Zawahiri was the founder and leader of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), an Egyptian terrorist organization. Since February 1998, he served as the deputy commander of al-Qaeda and was appointed Bin Laden's successor after the latter was killed in May 2011.
  - 11 Specifically, the Egyptian Gamma'a al-Islamiyah, founded in the 1970s by Sheikh Omar Abed al-Rahman (the so-called blind sheikh), and the Egyptian Jihad established later by Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri.
  - 12 Ayman al-Zawahiri, *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*, chapter 2, as published in *a-Sharq al-Awsat*, December 3, 2001.
  - 13 Afghani mujahidin (holy fighters) groups that went to war against the communist rebels included, among others, the Rabani Massoud group, the Abed al-Rasul Sayyaf group, and the group of Halak Yunis and Gulbuddin Hekmatiyar. Some of the leaders of these groups had graduated from al-Azhar University in Cairo, the foremost spiritual authority for the Muslim Brotherhood.
  - 14 An arena of jihad refers to a Muslim location conquered at some point by non-Muslims, where war is currently being fought between Muslims and foreigners. The religious obligation to go there and fight alongside their brethren applies to all Muslims. Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion was a classic arena of jihad. Other such arenas developed later in Bosnia, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Somalia. Iraq and Afghanistan, and more recently the hot spots that developed as a result of the Arab Spring in Libya and Syria became other arenas of jihad. The preferred arena of jihad, where the political reality makes such Islamic activity difficult, is of course Palestine.
  - 15 Maliah and Shay, *From Kabul to Jerusalem*, p. 103. The great innovation in Azzam's call for action lay in his definition of the obligation of jihad against a foreign invader as a personal one, applicable to every single Muslim in the world, rather than a communal obligation that may be carried out by sending trained militias to fight, as per Hassan al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood.
  - 16 Bin Laden was the son of a wealthy Saudi Arabian family with a large construction company. According to several different estimates, Bin Laden's personal wealth was in the \$100-300 million range when he first came to Afghanistan.

- 17 Peter Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know* (New York: Free Press, 2006), pp. 26-27, 39.
- 18 Ibid., pp. 64-67.
- 19 Palestine, the Central Asian republics, Kashmir, Mindanao in the Philippines, and even Andalusia in Spain, which was under Muslim rule until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, were all mentioned in this context. The Azzam-Zawahiri conflict is described in great detail in Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know*.
- 20 Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know*, p. 74.
- 21 Primarily by means of sullyng Azzam's name by accusing him of collaborating with the United States, the CIA, and France. See Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know*, p. 74.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 94-95.
- 23 Ibid., p. 49.
- 24 Tariq Osama, document no. 76, seized from the computer of Essam Arnaout.
- 25 Tariq Osama, documents no. 91-94, seized from the computer of Essam Arnaout.
- 26 The precise date of the sketch found in the Tariq Osama file discovered among the documents of Essam Arnaout is not noted, but the mention of Abdullah Azzam among the office holders dates it to a time before the official establishment of al-Qaeda in August 1988 and before the final rift between Azzam and Bin Laden. See document no. 136 in the Tariq Osama file, seized from the computer of Essam Arnaout.
- 27 The first to have used the name al-Qaeda al-Sulbah (literally "the Solid Base") was Abdullah Azzam, referring to the believers who would constitute the foundation of the Islamic army that would issue the call for jihad. See *al-Jihad Magazine*, April 1986.
- 28 Tariq Osama, documents no. 127-127a, seized from the computer of Essam Arnaout.
- 29 Ibid. Bin Laden differentiated between the volunteers arriving in Afghanistan on the basis of the length of their stay. Those who came for a limited period were to be trained by the Afghans (specifically, Abed al-Rasul Sayyaf's organization, Ittihad al-Islami al-Afghani) in the Sadah camp and then sent to fight on the front as part of the Afghani guerilla groups. Those who came for an indefinite amount of time were placed in a selection camp. The best were chosen for the al-Qaeda army. In this context, it is worth noting that some of the Arab volunteers who came to Afghanistan did in fact come for limited periods, such as semester breaks, gap years, and so on.
- 30 Tariq Osama, documents no. 127-127a, seized from the computer of Essam Arnaout.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid. See also the testimony of Jamal al-Fadal, *United States of America v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, United States District Court, Southern District of New York, February 2, 2001, [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_of\\_America\\_v.\\_Usama\\_bin\\_Laden/Day\\_2\\_6\\_February\\_2001](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United_States_of_America_v._Usama_bin_Laden/Day_2_6_February_2001).
- 33 Tariq al-Musadat documents no. 86, 87, and 88, seized from the computer of Essam Arnaout.
- 34 *United States of America v. Usama Bin Laden*, February 2, 2001, p. 197, <http://>

- en.wikisource.org/wiki/United\_States\_of\_America\_v.\_Usama\_bin\_Laden/Day\_2\_6\_February\_2001.
- 35 *United States of America v. Usama Bin Laden*, February 2, 2001, p. 192, [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_of\\_America\\_v.\\_Usama\\_bin\\_Laden/Day\\_2\\_6\\_February\\_2001](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United_States_of_America_v._Usama_bin_Laden/Day_2_6_February_2001).
- 36 *Ibid.*, pp. 205-12.
- 37 See, for example, statements by Mustafa Hamid, a long-time supporter of Azzam, about Bin Laden's decision to involve Arab forces in the civil war in Afghanistan, especially the battle for Jalalabad, as they appear in the Harmony documents seized in Afghanistan and translated at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/AFGP-2002-600088-Trans-Meta>.
- 38 See the testimony of Jamal al-Fadal, one of the first members of al-Qaeda, in *United States of America v. Usama Bin Laden*, February 2, 2001, p. 216, [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_of\\_America\\_v.\\_Usama\\_bin\\_Laden/Day\\_2\\_6\\_February\\_2001](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United_States_of_America_v._Usama_bin_Laden/Day_2_6_February_2001).
- 39 The success of the mujahidin in Afghanistan inspired multitudes of others in Islamic states. During those years, dozens of organizations with radical Islamic orientation were founded in Muslim countries, for the express purpose of challenging the secular authorities. Led by activists returning home after the end of the fighting in Afghanistan, these organizations began to conduct terrorist attacks against the local regimes in order to destabilize them. In fact, all of the nations in the region experienced a certain level of instability as a result of the actions of Islamic terrorist organizations.
- 40 After the hostilities in Afghanistan came to an end, new arenas of jihad emerged throughout the world, drawing many Islamic volunteers who came to fight the infidel enemy. Bosnia, Tajikistan, Chechnya, Somalia, the Maluku Islands and Sulawesi Islands in Indonesia, Kashmir, and the Mindanao Peninsula in the Philippines all became arenas of jihad in the 1990s. See also *The 9/11 Commission Report*, <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf>, p. 60.
- 41 *United States of America v. Usama Bin Laden*, February 2, 2001, pp. 221-23, [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_of\\_America\\_v.\\_Usama\\_bin\\_Laden/Day\\_2\\_6\\_February\\_2001](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United_States_of_America_v._Usama_bin_Laden/Day_2_6_February_2001).
- 42 An entire division in the Bosnian army – the Abu Ma'ali Mujahidin Division – comprised veterans of the Afghanistan war under the guidance of al-Qaeda.
- 43 In Chechnya, Ibn Khattab, a veteran of the war in Afghanistan, was notable for having constructed a military force composed of veterans of the Afghani jihad, who fought alongside the local rebels against Russia.
- 44 See Clint Watts, Jacob Shapiro, and Vahid Brown, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa* (West Point: Harmony Project, Combating Terrorism Center, 2007), p. 78, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Al-Qaidas-MisAdventures-in-the-Horn-of-Africa.pdf>.
- 45 The Taliban was composed of Afghani students (Talib literally means a student) who had studied in Pakistan. The organization was established by the ISI, the Pakistani intelligence service, in order to promote Pakistan's interests in the region. Although the group did not take part in the fighting against the Soviets during the 1980s, it became involved in the Afghani civil war that developed after

- the Soviet withdrawal.
- 46 *United States of America v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, United States District Court, Southern District of New York, February 28, 2001, p. 1652, <http://cryptome.org/usa-v-ubl-12.htm>.
  - 47 Jamal al-Fadl's testimony in a US federal courtroom, *United States of America v. Usama Bin Laden et al.*, February 28, 2001, pp. 289-91, <http://cryptome.org/usa-v-ubl-02.htm>.
  - 48 Particularly humiliating was the presence of infidel US servicemen and servicewomen on the holy land, the birthplace of Islam, and the home of the two holiest sites in Islam. Osama Bin Laden viewed this as an abomination.
  - 49 Regional instability followed in the wake of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in the summer of 1990, leading to a sense of threat among the Gulf States, especially Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden approached the Saudis and offered the services of al-Qaeda, based on the Islamic force he was building, to defend the kingdom against Saddam Hussein. Saudi Arabia rejected his offer, opting instead to invite the United States to build bases on its soil to fight the Iraqi invader. These bases remained active long after the first Gulf War and Iraq's defeat.
  - 50 Watts, Shapiro, and Brown, *Al-Qaida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*, p. 5, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Al-Qaidas-MisAdventures-in-the-Horn-of-Africa.pdf>.
  - 51 Bin Laden, the "hero of Afghanistan," had significant influence on the masses in Saudi Arabia, and his militant condemnations of the US presence were a source of grave concern for Saudi leaders. In fact, Saudi officials negotiated with Bin Laden and were prepared to allow him back in the country and restore his citizenship, status, and property, on the condition that he stop inciting the masses against the United States. Bin Laden refused the Saudi offer, in response to which the Saudis made an attempt on his life in Sudan.
  - 52 This possibility was raised in an article by Ronen Bergman. See *Yediot Ahronot* supplement "Seven Days," August 26, 2011, p. 28. There are initial indications that al-Qaeda personnel, who trained in Hizbollah camps in Lebanon, were involved in the attacks in Saudi Arabia. Still, there is no firm evidence supporting the claim that Iran knew in advance of al-Qaeda's intention to strike the United States on September 11, 2001, or actually helped carry it out, as implied in the article.
  - 53 "Bin Laden Declared Jihad on Americans," *al-Islah* (London), September 2, 1996.
  - 54 *Ibid.*
  - 55 "Bin Laden Interviewed on Jihad against US," *al-Quds al-Arabi* (London), November 27, 1996.
  - 56 Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's Inc., 2002), p. 4.
  - 57 *The 9/11 Commission Report*, pp. 148-49.
  - 58 Khaled Sheikh Muhammad was a member of a group that operated against the United States during the early 1990s and carried out the first attack on the World Trade Center and came up with the Bojinca plot. Though Osama Bin Laden and Khaled Sheikh Muhammad had met in the Afghani melting pot, the activities of this group were not linked with al-Qaeda.



- 59 Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, p. 55.
- 60 The merger with al-Qaeda and the adoption of the external jihad ideology at the expense of internal jihad aroused widespread opposition against al-Zawahiri, which at times turned into personal antagonism, among members of Egyptian Islamic Jihad. In this context, see the email exchanges between al-Zawahiri and his Egyptian supporters, discovered in al-Zawahiri's personal computer seized in Afghanistan, cited in Alan Cullison, "Inside Al-Qaeda's Hard Drive," *Atlantic Monthly*, September 2004, pp. 64-67.
- 61 Other organizations signing the *fatwa* on opening "an Islamic front to fight the Jews and Crusaders" were the Gamma'a al-Islamiyah in Egypt, the Pakistan Jama'at al-Ulama, and the Bangladeshi Jihad Movement, <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980223-fatwa.htm>.
- 62 Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, p. 61.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- 64 Bin Laden engaged here in some interesting word play. He used the Arabic name Abdullah, which means "God's servant," but in addition Bin Laden himself was known among his followers as Abu Abdullah.
- 65 Statement by Osama Bin Laden, *al-Jazeera Satellite Channel Television*, December 27, 2001.
- 66 "First War of the Century: Statement by al-Qaeda Leader Osama Bin Laden," *al-Jazeera Satellite Channel Television*, December 27, 2001.
- 67 *Ibid.*
- 68 *A-Sharqi al-Awsat*, November 13, 2000.
- 69 Joseph Stieglitz, "The Globalization of Protest," Project Syndicate, November 4, 2011; Joseph Stieglitz, "The Price of 9/11," Project Syndicate, September 1, 2011, <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-price-of-9-11>; Joseph E. Stieglitz and Linda J. Bilmes, "The True Cost of the Iraq War: \$3 Trillion and Beyond," *Washington Post*, September 5, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/03/AR2010090302200.html>.
- 70 "Bin Laden's Former 'Bodyguard' Interviewed on al-Qaeda Strategies," *al-Quds al-Arabi* (London), August 3, 2004, p. 4.
- 71 At the time of the rise of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad identified the movement of caravans traveling through the desert crossroads in Mecca as the most important economic element in the day-to-day life of the city. Therefore, in order to cause the economic collapse of the city and its residents before its conquest, the prophet's followers perpetrated a series of attacks on those caravans, aborting their movement and leading to economic collapse for Meccans and Mecca, which later fell into the hands of the new Muslims. See Marisa Urgo and Jack F. Williams, "Al-Qaeda's Medinan Strategy: Targeting Global Energy Infrastructure," *CTC Sentinel* 1, no. 6, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/volume-1-issue-6>.
- 72 The initial operational idea for the 9/11 attacks included the hijacking of ten American passenger planes (five on each coast) and crashing nine of them. The tenth was to have landed with Khaled Sheikh Muhammad onboard. He would then have explained the motivation and circumstances of the attack to the American people. In the end, this proposal was not implemented because of logistical unfeasibility, but the intention and thought made clear the connection the



- organization saw between operations and propaganda. See *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 154.
- 73 Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, p. 66.
- 74 Rohan Gunaratna and Aviv Oreg, "Al Qaeda's Organizational Structure and its Evolution," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33, no. 12 (2010): 1043-78.
- 75 Gunaratna and Oreg, "Al Qaeda's Organization Structure and its Evolution," p. 1055.
- 76 Two of the senior commanders, Khaled Sheikh Muhammad and Abdullah Nashiri, testified that they decided to become active under the wing of al-Qaeda after understanding that the organization was in fact realizing its vision to carry out an active jihad using terrorism against Islam's enemies.
- 77 Yoram Schweitzer and Shaul Shay, *Expected Surprise: The Terrorist Attacks Against the United States on September 11, 2001 and their Ramifications* (Herzylia: Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya and the Counterterrorist Policy Institute, 2002), pp. 159-79.
- 78 The fourth plane, which crashed in a field in Pennsylvania thanks to the bravery of the passengers who fought the terrorists, was – according to the original plan – to have crashed into the White House. When it became clear that this would be impossible, the target was changed to Capitol Hill.
- 79 Schweitzer and Shay, *Expected Surprise*, pp. 132-33.
- 80 Bin Laden's speech to the Iraqi people, Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), December 28, 2004.
- 81 Bin Laden's sermon in honor of Eid al-Adha, MEMRI, February 23, 2003.
- 82 Schweitzer and Shay, *Expected Surprise*, p. 49.

## Notes to Chapter 2, A Decade of Terrorism: Al-Qaeda's Strategy of Warfare

- 1 Until his arrest in March 2003, followed by his replacements: Hamza Rabia (until his death at the end of 2005), Abu Ubeida al-Masri (until his death in 2007), Sallah al-Somali (until his death in 2009), and Adnan Shukri Juma'a (Jafar al-Tayar).
- 2 See Appendix on attacks and attempted attacks.
- 3 In addition to carrying out multi-victim attacks on the international arena, the organization was involved in dozens of terrorist attacks in arenas of jihad (Afghanistan and especially Iraq). There too al-Qaeda used methods designed to maximize the number of casualties. But in the arenas of jihad this activity aroused a great deal of opposition and caused the organization's legitimacy to suffer in the eyes of the Muslim public because of the high number of Muslim casualties.
- 4 See, for example, Harun Fazul's descriptions of dozens of operatives who came to Somalia from Europe to become shaheeds (martyrs). Harun Fazul, *War against Islam*, Part 2, p. 97, available at <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/The-Story-of-Fazul-Harun-Part-2-O.pdf>.
- 5 One such example is the attack in Bali in October 2002. The operatives were members of Jamma'al-Islamiyah in Southeast Asia. The attack, which killed 202 civilians, mostly tourists, was the first suicide attack ever carried out by the

- organization and its first attack of any sort in Indonesia.
- 6 Data from the Terrorism and Low Intensity Warfare Program at the Institute for National Security Studies.
  - 7 Further evidence of the importance of economic jihad to the campaign as a whole was provided by Osama Bin Laden himself, as reported by Sajid Badat, an al-Qaeda agent who was supposed to blow up a US passenger plane in flight, using explosives hidden in his shoe, and who received personal instructions from the leader of the organization: “The US economy is like a chain. If you break one link, the whole thing collapses. After the attacks [of 9/11], this operation [by Badat and Reid] will destroy the airline industry, and after that the entire economy will collapse.” See *Daily Mail* April 24, 2012, at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2134351/Saajid-Muhammad-Badat-Osama-Bin-Laden-wanted-shoe-bombers-wreck-aviation-industry.html>.
  - 8 Stieglitz, “The Price of 9/11”; Stieglitz and Bilmes, “The True Cost of the Iraq War.”
  - 9 One of the explanations for the severe economic recession affecting the West, especially the United States, which began in 2008, holds that the 9/11 attacks led to an unprecedented increase in security measures at airports, impinging on the freedom and efficiency of movement of passengers throughout the United States. Consequently, large corporations and companies preferred to use private planes rather than commercial flights. The steep drop in passenger travel, especially in the more expensive classes, led to bankruptcy among many mid-size and smaller airlines, especially in the United States, and tens of thousands of airline workers were dismissed. The latter then had difficulty meeting their mortgage obligations, thereby generating the great mortgage crisis from which the US economy is still trying to recover. For more on the long-term implications of the 9/11 attacks, see, for example, Yitzhak Ben Horin, “A Decade since 9/11: Bin Laden Is Laughing at the US from Hell,” *Ynet*, August 26, 2011, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4110366,00.html>.
  - 10 See Appendix on attacks and attempted attacks.
  - 11 An article published in the organization’s magazine, *Inspire*, stated, “Since the attacks of 9/11, the West has invested a great deal in upgrading security on passenger flights. The 9/11 attacks, and afterwards the attempted attacks by Richard Reid and Farouk Abed al-Mutaleb and the attempted attack at Heathrow, forced the nations of the West to invest billions of dollars in upgrading security systems on passenger planes.... But what about cargo planes? The global cargo flight industry is a tremendous one, estimated at many billions of dollars.... And because this industry is necessary... we [through these attacks] have forced the West to undertake significant security modifications in order to cope with the new threat we are posing. This will represent a huge burden on their already struggling economies.... We have presented the West with two options: either the West invests billions of dollars on security clearance of each and every package or the West changes nothing and we exploit it to strike again.”
  - 12 Via elements linked to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Midhat Morsi Abu Hubab.
  - 13 See the leaked US Department of Defense summary of the interrogation of Khaled Sheikh Muhammad, “Combatant Status Review Tribunal Input and

- Recommendation for Continued Detention under DoD Control (CD) for Guantanamo Detainee, ISN: US9KU-010024DP (S),” US Department of Defense Memorandum, December 8, 2006, <http://wikileaks.org/gitmo/pdf/ku/us9ku-010024dp.pdf>.
- 14 One of the ideas was to scatter anthrax spores over large wheat-growing areas in the United States using rented crop dusters. Muhammad Atta, the leader of the group of pilots responsible for the 9/11 attacks, was told to examine the operational feasibility of this idea. See Ross Getman, “Al-Qaeda, Anthrax and Ayman,” November 20, 2002, <http://cryptome.org/alqaeda-anthrax.htm>.
  - 15 Information that was leaked via WikiLeaks, originating in the interrogation of Abu Faraj al-Libi, who at the time of his arrest was the leader of al-Qaeda’s military committee, and of an operative of the group, Sheriff al-Masri, who at the time of his arrest was a regional commander in the organization’s interior affairs unit.
  - 16 Ronald Sandee, “Qaidat al-Jihad’s Near Future,” Nefa Foundation, May 2011, reproduced at <http://www.slantright.com/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=3197> and <http://nefafoundation.org/file/AQNearFuture051611.pdf>.
  - 17 The information needs verification and its relevance is unclear. Still, it is worrisome and in 2008 it was identified as an “intelligence gap” by official US intelligence sources. See “Recommendation for Continued Detention under DoD Control (CD) for Guantanamo Detainee, ISN US9LY-010017DP (S) Abu Faraj al-Libi,” US Department of Defense Memorandum, September 10, 2008, p. 9, <http://wikileaks.ch/gitmo/pdf/ly/us9ly-010017dp.pdf>.
  - 18 See summary of the interrogation of Khaled Sheikh Muhammad at Guantanamo, “Combatant Status Review Tribunal Input and Recommendation for Continued Detention Under DoD Control (CD) for Guantanamo Detainee, ISN: US9KU-010024DP (S),” US Department of Defense Memorandum, December 8, 2006, <http://wikileaks.org/gitmo/pdf/ku/us9ku-010024dp.pdf>.
  - 19 Timothy L. Thomas, “Al-Qaeda and the Internet: The Danger of ‘Cyberplanning,’” *Parameters* (Spring 2003): 112-23, [strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/articles/03spring/thomas.pdf](http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/articles/03spring/thomas.pdf).
  - 20 Testimony of Dan Verton, United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, February 24, 2004, [http://www.judiciary.senate.gov/hearings/testimony.cfm?id=4f1e0899533f7680e78d03281ff494d5&wit\\_id=4f1e0899533f7680e78d03281ff494d5-2-1](http://www.judiciary.senate.gov/hearings/testimony.cfm?id=4f1e0899533f7680e78d03281ff494d5&wit_id=4f1e0899533f7680e78d03281ff494d5-2-1).
  - 21 See Appendix on attacks and attempted attacks.
  - 22 Tom Curry, “Obama Reframes Counterterrorism Policy with New Rules on Drones,” National Affairs Writer, *NBC News*, May 23, 2013, [http://nbcpolitics.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2013/05/23/18448515-obama-reframes-counterterrorism-policy-with-new-rules-on-drones?lite](http://nbcpolitics.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/05/23/18448515-obama-reframes-counterterrorism-policy-with-new-rules-on-drones?lite).
  - 23 Gunaratna and Oreg, “Al-Qaeda’s Organizational Structure,” p. 1053.
  - 24 Yoram Schweitzer, “Al-Qaeda and Suicide Terrorism: Vision and Reality,” *Military and Strategic Affairs* 2, no. 2 (2010): 101-12, [http://d26e8pvoto2x3r.cloudfront.net/uploadimages/import/\(file\)1298360264.pdf](http://d26e8pvoto2x3r.cloudfront.net/uploadimages/import/(file)1298360264.pdf).
  - 25 In this context, one example would be the Sadah camp belonging to the al-Ittihad al-Islami al-Afghani organization under the command of Afghani fighter Abed

- al-Rasul Sayyaf, which provided training services and operational experience to operatives from various locales – including Baluchistan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines – to take part in the jihad against the Soviets.
- 26 Abu Sayyaf is a terrorist organization with a radical Islamic ideology operating in the Mindanao Peninsula in the Philippines. The founder and leader, Abed al-Razak Janjalani, was a member of the Sadah camp and named his new organization for the Sadah commander, Abed al-Rasul Sayyaf.
  - 27 Gunaratna and Oreg, “Al-Qaeda’s Organizational Structure,” p. 1069.
  - 28 See Appendix on attacks and attempted attacks.
  - 29 For more information, see Appendix on attacks and attempted attacks. Another example of operational cooperation between al-Qaeda and local organizations based on personal relationships can be found in the operational activity of the Uzbek organization Islamic Jihad Union (IJU). Abu Layth a-Libi, one of the senior commanders of al-Qaeda in the general department of the organization’s military committee, managed to influence several operatives from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) to leave the parent group and establish the IJU, drawing on their position that the organization should expand the range of its targets – from its focus on attacks against the local regime to include Western targets as well. Members of the splinter group subsequently carried out suicide attacks on the Israeli and US embassies in Tashkent in July 2004. Later, the organization’s intent to carry out several attacks in Western Europe, especially Germany, came to light.
  - 30 Gunaratna and Oreg, “Al-Qaeda’s Organizational Structure,” p. 1051.
  - 31 Ibid.
  - 32 Ibid.
  - 33 Ibid.
  - 34 In this context, we should mention the intentions of the Saudi cell, headed by al-A’syari, al-Jawfi, and Muqron, to carry out an attack patterned on 9/11 by hijacking passenger planes flying out of Eastern Europe and crashing them into selected targets in London, as well as the intention to crash a Royal Saudi air force fighter jet – to be flown by an organization agent and pilot in the Saudi air force – into one of the resort hotels in Israel’s southernmost city of Eilat. Document retrieved from NEFA – Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation, Charleston, South Carolina 2007-2013.
  - 35 Gunaratna and Oreg, “Al-Qaeda’s Organizational Structure,” p. 1056.
  - 36 Open Source Center, “Al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula Claims Attempted Attack in US,” *Jihadist Websites – OSC Summary in Arabic*, December 28, 2009.
  - 37 Document retrieved from NEFA – Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation. Another of the organization’s successes, which started mostly as propaganda, was the activity of Anwar al-Awlaki. For many years, al-Awlaki, a Salafist imam with US citizenship, had served as the imam of the Dar al-Hijra mosque in a small town in Virginia. Some of the terrorists who carried out the 9/11 attacks visited the small mosque and listened to al-Awlaki’s sermons as they were preparing the operation. After the attacks, al-Awlaki was interrogated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and although his ties to 9/11 were never proven, he fled, first to Great Britain and then to Yemen, where he joined AQAP. In Yemen, al-Awlaki

- continued his widespread propaganda activity, which included establishing a popular website where he expounded on the principles of Salafiya Jihadiya and called on his faithful supporters to carry out attacks commensurate with their capabilities and initiative in their countries of origin. He also conducted persuasive campaigns aimed at website visitors. In fact, many attacks and attempted attacks by local activists, especially in Europe and the United States, can be traced to al-Awlaki (see Appendix on attacks and attempted attacks).
- 38 So called for a Lebanese al-Qaeda operative who flew the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001.
  - 39 So called for the Saudi Arabian leader of al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia.
  - 40 “Abdullah Azzam Brigades,” Civil Effort in Fighting International Terrorism, <http://www.cefit.com/?categoryId=23531&itemId=125602>.
  - 41 Evan F Kohlmann, *Shabaab al-Mujahideen: Migration and Jihad in the Horn of Africa*, Nefa Foundation, May 2009, available at <http://nefafoundation.org/file/FeaturedDocs/nefashabaabreport0509.pdf> and <http://www.scribd.com/doc/94976876/Shabaab-Mujahiddeen-Migration-and-Jihad-in-the-Horn-of-Africa>.
  - 42 Fazul, *War against Islam*, Part 2, p. 97.
  - 43 Document retrieved from NEFA – Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation.
  - 44 “Somalia’s New Role in Light of Recent Arrests,” Civil Effort in Fighting International Terrorism, August 4, 2009, <http://www.cefit.com/?categoryId=41108&itemId=79326>.
  - 45 “Death of Harun Fazul – East African al-Qaeda Leader,” *Asiantribune.com*, June 12, 2011, <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2011/06/11/death-harun-fazul-east-african-al-qaeda-leader>.
  - 46 A third planned operation was not carried out because the terrorist had a last-minute change of heart.
  - 47 Document retrieved from NEFA – Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation.
  - 48 Thomas Jocelyn and Bill Roggio, “Shabaab Formally Joins al-Qaeda,” *The Long War Journal*, February 9, 2012, [http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/02/shabaab\\_formally\\_joi.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/02/shabaab_formally_joi.php).
  - 49 The distinction between a martyrdom mission and suicide attack was first made by Israeli security and military personnel during the second Palestinian uprising, known as the al-Aqsa Intifada. While a suicide attack involves terrorists setting off explosive devices attached to their own body, knowing for certain that they will die in the course of the operation, in the martyrdom mission there is a chance, albeit a slim one, that the operative will survive.
  - 50 Among these organizations are the Thai PULO, the Philippine MILF and RSM, the Indian SIMI, the Pakistani JEM, HUJI, HUM, HM, HUMA, LEJ, and SSP, the Uyghur ETIM, active in Western China, the Iraqi Kurdish Ansar al-Islam, the Egyptian Gamma’a al-Islamiyah, the Jerusalem Supporters Organization (Ansar Bait al-Maqadis), active in the Sinai Peninsula, the Palestinian umbrella organization Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem (uniting all the Salafist jihadist groups in the Gaza Strip), the Lebanese al-Ansar Formation and Fatah al-Islam, the South African PAGAD, the Somali AIAI, the Eritrean EJIM, the Moroccan GICM, and the Nigerian Taliban (Boko Haram), operating

- in and controlling the northern part of the country.
- 51 Taken from a partial translation of Abu Musab al-Suri, *The Global Islamic Resistance Call*, [http://www.archive.org/download/TheGlobalIslamicResistanceCall/The\\_Global\\_Islamic\\_Resistance\\_Call\\_-\\_Chapter\\_8\\_sections\\_5\\_to\\_7\\_LIST\\_OF\\_TARGETS.pdf](http://www.archive.org/download/TheGlobalIslamicResistanceCall/The_Global_Islamic_Resistance_Call_-_Chapter_8_sections_5_to_7_LIST_OF_TARGETS.pdf).
  - 52 Lia Brynjar, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 367-71.
  - 53 Bruce Hoffman, "Al-Qaeda Has a New Strategy. Obama Needs One, Too," *Washington Post*, January 10, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2010/01/08/AR2010010803555.html>.
  - 54 "Abu Musab al-Suri's Military Theory of Jihad," *SITE*, October 14, 2010, <https://news.siteintelgroup.com/component/content/article/21-suri-a-mili>.
  - 55 "AQAP Outlines Strategy against West," *Middle East News Line*, November 22, 2010, <http://www.menewline.com/article-21330-AQAP-Outlines-Strategy-Against-We.aspx>.
  - 56 Raffaello Pantucci, *A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Islamist Terrorists*, International Centre for the Study of Radicalism, March 2011, [http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/1302002992ICSRPaper\\_ATypologyofLoneWolves\\_Pantucci.pdf](http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/1302002992ICSRPaper_ATypologyofLoneWolves_Pantucci.pdf).
  - 57 Ibid.
  - 58 Ibid.
  - 59 Hoffman, "Al-Qaeda Has a New Strategy."
  - 60 Bruce Hoffman and Peter Bergen, "Assessing the Terrorist Threat," Bipartisan Policy Center, September 10, 2010.
  - 61 A highly instructive example of the tremendous media reverberations caused by a relatively small-scale attack, which killed three US citizens, is the one carried out in April 2013 by two brothers, US residents of Chechnyan descent, during the Boston Marathon. The coverage of the attack and its aftermath was exceptionally intensive, lasting continuously for almost a full week by all US media. According to all currently available information, the attack was carried out without any external assistance.
  - 62 Hoffman and Bergen, "Assessing the Terrorist Threat."
  - 63 Brian Michael Jenkins, *Would-Be Warriors: Incidents of Jihadist Terrorist Radicalization in the United States since September 11, 2001*, RAND Corporation, 2010.
  - 64 This refers to the 15 al-Qaeda agents from Saudi Arabia who entered the United States to serve as muscle hijackers in the hijacking of the planes on 9/11. The key operatives, that is, the pilots, were home-grown.
  - 65 Theo van Gogh, a Dutch publicist who was a vocal critic of radical Islam, was stabbed to death by an operative of such an Islamic radical group – the Hofstad Network – which had formed in one of Amsterdam's radical mosques. Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* (New York: New York City Police Department, Intelligence Division, 2007), pp. 49-50.
  - 66 Attempted attacks by such groups were foiled in Australia, Canada, and the United States, after the operatives succeeded in amassing impressive quantities of



- raw materials for constructing explosives. See Silber and Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West*, pp. 53-54.
- 67 The July 21, 2005 attempted attack on the London transit system by four operatives, meant to replicate the success of similar attacks two weeks earlier, ended without casualties. Unlike the terrorists who sowed much destruction and killed and maimed many, the operatives of the failed attack did not receive the proper training and acted on the basis of information they had gathered from the internet.
- 68 Silber and Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West*, pp. 48-49.
- 69 David Gordon Smith, "Germans Have to Distinguish between Muslims and Murderers," *Der Spiegel*, March 4, 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,749173,00.html>.
- 70 See Financial Action Task Force, *Terrorist Financing* (Paris: FATF/OECD, 2008), pp. 11-19.
- 71 The money that financed the preparations for 9/11 was transferred by the organization's leaders to the United States through the world banking system. See *The 9/11 Commission Report*, pp. 224-25.
- 72 Hawala is a traditional system of transferring funds relying on a network of personal acquaintances and tribal affiliations, with virtually no banking or other records. Anyone who wants to transfer money to someone else in another location contacts the Hawala representative in his area and gives him the money in question. The intended recipient goes to the Hawala representative in his area and receives the same sum from him. The two Hawala representatives usually belong to the same tribe, meet from time to time, and balance their accounts.
- 73 See Financial Action Task Force, *Terrorist Financing*, pp. 21-25.
- 74 Yoram Schweitzer and Einav Yogev, "Targeted Killing in the US War on Terror: Effective Tool or Double-Edged Sword," *Strategic Assessment* 15, no. 1 (2012): 67-77, [http://d26e8pvoto2x3r.cloudfront.net/uploadimages/import/\(file\)1337251172.pdf](http://d26e8pvoto2x3r.cloudfront.net/uploadimages/import/(file)1337251172.pdf).
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- 76 Lee Ferran, "Al-Qaeda 'Shadow of Former Self,' US Counter-Terror Official Says," *ABC News*, April 30, 2012, <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2012/04/al-qaeda-shadow-of-former-self/>.
- 77 Typically, undercover agents make themselves known to the suspect and suggest he carry out an attack with a dummy explosive device or non-functional weapons they give him. The moment the suspect tries to carry out the planned attack using the non-functional weapons he is arrested, tried, and sentenced to lengthy imprisonment.
- 78 Communal leaders working with the security establishment contact the family of the individual in question, involve teachers and opinion leaders in the community in a process directed at the individual, and in many cases introduce him to moderate Muslim clergymen.
- 79 See the appointment of the organization's secretary general, Atiya Abed al-Rahman, in October 2010, document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in 2011, available at Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctic.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000015->

- Trans.pdf; see also the appointment of Sheikh Yunis al-Mauritani to head al-Qaeda's international operations in Africa and West Asia, document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in May 2011, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000019-Trans.pdf>.
- 80 See Osama Bin Laden's instructions on the establishment of a media apparatus for al-Qaeda's various affiliates, document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in May 2011, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000019-Trans.pdf>; see also Bin Laden's precise directions to Adam Ghadahn, a senior member of the media committee of the organization, about the media activity required to mark the ten-year anniversary of 9/11, document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in 2011, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000004-Trans.pdf>.
- 81 See Osama Bin Laden's general instructions on the attack policy transmitted as instructions to Sheikh Atiya for dissemination to al-Qaeda's affiliates, document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in 2011, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000015-Trans.pdf>, and specific directions to Sheikh Abu Bassir al-Yamani, the AQAP leader, document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in 2011, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000016-Trans.pdf>.
- 82 See Osama Bin Laden's instructions on Somalia, document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in 2011, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000005-Trans.pdf>, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000004-Trans.pdf>.
- 83 Document retrieved from Osama Bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad in 2011, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000004-Trans.pdf>.

### Notes to Chapter 3, Al-Qaeda and Global Jihad: Quo Vadis?

- 1 "Obama: Core of al-Qaeda on 'Path to Defeat,'" *Fox News Insider*, May 23, 2013, <http://foxnewsinsider.com/2013/05/23/obama-core-al-qaeda-%E2%80%98path-to-defeat%E2%80%99>.
- 2 The last attack on the international arena (outside the Afghanistan/Pakistan arena) that al-Qaeda managed to carry out was the one on the London public transit system in July 2005. All the attacks carried out in the name of global jihad since then, which caused the deaths of hundreds of people around the globe, were carried out by various partners, whether local organizations, local initiatives, or lone wolves.
- 3 See documents found in Osama Bin Laden's hiding place in Abbottabad, <http://www.tribuneofusa.com/obamacore-of-al-qaeda-on-path-to-defeat/> and <http://>



- [www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000012-Trans.pdf](http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SOCOM-2012-0000012-Trans.pdf).
- 4 Some, such as Saif al-Adil, the former head of the organization's military committee, have in the meantime gone back to Iran given the danger to their safety after Bin Laden's elimination.
  - 5 For several years, terrorists in South Yemen have been waging a campaign to separate from the rest of Yemen. See "New AQAP Video, Uploaded to YouTube before Its Official Release, Celebrates Victories over Yemeni Army in South Yemen," MEMRI, October 31, 2011, <http://www.memrijtm.org/content/en/report.htm?report=5760&param=APT>, and Open Source Center, "Report on Al-Qaida's New Tactics in Yemen," *a-Sharq al-Awsat Online*, July 22, 2009, Document ID#GMP20090722825002.
  - 6 See al-Zawahiri's letter to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi of June 2005, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/CTC-Zawahiri-Letter-10-05.pdf>.
  - 7 Jason Burke, "Al-Qaida Leader Zawahiri Urges Muslim Support for Syrian Uprising," *The Guardian*, February 12, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/12/alqaida-zawahiri-support-syrian-uprising>.
  - 8 Based on his speech patterns, the organization's speaker heard in a promotional video is neither Egyptian nor Bedouin; he may be Palestinian or Iraqi. Video retrieved from YouTube, July 24, 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q215CvKa10s>.
  - 9 See the praise given by Ayman al-Zawahiri, in his own voice, to Ansar Bait al-Maqdis for the attacks on the Egypt-Israel natural gas pipeline, <http://arabiansword.wordpress.com/2012/03/13/%D9%82%D8%A8%D9%84-%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%B1%D9%89-%D8%B6%D8%B1%D8%A8-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A8-%D8%AE%D8%B7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%A7/> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFXOJHid7ME>.
  - 10 "The Mujahideen Shura Council, a Global Jihad-Affiliated Organization Based in the Gaza Strip, Has Recently Become Prominent for Firing Rockets and Mortar Shells into Israeli Territory," Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, April 22, 2013, <http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/20504>.
  - 11 "Al-Shabaab Joining al Qaeda, Monitor Group Says," *CNN*, February 9, 2012, [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-09/africa/world\\_africa\\_somalia-shabaab-qaeda\\_1\\_al-zawahiri-qaeda-somali-americans?\\_s=PM:AFRICA](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-09/africa/world_africa_somalia-shabaab-qaeda_1_al-zawahiri-qaeda-somali-americans?_s=PM:AFRICA).
  - 12 Roy Case, "Rebels Divided: Jihad, Ego and Coercion," *Ynet*, September 22, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4432291,00.html>.
  - 13 "Rebel Group Jabhat al-Nusra Declare Allegiance to al-Qaeda," *Ynet*, April 10, 2013, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4366434,00.html>.
  - 14 Interrogations of senior organization operatives revealed that the organization had carried out preliminary preparations for an attack to avenge the possible assassination of Osama Bin Laden. It was reported that al-Qaeda had obtained a small nuclear device, apparently from Pakistanis involved in their nation's nuclear program, in order to carry out a revenge attack on US soil. These interrogations also revealed that in 2004 the organization tried very hard to move the device

- from Europe to the United States (likely in order to store it there for when it would be needed). Those interrogated were Abu Faraj al-Libi, who served as the head of al-Qaeda's military committee in 2003-2005, and Sharif al-Masri, a senior field operative in the same branch. Summaries of their interrogations were published on the internet among the documents leaked by WikiLeaks in April 2011. See "Recommendation for Continued Detention Under DoD Control (CD) for Guantanamo Detainee, ISN US9LY-010017(Abu Faraj al-Libi) DP (S)," US Department of Defense Memorandum, February 5, 2008, p. 9, <http://wikileaks.org/gitmo/pdf/ym/us9ym-000564dp.pdf>.
- 15 "Is al-Qaeda on the Brink of Conducting New Wave of Attacks in the West? Al-Qaeda's External Operations Unit Update-Rehabilitating, Functioning, Training and Plotting," Civil Effort in Fighting International Terrorism, September 6, 2009, [http://www.upsite.co.il/uploaded/files/626\\_8230c8bf67553cd90811a026c3d14bbf.pdf](http://www.upsite.co.il/uploaded/files/626_8230c8bf67553cd90811a026c3d14bbf.pdf).
  - 16 Global jihadists in the Sahara region have managed to assume control of large areas of Mali. In early 2013, in response to an explicit request by the President of Mali, a sizable French force launched a large-scale offensive there against Islamic insurgents, turning the northern part of Mali into a new arena of jihad, and Muslim volunteers started arriving from all over the world to join the fighting against the French.
  - 17 Aaron Zelin, Evan Kohlmann, and Laith al-Khouri, *Convoy of Martyrs in the Levant*, Flashpoint Global Partners, June 2013, <http://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/convoy-of-martyrs-in-the-levant-a-joint-study-charting-the-evolving-role-of-sunni-foreign-fighters-in-the-armed-uprising-against-the-assad-regime-in-syria2.pdf>.
  - 18 See, for example, Ronald Sandee, *Inside the Jihad: Dutch Fighters in Syria*, Kronos, 2013, [http://www.kronosadvisory.com/Kronos\\_DUTCH.FIGHTERS.IN.SYRIA.pdf](http://www.kronosadvisory.com/Kronos_DUTCH.FIGHTERS.IN.SYRIA.pdf).
  - 19 An online magazine produced by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula that contains propaganda and instructions for jihadists on using weapons.
  - 20 It has been estimated that the main candidates for taking actions against Western targets in the next few years are AQAP, AQIM, the Shabaab al-Mujahidin al-Somali, the Nigerian Boko Haram, the Abdullah Azzam Brigades (including their various branches in Saudi Arabia and Lebanon), the Uzbek Islamic Jihad Union, and the Pakistani Lashqar e-Toyba.

## Notes to Chapter 4, Israel, the Jews, and the Threat of Global Jihad

- 1 Ayman al-Zawahiri, "46 Years since the Defeat of the Arab Armies in the Six Day War," video retrieved from YouTube on July 31, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPIHaDL2QWE>.
- 2 "Bin Laden's Deputy: Israel in Our Sights," *Ynet*, September 11, 2006, <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3302197,00.html>.
- 3 According to Muslim tradition, there are distinct stages in waging a religiously commanded war of jihad. An important stage, just before the declaration of jihad and going to war, is *ribat*, in which the Muslim warriors gather along the enemy's

- border. It is a prerequisite for declaring jihad. See Maliah and Shay, *From Kabul to Jerusalem*, pp. 109-15.
- 4 “65 Years since the Establishment of the Occupying State of Israel, Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, God Preserve Him,” video retrieved from YouTube on June 6, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9kaHWF-2ds>.
  - 5 An example from a different arena is the June 18, 2012, attack on the Egyptian-Israeli border in which an Israeli civilian was killed and two were wounded by terrorists, Egyptian and Saudi citizens, who had reached Sinai as another station in their journey of jihad, after having taken part in fighting against the government of Muammar Qaddafi in Libya. See “Sinai Peninsula as an Active Arena of Islamic Terrorism,” Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, August 13, 2012, <http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/he/article/20381>. See also “Terrorists Attack Israeli Civilians in Cross-Border Attack from Egypt,” Israel Defense Forces, June 18, 2012, <http://www.idfblog.com/2012/06/18/terrorists-attack-israeli-civilians-in-cross-border-attack-from-egypt/>.
  - 6 Yoram Schweitzer and Gal Toren, “Global Jihad in Syria: Disputes Amidst a Common Goal,” *INSS Insight* No. 419, April 18, 2013, <http://www.inss.org.il/index.aspx?id=4454&userid=123&type=212&fromDate=17/04/2013&toDate=17/04/2013>.
  - 7 “Expert: The War in Syria Is Part of a Sunni Vision Whose Objective Is the Destruction of Israel,” *NRG*, June 11, 2013, <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/479/443.html?snopcmdt=1>.
  - 8 This is the organization whose establishment was unilaterally declared by Abu Baker al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISI in Iraq, and rejected by Muhammad al-Julani, the leader of Jabhat al-Nusra.
  - 9 The reference is to Jund Ansar Allah, established in 2007, which made headlines when it tried to attack IDF forces using an original means – booby-trapped horses – in June 2009; Jaish al-Islam, headed by Mumtaz Durmush, who was involved in the abduction of Gilad Shalit to the Gaza Strip in June 2006; Tawhid Wal Jihad, headed by Hashim al-Sai’adini until he was eliminated by the IDF in October 2012; and Ansar al-Sunna, headed by Abu Hamza al-Maqdisi.
  - 10 For example, moving the landing strip of civilian aircraft at the Eilat airport.

