

# Assessing al-Qaeda's Chemical Threat

René Pita

Athena Paper, Vol. 2, No 2

Article 3/5

April 17, 2007

[www.athenaintelligence.org](http://www.athenaintelligence.org)

**Athena Intelligence**

*Red de Investigación Avanzada  
en Insurgencia y Terrorismo*



## Introduction

After the 11 September 2001 (9/11) terrorist attacks in the United States, there is a high perception of risk of possible attacks with chemical weapons (CW), especially by groups affiliated or associated with the al-Qaeda terrorist network. Earlier, in 1994 and 1995, Aum Shinrikyo, a religious organization in Japan, used sarin, a nerve chemical warfare agent, in attacks in Matsumoto City and on the Tokyo subway, causing a large number of casualties. These terrorist attacks had a big impact on the chemical defence and intelligence communities but not on other circles, perhaps because a chemical attack by a religious organization in Japan seemed something far removed from the reality of the rest of the world. But this changed after 9/11 when the mailing of letters containing anthrax spores, accompanied by images of the attacks on the World Trade Center towers, increased the concern about weapons of mass destruction (WMD) attacks, including by CW.

As a religious terrorist group, al-Qaeda does not fit the assumption made by Brian Jenkins in 1975 that “terrorists want a lot of people watching and a lot of people listening, and not a lot of people dead.”<sup>1</sup> This statement fits better with secular terrorist groups. But for religious terrorist groups like al-Qaeda, “divine duty” results in disappearance of moral restraints that would justify “a lot of people dead” in their terrorist attacks,<sup>2</sup> such as the 9/11 ones. And if CW are part of the WMD concept because they can cause a large number of casualties, they could be very good tools for religious terrorists to achieve their goals.

### Is al-Qaeda Interested in CW?

There are three phases in the statements of al-Qaeda members related to WMD. In the first phase, al-Qaeda tended to justify the acquisition and possession of CW from the point of view of deterrence. This phase goes as far back as 1998 when Osama bin Laden had stated:

Acquiring weapons for the defence of Muslims is a religious duty. If I have indeed acquired these weapons [chemical and nuclear weapons], then I thank God for enabling me to do so. And if I seek to acquire these weapons, I am carrying out a duty. It would be a sin for Muslims not to try to possess the weapons that would prevent the infidels from inflicting harm on Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

This and similar statements were made by bin Laden in different interviews after the US attack on the al-Shifa Pharmaceutical Industries factory in Khartoum on 20 August 1998.<sup>4</sup> This attack was part of Operation Infinite Reach in retaliation for the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on 7 August 1998, for which the bin Laden terrorist network was blamed by US officials. The al-Shifa target was justified in the finding of O-ethyl methylphosphonothionate (EMPTA), a precursor of VX, in soil samples outside the factory, and in the financial contributions of bin Laden to the production of CW.<sup>5</sup>

Soon after 9/11 and the mailings of envelopes with anthrax spores in the United States, bin Laden was interviewed, and when asked about reports claiming that he was trying to acquire chemical and nuclear weapons, he answered:

I heard the speech of American President Bush yesterday [7 October 2001]. He was scaring the European countries that Osama wanted to attack with weapons of mass destruction. I wish to declare that if America used chemical or nuclear weapons against us, then we may retort with chemical and nuclear weapons. We have the weapons as deterrent.<sup>6</sup>

A few weeks later, Abu Hafs “The Mauritanian” (al-Qaeda’s religious leader) replied similarly when asked about the veracity of bin Laden’s previous statements:

If such a weapon [chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons] is at Al-Qa’ida’s disposal, then it is a deterrent weapon, and not for initiating an action. Let the Americans fear the worst possible scenario when they use any unconventional weapons. We are lying in wait for them, Allah willing.<sup>7</sup>

The second phase of statements of al-Qaeda members related to WMD began soon after the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda’s reasoning was that the Coalition Forces had used conventional weapons (e.g., missiles) that had caused a large number of casualties and destruction, and for this reason these weapons could be considered WMD. This interpretation justified the use of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons as retaliation for similar attacks. The most well-known statement in this second phase was made by Suleiman Abu Gheith, al-Qaeda’s spokesman, who wrote in the third part of his article “In the Shadow of the Lances,” published on al-Qaeda’s Web site ([www.alneda.com](http://www.alneda.com)) in 2002:

We have not reached parity with them. We have the right to kill four million Americans—two million of them children—and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple hundreds of thousands. Furthermore, it is our right to fight them with chemical and biological weapons, so as to afflict them with the fatal maladies that have afflicted the Muslims because of the [Americans’] chemical and biological weapons.<sup>8</sup>

The third phase started in May 2003 when Shaykh Naser bin Hamad al-Fahd, a Saudi cleric who supports the global jihad movement, issued a fatwa justifying and authorizing the use of WMD.<sup>9</sup> Al-Fahd used arguments based on reciprocity, stating that the United States had used weapons that caused a large number of casualties and mass destruction. But what was new in this fatwa was that al-Fahd’s arguments are based also on Islamic texts that prove that it is allowed to use WMD if those engaged in jihad decide there is benefit in using them. And this is the case of al-Qaeda’s influential strategist Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, better known as Abu Musab al-Suri, who posted a letter on the Internet in December 2004 that stated:

Although I emphasize my non-participation and lack of prior knowledge of the honorable September 11 attacks, if I had been consulted about this operation, I would have advised them to select aircraft on international flights and to have put weapons of mass destruction aboard them. Attacking America with weapons of mass destruction was—and still is—a difficult and complicated matter, but it is still a possibility in the end, if Allah permits us. More importantly, it is becoming a necessity.<sup>10</sup>

## Al-Qaeda's CW Programmes

The first information of al-Qaeda's CW programmes came from Jamal Ahmed al-Fadl (an al-Qaeda member who defected and became a US government informer in 1996), who claimed that in the early 1990s he and other al-Qaeda members discussed the start of a manufacturing programme of CW with a Sudanese army officer.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the al-Shifa facility would have been part of this programme.

Since October 2001, reporters and military forces in Afghanistan have found written and electronic documents with rudimentary procedures for the production of CW.<sup>12</sup> These procedures are similar, and in some cases word-for-word translations, from the ones included in the so-called "cookbooks" that are popular in "amateur terrorist" circles and among white supremacist terrorist groups in the United States. Actually, two well-known "cookbooks" were found in Afghanistan. An example of the relation between jihadi publications and "cookbooks" can be found in a 2003 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) unclassified publication.<sup>13</sup> The CIA report contains part of a document found in the summer of 2002 in Afghanistan with a diagram of the Levinstein method for making sulphur mustard. This diagram appears to be copied from a popular "cookbook," *Assorted Nasties*.

The CW-related material found in Afghanistan came mostly from the Abu Khabab camp located in the Darunta training camp complex, which specialized in chemical training.<sup>14</sup> This camp was named after the man who ran it, the Egyptian Midhat Mursi, commonly known as Abu Khabab, who was killed in a US air strike on the Pakistani-Afghan border in January 2006. Abu Khabab allegedly recorded the famous videotape aired in August 2002 by Cable News Network (CNN) that showed how a dog was exposed to a toxic substance in the Darunta complex. That live training with animals was being conducted in the Darunta complex was already known before the start of military operations in Afghanistan. Ahmed Ressam, an Algerian arrested by US authorities for carrying explosives that he intended to use in a bombing against the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), explained in court in July 2001 that he had been trained in the Darunta training camp complex in 1998 on how to prepare hydrogen cyanide by mixing a cyanide salt and sulphuric acid.<sup>15</sup> He was told to release it near the air intake vents of buildings, and he even participated in live training exercises using dogs. More recently, a book by Omar Nasiri, pseudonym of an alleged al-Qaeda member who worked as an informer for France's DGSE and the United Kingdom's MI5 and MI6, also revealed his participation in live experiments with animals exposed to cyanogen agents while training in Khaldan.<sup>16</sup>

One of the most relevant discoveries in Afghanistan was made by *Wall Street Journal* reporter Alan Cullison, who obtained two computers from a looter who allegedly stole them from al-Qaeda's central office in Kabul on 12 November 2001.<sup>17</sup> The looter told Cullison he had found the computers in the office of al-Qaeda's military commander Muhammad Atef (Abu Hafs), a strong supporter of al-Qaeda's acquisition of WMD, who was killed in a US air strike that same month. The computer files included information of al-Qaeda's effort to start a CW and biological weapons programme code-named "al-Zabadi" ("Yogurt") in May 1999

with an initial budget of only \$2,000–\$4,000. Based on Cullison’s analysis of the computer files, Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abu Hafs (assisted by Abu Khabab) started the programme after studying different books and articles from biomedical journals. In a computer message dated 23 May 1999, al-Zawahiri mentioned discussing “very useful ideas” with Abu Khabab that included a “home-brew[ed] nerve gas made from insecticides and a chemical additive that would help speed up penetration into the skin.” Although the name of the “nerve gas” was not mentioned, organophosphate pesticides have a mechanism of action similar to nerve agents but are much less toxic to humans. The option of using an insecticide instead of producing a nerve chemical warfare agent would reflect the difficulties of producing this type of agent. Even Aum Shinrikyo—which had excellent financial resources and personnel with the required expertise, and had carried out their attacks before the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)—had some difficulties in synthesizing sarin and could have received support from Russian sources, although its large-scale sarin production facility was never fully operational.<sup>18</sup>

An additional problem for terrorists is the need to have a reliable delivery system. Effective dissemination or dispersion may be even more difficult than obtaining the agent, especially if the objective is to cause a large number of casualties. Aum Shinrikyo nerve agent attacks in Japan showed that effective dispersion of the agent is not an easy task.<sup>19</sup> The “art” of chemical warfare includes the research and development of special munitions that, among other things, do not inactivate the agent by the thermal effect of the explosion. Aerosolization dispersal systems are another option. Luckily, another gap in the information in the al-Qaeda-related publications and “cookbooks” is the often-inaccurate information on delivery systems. Omar Nasiri’s book describes how, after several failed attempts to use mustard gas mortars in the Khaldan training camp, the camp members celebrated the appearance of a “thick cloud of smoke.”<sup>20</sup> However, this does not mean that they had achieved their objective.

No public report of sophisticated CW means or production facilities found in Afghanistan has yet been made. Only a centrifuge and an oven found by British forces near Kandahar have been presented by the US Department of Defense as the equipment al-Qaeda intended to use to make CW and biological weapons.<sup>21</sup> Based on intelligence assembled from collected documents, detainee interviews, and reconnaissance of al-Qaeda facilities during Operation Enduring Freedom, the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (the WMD Commission) concluded in its unclassified report (dated 31 March 2005) that al-Qaeda did not have a large-scale CW capability.<sup>22</sup> Still, past and current CW programmes are said to be not fully understood, especially because of difficulties in penetrating the terrorist network and, therefore, in collecting human intelligence (HUMINT).

After the disappearance of the Afghan training camps, Internet and jihadi Web sites have acquired more relevance. Al-Suri’s book, *The Global Islamic Resistance Call*, posted on the Internet in 2005, suggests an asymmetric approach that includes the

use of WMD, as well as a decentralized and diffused global jihad—labeled “al-Qaeda 2.0” by Peter Bergen in 2002,<sup>23</sup>— in which autonomous cells play an important role.<sup>24</sup> Autonomous cells should be self-sufficient, including having training capabilities. For these reasons, jihadi Web sites are important tools providing autonomous cells with training manuals as well as lessons learned from attacks by other cells.<sup>25</sup> For example, the latest (fourth) edition of the *Jihad Encyclopedia* was discovered on the Internet in October 2004.<sup>26</sup> The *Encyclopedia*, as well as other electronic documents,<sup>27</sup> includes information and procedures about CW identical to the ones found in Afghanistan, i.e. similar to the information included in “cookbooks.” Some of these Web sites offer scanned copies of these “cookbooks” and even homemade videos. For example, a well-known jihadi Web site recently made a video file available that explains a procedure for extraction of ricin that is an excerpt from a popular amateur homemade video, *The Poor Man’s James Bond Greets the Russians*.

### **Al-Qaeda Plots with CW**

A detailed study of incidents with CW linked to al-Qaeda shows that hydrogen cyanide, ricin, and toxic industrial chemicals (TIC) have been the chemical agents of choice for jihadi terrorists.<sup>28</sup> Procedures for obtaining hydrogen cyanide and ricin are common in jihadi publications. In fact, the procedures for obtaining ricin from castor plant seeds included in these publications are copies from the ones included in the “cookbooks” but are not capable of achieving a good product for causing a large number of casualties by any exposure route, mainly because of the low content of toxin of the final extracts.<sup>29</sup> Ricin was reported to have been detected in January 2003 in an apartment in the north of London, where North African al-Qaeda sympathizers were living.<sup>30</sup> This finding turned out to be a false positive, as a laboratory analysis of the samples did not identify ricin, although castor plant seeds and a written ricin extraction procedure (as well as other recipes) were found.<sup>31</sup> Only one of the arrested men, Kamel Bourgass, was convicted on 8 April 2005 of conspiring to commit a public nuisance by the use of poisons and/or explosives.<sup>32</sup> At an earlier trial in 2004, he had been convicted of murdering a police officer during his capture in a flat in Manchester on 14 January 2003.

Hydrogen cyanide is easy to obtain by mixing the right salt and an acid, but transporting and mixing the reagents without being discovered constitutes one of the biggest hurdles for terrorists who decide to use it. Improvised chemical devices (ICD) that try to solve this problem have already been developed, information of which is available on the Internet.<sup>33</sup> This is the case of the “al-Mubtakkar”,<sup>34</sup> with which an al-Qaeda cell based in Saudi Arabia planned an attack on the New York City subway.<sup>35</sup> Surprisingly, when al-Qaeda’s leader in Saudi Arabia, Shaykh Yousef al-Ayiri, told al-Zawahiri about the plot in January 2003, al-Zawahiri decided to cancel the operation. Two hydrogen cyanide ICD were also described in a training manual found in October 2003 after a raid in the southern Philippines on the home of Taufiq Rifqi, a senior Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) leader.<sup>36</sup>

Nerve agents also seem to be of interest to al-Qaeda especially because of their toxicological and physico-chemical properties, which make them ideal for tactical

use in terrorist attacks. However, the synthesis process requires some level of expertise and is far more complex than the recipes featured in “cookbooks” and al-Qaeda-related manuals.

Since January 2007, suicide terrorists in Iraq have started detonating vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED)<sup>37</sup> carrying chlorine cylinders. This new tactic shows that the use of TIC is an option that may yield better results than following the crude and rudimentary procedures of al-Qaeda-related publications for the production of “classical” chemical warfare agents.<sup>38</sup> However, the chlorine attacks in Iraq are still rudimentary in their means of delivery. For example, in the first attack on 28 January in Ramadi, 16 people were killed, not because of chlorine exposure, but due to the mechanical and thermal effects of the explosion.<sup>39</sup> Although the Islamic State of Iraq denied responsibility for the chlorine attacks on 22 March,<sup>40</sup> a 20 February raid on a facility used for the manufacture of VBIED in Karma, east of Fallujah, uncovered 55-gallon cylinders of chlorine and al-Qaeda fliers.<sup>41</sup>

Jihadi terrorists have also shown interest in industrial chemicals that may not be of much relative importance because of their toxicological properties but rather because of their flammable or explosive properties. This is the case with Dhiren Barot, arrested in August 2004 in the United Kingdom, who, in October 2006, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to murder in the United Kingdom and the United States.<sup>42</sup> His main plan, “Gas Limos Project,” basically consisted of exploding three limousines in underground car parks. Barot studied the flammable and explosive properties of chemical substances in the books *Hazardous Chemicals Handbook* and *Hazardous Chemicals Desk Reference*,<sup>43</sup> and then tried to find out which of the selected chemicals were more readily available in the United Kingdom. He even suggested the possibility of including radioactive materials in order to create “dirty bombs.”

## Conclusions

The lack of adequate procedures and programmes for the production of CW may explain why, until now, al-Qaeda has not been capable of achieving an effective chemical attack. But it is clear that jihadi terrorists are both interested in CW and actively trying to obtain them. For this reason, it should not be dismissed out of hand that at some stage they could have access to chemical warfare agents and effective delivery systems. According to al-Suri’s book, his proposed decentralized global jihad system should include “Strategic Operations Brigades” with “very high-level financial capabilities to acquire an operational knowledge and potential to use WMD.”<sup>44</sup> Perhaps the inclusion of this special group for WMD operations arose after al-Suri realized the difficulties faced by a small autonomous cell that depended on its own capabilities to become a multidisciplinary team with the expertise required to obtain and disperse CW in an effective manner.

Acquiring CW from black-market smugglers or sponsoring states is an option that may help al-Qaeda achieve its goal. In a letter dated 5 June 2002, bin Laden wrote to Mullah Muhammad Omar (the Taliban leader of Afghanistan): “It is a fact that the [former Soviet Union’s] Islamic Republics region is rich with significant

scientific experiences in conventional and non-conventional military industries, which have a great role in the future jihad against the enemies of Islam.”<sup>45</sup> This option is also explicitly mentioned in al-Suri’s December 2004 letter:

The last option [to defeat and destroy America]: to destroy America through strategic and decisive operations involving weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, chemical, or biological. The mujahideen may be able to obtain these weapons by cooperating with whomever already possesses them, by buying them, or by building and using primitive radioactive weapons known as “dirty bombs.”<sup>46</sup>

More recently, in an audio message distributed on 28 September 2006 through jihadi Web sites, Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, al-Qaeda’s new “amir” in Iraq, called for people with expertise in chemistry, among others, to help with the development of non-conventional weapons to be used in Iraq.<sup>47</sup> As a result, an online journal, *Al-Mujahid al-Tiqani (The Technical Mujahid)*, that deals with technological issues that can be useful for the jihad appeared in December 2006.<sup>48</sup>

Another concern is that al-Qaeda will increasingly try to acquire chemical substances that are not strictly classified as “classical” chemical warfare agents but which could be equally effective. An attack against a chemical plant or transport vehicle may also result in the release of TIC, with potentially catastrophic consequences similar to the release of methyl isocyanate in Bhopal (India) in 1984. Actually, in 1997 or 1998 Abu Hamza al-Masri had said: “You cannot do it by chemical weapons, you have to do it by mice poison.”<sup>49</sup> The reasoning of Brynjar Lia of the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment is that if al-Qaeda used airplanes like missiles, they could use TIC like CW.<sup>50</sup> These attacks could have important effects not only because of the toxicological effects of the chemicals used, but because of the psychological effects of a chemical attack. Indeed, one of the objectives of using CW or biological weapons in a military scenario is not only to cause physical casualties, but also to demoralize troops. Similarly, in a terrorist attack on civilians, one of the primary goals is to create a general sense of panic and fear, resulting in psychological trauma and disruption of economic and social activities.<sup>51</sup> For these reasons, CW can also be regarded as WMD. For instance, it is frequently asserted that the Aum Shinrikyo subway attack caused more than five thousand sarin casualties, but actually only about one thousand patients had clinical signs of sarin exposure.<sup>52</sup> That means that about four thousand people who sought attention in medical facilities were, in fact, mainly psychological casualties with psychogenic symptoms. Based on a book by Abu Walid al-Misri, editor of a magazine for the Taliban, quoted in Peter Bergen’s book *The Osama bin Laden I Know*, al-Qaeda has been aware of the psychological effects of WMD since they first thought about acquiring them:

Another group believed that these type of weapons, if bin Laden could obtain them, would be tactical [in nature only] by virtue of their primitiveness and weak destructive capability. However, they will continue to call them “weapons of mass destruction” to create fear. They are primitive weapons with tactical and not strategic capabilities. In other words, using them will give the mujahideen credibility, prestige, and psychological influence.



The people close to bin Laden believed that these destructive weapons would greatly enhance the combat capability and psychological influence of the al-Qaeda fighters.<sup>53</sup>

A 2006 report of the Council on Global Terrorism states: “Governments cannot protect everything, all at once, all of the time”.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, it is impossible to protect all possible targets against every single type of attack, and all the time. Trying to achieve this would mean use of resources that would finally lead al-Qaeda to achieve one of its goals, as mentioned in a bin Laden message from October 2004: “Even more serious for America is the fact that the *Jihad* fighters have recently forced Bush to resort to an emergency budget in order to continue the fighting in Afghanistan and in Iraq, which proves the success of the plan of bleeding [America] to the point of bankruptcy, Allah willing”.<sup>55</sup> While security measures of critical facilities are essential, the problem is defining “critical” and “non-critical” facilities. For example, the 2007 chlorine attacks in Iraq raised concerns that similar attacks with chlorine could take place outside of Iraq.<sup>56</sup> Organizations in the United States asked for drinking- and waste-water treatments other than chlorine, and in the United Kingdom, security services started monitoring the movement of industrial chlorine.<sup>57</sup> The questions are: What chemicals will be next? What new measures should be taken?

New intelligence models are also required to minimize vulnerabilities against the jihadi terrorism threat. The scarce HUMINT and incorrect analyses that lead to bad intelligence products are some of the deficiencies observed. Finally, governments must develop the capabilities to detect and minimize both physical consequences and psychological impact in case a chemical attack occurs. We should not forget the statement made by an IRA member in 1984: “We only have to be lucky once. You have to be lucky all the time.”<sup>58</sup>

*This paper is based on an address delivered at the Global Security Asia 2007 Conference in Singapore, 29 March 2007.*

---

#### About the author:

**Dr. René Pita**, a professor at the NBC Defense School, Madrid, Spain, has extensive experience in the strategic, operational, and tactical aspects of CBRN defense, including many NATO and Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) exercises. A Ph.D. in neurotoxicology from Madrid Complutense University, he has written extensively on issues of chemical warfare, chemical terrorism, and chemical defense. E-mail: [renepita@arrakis.es](mailto:renepita@arrakis.es)

<sup>1</sup> Brian Michael Jenkins, “International Terrorism: A New Mode of Conflict,” in David Carlton and Carlo Schaefer, eds., *International Terrorism and World Security* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, rev. and exp. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 88–89; Brian Michael Jenkins, “The New Age of Terrorism,” in David G. Kamien, ed., *The McGraw-Hill Homeland Security Handbook* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006), pp. 118–119; and Brian Michael Jenkins, *Unconquerable Nation: Knowing Our Enemy, Strengthening Ourselves* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), pp. 8–9.

<sup>3</sup> Osama bin Laden’s interview by Rahimullah Yusufzai, “Conversation with Terror,” *Time*, 11 January 1999.

<sup>4</sup> In late 1998 and early 1999, bin Laden made similar statements in different interviews: interview by John Miller, ABC News, 24 December 1998; interview by Jamal Ismail, al-Jazeera, 1998 (excerpts in “I Am Not Afraid of Death,” *Newsweek*, 11 January 1999); and an interview in al-Jazeera broadcasted in 1999. For transcripts of these interviews, see Thomas Hegghammer, *Dokumentasjon om al-Qa’ida—Interjuer Kommunikéer*

og Andre Primærkilder, 1990–2002, FFI/RAPPORT-2002/01393, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI), 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Statements that it was not a CW factory made by British, Italian, Jordanian, and US consultants and engineers; the inadequate sampling method used; the claim that US agents had indeed penetrated the plant and taken the sample from a discharge pipe; the fact that EMP/TA is also used in the chemical industry for non-prohibited Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) purposes; and the US refusal of a UN investigation tarnished the credibility of the US claim that al-Shifa was a CW production facility. Jonathan B. Tucker, *War of Nerves: Chemical Warfare from World War I to Al-Qaeda* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), pp. 362–368; Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2004), pp. 145–147; and Jean Pascal Zanders, Elisabeth M. French and Natalie Pauwels, “Chemical and Biological Weapon Developments and Arms Control,” in *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook 1999: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 581–582.

<sup>6</sup> Osama bin Laden's interview by Hamid Mir, “Osama Claims He Has Nukes: If U.S. Uses N-arms It Will Get Same Response,” *Dawn* (Karachi), 10 November 2001. In Hamid Mir's interview by Peter Bergen on 11 May 2002, Mir stated that he had already asked that same question to bin Laden in an interview in 1998, but his answer was, “Next question.” Peter L. Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral Story of al Qaeda's Leader* (New York: Free Press, 2006), p. 348.

<sup>7</sup> Abu Hafs the Mauritanian's interview, al-Jazeera, 30 November 2001. For a transcript of the interview, see Hegghammer, *Dokumentasjon om al-Qa'ida*.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in “Why We Fight America: Al-Qa'ida Spokesman Explains September 11 and Declares Intentions to Kill 4 Million Americans with Weapons of Mass Destruction,” *Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) Special Dispatch Series*, no. 388, 12 June 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Reuven Paz, “Global Jihad and WMD: Between Martyrdom and Mass Destruction,” *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, vol. 2, 2005, pp. 74–86.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Evan Kohlmann, “Abu Musab al-Suri and His Plan for the Destruction of America: ‘Dirty Bombs for a Dirty Nation,’” *Globalterroralert.com*, 11 July 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Tucker, *War of Nerves*, p. 367; Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies* (New York: Free Press, 2004), p. 147; and Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (New York: Free Press, 2001), pp. 59–60, 84.

<sup>12</sup> For more information about the Afghanistan findings related to CW, see René Pita, “Assessing al-Qaeda's Chemical Threat,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2007, pp. 480–511.

<sup>13</sup> Central Intelligence Agency (Directorate of Intelligence), *Terrorist CBRN: Materials and Effects (U)*, CTC 2003-40058, May 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Rohan Gunaratna and Arabinda Acharya, “The Terrorist Training Camps of al Qaeda,” in James J. F. Forest, ed., *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes*, vol. 2, *Training* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), pp. 174, 180–181.

<sup>15</sup> Ahmed Ressam's testimony, *United States of America v. Mokhtar Haouari*, United States District Court, Southern District of New York, S4 00 Cr. 15 (JFK), 5 July 2001, pp. 620–626.

<sup>16</sup> Omar Nasiri, *Inside the Jihad* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), p. 221.

<sup>17</sup> Alan Cullison and Andrew Higgins, “Files Found: A Computer in Kabul Yields a Chilling Array of al Qaeda Memos,” *Wall Street Journal*, 31 December 2001; and Alan Cullison, “Inside Al-Qaeda's Hard Drive,” *Atlantic Monthly*, September 2004.

<sup>18</sup> Tucker, *War of Nerves*, pp. 331–332; Anthony T. Tu, *Chemical Terrorism: Horrors in Tokyo Subway and Matsumoto City* (Fort Collins, CO: Alaken, 2002); David E. Kaplan, “Aum Shinrikyo (1995),” in Jonathan B. Tucker, ed., *Toxic Terror: Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons* (Cambridge, MA: Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2000), pp. 207–226; and John V. Parachini, “The Making of Aum Shinrikyo's Chemical Weapons Program,” in Forest, *The Making of a Terrorist*, pp. 277–295.

<sup>19</sup> Tucker, *War of Nerves*, pp. 335–337.

<sup>20</sup> Nasiri, *Inside the Jihad*, p. 222.

<sup>21</sup> Judith Miller, “Threats and Responses: Terrorist Weapons; Lab Suggests Qaeda Planned to Build Arms, Officials Say,” *New York Times*, 14 September 2002.

<sup>22</sup> The Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, *Report to the President of the United States (Unclassified Report)*, 31 March 2005, pp. 267–278.

<sup>23</sup> Peter L. Bergen, “Al Qaeda's New Tactics,” *New York Times*, 15 November 2002.

<sup>24</sup> Brynjar Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri* (London: C. Hurst, forthcoming).

<sup>25</sup> Recently, a well-known jihadi forum published a document with lessons learned in the 11 March 2004 terrorist attacks in Madrid.

<sup>26</sup> Brynjar Lia, “Al-Qa'ida's CBRN Programme: Lessons and Implications,” Norwegian International Defence Seminar (NIDS) II, Lillestrøm (Norway), 12 October 2004, p. 6.

- <sup>27</sup> Other well-known publications include the manual *Military Studies in the Jihad Against the Tyrants, The Mujabideen Poisons Handbook*, and some of the most recent ones like the documents “The War on Poisons” by Wajeh al-Qamar (alias on jihadi forum) and “How to Fight Alone” by Mohammed al-Hakaymah.
- <sup>28</sup> Pita, “Assessing al-Qaeda’s Chemical Threat”.
- <sup>29</sup> René Pita et al., “Extracción de ricina por procedimientos incluidos en publicaciones paramilitares y manuales relacionados con la red terrorista Al Qaeda,” *Medicina Militar*, vol. 60, no. 3, 2004, pp. 172–175.
- <sup>30</sup> Jeffrey M. Bale et al., “Ricin Found in London: An al-Qa’ida Connection?” Center for Nonproliferation Studies (Monterey Institute of International Studies), 23 January 2003.
- <sup>31</sup> Milton Leitenberg, *Assessing the Biological Weapons and Bioterrorism Threat* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2005), pp. 27–28; Ben Leapman, “The Ricin Plot that Never Was,” *Evening Standard* (London), 15 September 2005; and Duncan Campbell, “The Ricin Ring that Never Was,” *Guardian* (London), 14 April 2005. Other useless written procedures found included the “potato and cigarette poison” recipe for solanine and nicotine, respectively; the “rotten meat poison” recipe for botulinum toxin; and a “cyanide poison” recipe for amygdalin based on boiling apple seeds. George Smith, “Playtime Recipes for Poisons: The Bourgas Notes of Mass Exaggeration,” National Security Notes (GlobalSecurity.org), 18 April 2005. These procedures are similar to the ones found in different “cookbooks.”
- <sup>32</sup> “Killer Jailed over Poison Plot,” BBC News, 13 April 2005; and Duncan Campbell et al., “Police Killer Gets 17 Years for Poison Plot,” *Guardian* (London), 14 April 2005.
- <sup>33</sup> Lia, “Al-Qaida’s CBRN Programme;” and Sammy Salama, “Special Report: Manual for Producing Chemical Weapon to Be Used in New York Subway Plot Available on al-Qaeda Websites since Late 2005,” *WMD Insights*, no. 7, July/August 2006, pp. 2–5.
- <sup>34</sup> For more information about the “al-Mubtakkar” see Pita, “Assessing al-Qaeda’s Chemical Threat.”
- <sup>35</sup> Ron Suskind, *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America’s Pursuit of Its Enemies since 9/11* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pp. 217–218.
- <sup>36</sup> Adam Dolnik and Rohan Gunaratna, “Jemaah Islamiyah and the Threat of Chemical and Biological Terrorism,” in Russell D. Howard and James J. Forest, eds., *Weapons of Mass Destruction and Terrorism* (Hightstown, NJ: McGraw-Hill, 2007), pp. 280–294.
- <sup>37</sup> Also known as suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (SVBIED).
- <sup>38</sup> Until 10 April 2007, there have been at least 10 suicide attacks involving VBIED carrying chlorine cylinders.
- <sup>39</sup> “Emergency Response Unit Compound in Ramadi Attacked by SVBIED,” Multi-National Corps –Iraq Public Affairs Office Release No. 20070130-04, 30 January 2007.
- <sup>40</sup> “Islamic State of Iraq Issues Statement Regarding Chlorine Attacks, Operations in Amiriyyat al-Fallujah,” SITE Institute, 22 March 2007.
- <sup>41</sup> “Al-Qaeda Linked to Iraqi Chlorine Site,” Global Security Newswire (www.nti.org), 26 February 2007.
- <sup>42</sup> Barot’s profile is available at [http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/dhiren\\_barot.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/dhiren_barot.htm) (last accessed 10 April 2007).
- <sup>43</sup> The author of this chemistry book is also the author of *Hawley’s Condensed Chemical Dictionary*, which was consulted by Ramzi Yousef, mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and one of the planners of the “Bojinka” plot. Peter Lance, *1000 Years for Revenge: International Terrorism and the FBI – The Untold Story* (New York: Regan, 2003), p. 236.
- <sup>44</sup> Paul Cruickshank and Mohanad Hage Ali, “Jihadist of Mass Destruction,” *Washington Post*, 11 June 2006.
- <sup>45</sup> Quoted in Michael Scheuer, “New York Subway Plot and al-Qaeda’s WMD Strategy,” *Terrorism Focus*, vol. 3, no. 24, 20 June 2006, pp. 6–7.
- <sup>46</sup> Quoted in Kohlmann, “Abu Musab al-Suri and His Plan for the Destruction of America.”
- <sup>47</sup> Sammy Salama and Gina Cabrera-Farraj, “New Leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq Calls for Use of Unconventional Weapons against U.S. Forces; Possible Poisoning of Iraqi Security Forces at Central Iraq Base,” *WMD Insights*, no. 10, November 2006, pp. 2–3.
- <sup>48</sup> “Al-Fajr Media Center Releases High Technology Journal,” *Terrorism Focus*, Vol. 3, No. 47, 7 December 2006, p. 1; and Abdul Hameed Bakier, “The New Issue of Technical Mujahid, a Training Manual for Jihadis,” *Terrorism Monitor*, vol. 5, no. 6, 29 March 2007, pp. 8–10.
- <sup>49</sup> Quoted in “Hamza Attacks ‘Enemies of Islam’,” BBC News, 12 January 2006.
- <sup>50</sup> Lia, “Al-Qaida’s CBRN Programme,” p. 7.
- <sup>51</sup> Jean Pascal Zanders, “Weapons of Mass Disruption?” in *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 683–690.
- <sup>52</sup> Jack Woodall, “Tokyo Subway Gas Attack,” *Lancet*, vol. 350, no. 9073, 1997, p. 296.
- <sup>53</sup> Quoted in Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know*, p. 342.
- <sup>54</sup> Council on Global Terrorism, *State of the Struggle: Report on the Battle Against Global Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2006), p. 30.

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in “The Full Version of Osama bin Laden’s Speech,” *Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) Special Dispatch Series*, no. 811, 5 November 2004.

<sup>56</sup> “Iraq Chlorine Attacks Likely to Continue, Expert Says,” *Global Security Newswire* (www.nti.org), 20 March 2007; and Paul Orum, *Toxic Trains and the Terrorist Threat: How Water Utilities Can Get Chlorine Gas Off the Rails and Out of American Communities*, Center for American Progress Report, April 2007.

<sup>57</sup> Orum, *Toxic Trains and the Terrorist Threat*; and Mark Townsend, “Police Track Chlorine Lorries in Terror Alert,” *Observer*, 4 March 2007.

<sup>58</sup> Quoted by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair in the Committee on Home Affairs Examination of Witnesses (UK Parliament), 13 September 2005, question 44.

### **Presentation of analysis for its publication as Assessment or Athena Papers:**

- The analysis can be sent to the following direction [contact@athenaintelligence.org](mailto:contact@athenaintelligence.org) indicating in the subject “Athena Paper” or “Athena Assessment”.
- Analysis on radical Islam, Jihadist Terrorism, Counter-insurgency and Counter-terrorism from a rigorous and original dimension will be very welcomed

#### **Assessment**

##### **Norms of presentation:**

The Assessment The analysis can have a maximum extension of 1.500 words.

#### **Athena Papers**

- Once received, an anonymous copy of the analysis will be sent to two referees for its evaluation. The positive or negative answer will be formulated in a term of two weeks from its reception

##### **Norms of presentation:**

- The paper can have a **maximum extension** of 14.000 words.
- They must be written to one space, in Garamond letter type size 13 and with a space of separation between the paragraphs.
- The paper can include graphics and charts inserted in the text.
- Each article should be summarized in an **abstract** of not more that 100 words
- Five **key words** must be included and a **short bio** of the author is required (no more than 50 words)

##### **References:**

- References must be at the end of the text.

##### **Style:**

##### **Article:**

Gregory, Shaun, “France and the War on Terrorism”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.15, No.1 (Spring 2003), pp.124–147

##### **Book:**

Bergen, Peter L., *The Osama bin Laden I Know*, (New York: Free Press, 2006)

##### **Book Chapter:**

Hafez, Mohammed M. "From Marginalization to Massacres. A Political Process Explanation of GIA Violence in Algeria", Wiktorowicz, Quintan (ed.) *Islamic Activism. A Social Movement Theory Approach*, (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), pp. 37-60