THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM: AN ASSESSMENT

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The Global War On Terrorism: An Assessment

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I. The War on Violent Islamic Radicalism—Key Judgments

> Our enemies have fought relentlessly these past five years, and they have a record of their own. Bin Laden and his deputy Zawahiri are still in hiding. Al Qaeda has continued its campaign of terror with deadly attacks that have targeted the innocent, including large numbers of fellow Muslims. The terrorists and insurgents in Iraq have killed American troops and thousands of Iraqis. Syria and Iran have continued their support for terror and extremism. Hezbollah has taken innocent life in Israel, and succeeded briefly in undermining Lebanon's democratic government. Hamas is standing in the way of peace with Israel. And the extremists have led an aggressive propaganda campaign to spread lies about America and incite Muslim radicalism. The enemies of freedom are skilled and sophisticated, and they are waging a long and determined war.[1]
>
> —President George W. Bush, September 7, 2006

In some ways the violent radicalism that is wracking the Muslim world today is nothing new. Since the death of Muhammad in 632, Islamic history has been punctuated by many periods in which various heterodox sects have emerged and clashed violently with mainstream Muslims, as well as with the West. Indeed, as will be detailed in Chapter II, the ideological roots of today's Salafi-Jihadi movement reach back to the Islamic scholar, Ibn Taymiyyah, who wrote at the dawn of the 14th Century. The practice of takfir, declaring fellow Muslims to be apostates deserving death for failing to adhere to specific interpretations of the

[1] President George W. Bush, "President Bush Discusses Progress in the Global War on Terror," Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, September 7, 2006.

Quran and hadith, is frequently invoked by al Qaeda and other terrorist groups today in much the same way as it was by the kharijites in the late 7th Century.[2]

What makes contemporary violent Islamic radicalism threatening to the West is the following:

- Deep-seated, popular frustration across much of the Muslim world stemming from five centuries of civilizational decline fused with resentment and anger toward the West for its economic, scientific/technological, and military success, exacerbated by lingering hostility engendered by European colonization and exploitation of Muslim lands and, more recently, the creation and support of Israel;[3]

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[2] Mary R. Habeck, *Knowing the Enemy—Jihadist Ideology and the War on Terror* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 175.

[3] Assuming that Islamic radicalism is indeed fueled by frustration and anger stemming from the failure of the Islamic world to compete effectively against the West over the past half millennia, it is almost certain to remain a long-term problem because ongoing demographic and economic trends strongly suggest that the downward spiral of Islamic civilization relative to the West will continue, and may even accelerate in the decades ahead. Demographically, the Arab/Muslim world is in a difficult situation. The relative size of the current youth cohort is unprecedented—most are single urban males, almost half have not received a secondary education, and many are unemployed or underemployed. Over the next two decades, the largest proportional youth populations will be located in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Iraq. The sex ratio in several of these states is tilted heavily toward males. A large cohort of young, unemployed, single males has been linked to increased political instability in the past. This cohort also provides a convenient pool from which to recruit terrorist operatives. Economic growth has not kept pace with population growth over the last several decades in most of the Islamic world. As a result, real per capita income has fallen substantially and will likely continue to fall. According to the United Nations Development Program, the average annual rate of growth in the Arab world since 1975 has been about 3.3 percent. That figure masks wide variations over time: from 8.6 percent in 1975–1980 during the oil boom to less than one percent in the 1980s. Throughout the 1990s, exports from the Arab region (over 70 percent of which were petroleum related) grew at only 1.5 percent per year, which was far below the global average of six percent. At about 15 percent, average unemployment in Arab countries is among the highest in the developing world. Unemployment is more than 30 percent in Algeria and more than 50 percent in Gaza. In short, barring a dramatic economic turn-around, the standard of living for the average Muslim in most Arab states will likely get worse before it gets better. See UN Arab Development Report; and Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," The Atlantic, September 1990.

- Globalization of communications, transportation, and trade which, paradoxically, the jihadis view as both a perilous threat to the *ummah* (i.e., increased exposure to corrupting Western influences) and as a critical enabler of their own defensive jihad (i.e., making it possible to spread their radical ideology more quickly and widely than in the past); and

- The emergence and diffusion of technologies that make it possible for small groups to carry out mass-casualty and catastrophic attacks (e.g., chemical high explosives, fuel-laden jet aircraft, and weapons of mass destruction).

Radical Islam's current war with the West began well before September 11, 2001. It started by and large with the Iranian Revolution in 1979. Key developments in this war include the taking and holding for 444 days of American hostages in Iran and the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca in 1979; the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981; the successful campaign of Hezbollah in Lebanon in the 1980s, first to drive out the United States (through the Beirut bombings, hostage taking, and the torture and murder of Americans)[4] and eventually the Israelis; and the rise of al Qaeda in the late 1990s and their sustained campaign of attacks against US interests, including the 1998 bombings of the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as the small-boat attack on the USS *Cole* off Yemen on October 12, 2000.[5] Most notably, in 1996, Osama bin Laden declared war against "Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places" and in 1998, the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders issued a *fatwa* that ruled that killing "Americans and their allies—both civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim…"[6]

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[4] Islamic terrorists killed almost 600 people over the course of the 1980s, which is more than fives times as many fatalities as caused by the Irish Republican Army. More than half of the people who lost their lives to Islamic terrorists during this period were American. Owing in large measure to extensive support from Iran, the militant group Hezbollah grew rapidly in strength and conducted a string of high-profile, mass-casualty attacks against American targets between 1983 and 1984 (e.g., the truck bombing of the USMC barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, which killed 241 Americans on October 23, 1983).

[5] Although radical Islam was generally on the ascendancy in the 1990s, it did encounter several setbacks, including government crackdowns against the Islamic Group and Islamic Jihad in Egypt and against the Armed Islamic Group in Algeria.

[6] World Islamic Front, "Jihad against Jews and Crusaders," February 23, 1998.

Until September 11, 2001, US counter-terrorism policy, however, was based principally (and ineffectively) on cooperative diplomacy and limited retaliatory responses. US diplomacy suffered from a chronic inability to secure decisive international cooperation. US military strikes against terrorists were neither decisive nor a deterrent against future terrorist action or state sponsorship of terrorism. More aggressive US strategies were constrained by a Cold War-policy overhang that viewed terrorism within a superpower, proxy war and crisis management context and as fundamentally a law-enforcement problem. As then-National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice testified before the 9/11 Commission:

> The terrorists were at war with us, but we were not yet at war with them. For more than 20 years, the terrorist threat gathered, and America's response across several administrations of both parties was insufficient. Historically, democratic societies have been slow to react to gathering threats, tending instead to wait to confront threats until they are too dangerous to ignore or until it is too late.[7]

September 11th was, in short, a strategic failure as much as an intelligence failure. It also marked an important turning point in the war with radical Islamic terrorists in that the United States struck back in a meaningful way for the first time and is now on the offensive on several fronts. The defeat of the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan was an important first victory in what will be a protracted campaign.

There are two branches of the radical Islamic threat today: heterodox Salafi-Jihadi groups within the Sunni Muslim community and "Khomeinist" Shiite groups that strive to impose their brand of *sharia* justice on the entire world.[8] Al Qaeda is an example of the former, while

[7] Dr. Condoleezza Rice, Opening Remarks to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Hart Senate Office Building, April 8, 2004. Available online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/04/print/20040408.html.

[8] "Jihad," which literally means "struggle," is often over-simplified as "holy war." Actually, the term refers both to the internal struggle of all Muslims to live according to Quran and sunna (ways or customs) of Muhammad, which is considered the great jihad (*jihad al-akbar*), as well as an external struggle to the spread the faith to unbelievers. The latter, which is considered the lesser jihad (*jihad al-asgar*), can be achieved in myriad ways, including: proselytizing, preaching sermons, conducting scholarly study, performing social work, and engaging in armed warfare. The term "Salafist" is derived from

Iranian-backed Hezbollah is an archetype of the latter. There are radical Islamist insurgencies of varying stages underway in nearly a score of countries around the globe—most notably in Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Somalia, and Lebanon. The operating environment spans developed Europe to the most underdeveloped parts of the world, and ranges from densely populated urban areas and mega-cities, to remote mountains, deserts and jungles. For the United States, it encompasses permissive, semi-permissive, and non-permissive environments, as well as hostile or denied areas. The ability of US allies and partners to address the threat ranges from sophisticated to almost non-existent, but even in the most capable partner areas (i.e., Europe), Islamist terrorist cells have repeatedly demonstrated their ability to operate.

While the United States and its partners in the war on terrorism have made important strides in combating jihadi groups worldwide since September 11th, they have not weakened the jihadis' will or their ability to inspire and regenerate. The high-water mark for the United States in the war on terrorism was arguably reached in 2002–2003. By that time, the Taliban government had been overthrown and al Qaeda stripped of its sanctuary in Afghanistan; ten of al Qaeda's senior-most leaders had been captured or killed, including Abu Zubaydah, Ramzi bin al Shibh, and Khalid Sheik Mohammad; dozens of jihadi cells had been rolled up worldwide; actions had been taken to seize the vast majority of terrorist finances frozen to date; and several partner countries around the world had taken steps to enhance their counter-terrorism (CT) capabilities.

Since 2002–2003, however, the overall US position in the GWOT has slipped. To be sure, the United States has made considerable progress capturing or killing terrorist leaders and operatives, disrupting terrorist operations, seizing assets, and building partner CT capabilities. Those gains, however, have been offset by the metastasis of the al Qaeda organization into a global movement, the spread and intensification of Salafi-Jihadi ideology, the resurgence of Iranian regional influence, and the growth in number and political influence of Islamic fundamentalist

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the word Salaf, which refers collectively to the companions of Muhammad, the early Muslims who followed them, and the first three generations of Islamic scholars and leaders. The terms "Salafist" and "jihadist" are often used almost interchangeably; this is no doubt because most jihadist groups advocate a return to the practices of the early Islamic society of the Salaf, and many self-described Salafists believe than some form of jihad is needed to restore the original purity of Islam.

political parties throughout the world.[9] Both Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist branches of Islamic radicalism have spread rather than receded since 2003. The continued presence of US military forces in Iraq has been a boon for the jihadi movement's propaganda effort and bolstered the legitimacy of its call to defensive jihad.

While the war in Iraq has certainly contributed to the radicalization of the Muslim world, it is by no means the primary cause of Islamic radicalization. The goals of the jihadi movement are much larger than evicting US forces from Iraq or even from the broader Middle East. As detailed in Chapter II, the Salafi-Jihadi branch also seeks the overthrow of all apostate regimes in the Muslim world, meaning all those that do not govern solely by the *sharia*; the creation of an Islamic "caliphate" ruling over all current and former Muslim lands, including Israel; and, in time, the conquest or conversion of all unbelievers. The constitutional charter of al Qaeda describes its strategic goal simply as "the victory of the mighty religion of Allah, the establishment of an Islamic Regime and the restoration of the Islamic caliphate, God willing."[10] The long-term goals of the Khomeinists are not any more limited. They are committed to spreading what they consider to be two universally applicable ideas: Islam is relevant to all aspects of life and the *sharia* alone provides a sufficient blueprint for living a just life on Earth.[11] While the initial goal is to unite and liberate "oppressed Muslims," the ultimate objective is to bring all of humanity under the umbrella of a Shi'a version of Islamic justice.

From a global perspective, the jihadist threat has, on balance, remained constant or declined slightly in four regions since September 11th: Africa, with the notable exception of Somalia; Russia and Central Asia; Southeast Asia; and the Americas. In contrast, it has intensified, in some cases sharply, in Southwest Asia, South Asia, and Europe. Al Qaeda's creation of an operational sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal areas and the growing strength of the Taliban Movement in Pakistan are

[9] Examples include the Justice and Prosperity Party and the Mujaheddin Council (MMI) in Indonesia, the Party of Islam in Malaysia, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam faction led by Maulana Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) in Pakistan, and Hezbollah in Lebanon. Raphael Perl, "Trends in Terrorism: 2006," *CRS Report to Congress*, RL33555, July 21, 2006.

[10] DIA, translation of "Al-Qaida: Constitutional Charter, Rules, and Regulations," Translation No. AFGT-2002-600175, August 2002, p. 2.

[11] "Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Middle East Journal*, Spring 1980, p. 185.

especially alarming. As the declassified version of the 2006 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on *Trends in Global Terrorism* concluded, "a large body of all-source reporting indicates that activists identifying themselves as jihadists, although a small percentage of Muslims, are increasing in both number and geographic dispersion."[12] Echoing that finding, veteran CIA analyst Bruce Reidel has argued that al Qaeda's "reach has spread throughout the Muslim world, where it has developed a large cadre of operatives, and in Europe, where it can claim the support of some disenfranchised Muslim locals and members of the Arab and Asian diasporas."[13]

The GWOT is likely to be protracted and increasingly fought within states with which the United States is not at war (i.e., outside of Afghanistan and Iraq). To prevail in this war, the United States, along with its allies and partners, will need to conduct a sustained, multifaceted, global "smother campaign." Key elements of that effort include hunting down jihadi commanders and foot soldiers relentlessly in scores of countries; denying them sanctuary in state-controlled territory (e.g., Iran and Syria), under-governed areas, densely populated cites from Islamabad to London, and increasingly, in cyberspace; disrupting terrorist operations; severing transnational links (e.g., transportation, communications, and financial transactions); and impeding recruitment and training. The United States cannot successfully wage this campaign alone. It will be essential to build the counter-terrorism capabilities and capacity of as many partner nations as possible. The US government will also need to shore up weak or failing states to prevent them from becoming terrorist sanctuaries. In some cases, this may require the US military to surge combat forces to assist states facing Islamist insurgencies. The United States will need to ensure that the "key terrain" of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan does not fall into jihadi hands. For long-term success, it is imperative for the US government to engage more aggressively in the "war of ideas" to isolate the Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist extremists from the mainline Muslim community, divide the jihadi movement internally, and undermine its ideological appeal. To do so, the United States will need to rally as many allies as possible to the cause, including non-violent Salafis who are best positioned to lure conservative Muslims away from the jihadi camp. Most critically,

[12] NIC, "Declassified Key Judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate 'Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States'," April 2006, p. 1.

[13] Bruce Riedel, "Al Qaeda Strikes Back," *Foreign Affairs*, May–June 2007, pp. 24–40.

the US government must avoid making statements or taking any actions that legitimize the call to defensive jihad. In summary form, the seven pillars of US strategy should be to:

- Sustain a global "smother campaign" on radical Islamic terrorists;
- Employ unconventional warfare (UW) and covert action against state sponsors of terrorism and transnational terrorist groups globally;
- Defend and hold the "key terrain" of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan;
- Maintain a significant "surge" capacity for responding to protracted COIN and state-failure contingencies;
- Create and exploit divisions within and among jihadi groups;
- Discredit Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist ideology and covertly promote credible, alternative Islamic voices (i.e., engage in the counter-fatwa war); and
- Isolate Islamic extremists from mainline, conservative Muslims and avoid legitimizing the call to defensive jihad.

Each of these strategic pillars is described in more detail in Chapter IV of this report.[14] It should be noted at the outset that clandestine and covert capabilities will play an increasingly central role in the execution of US strategy. It is assumed, moreover, that the United States will continue to take prudent steps to protect the US homeland and safeguard US and allied interests overseas. Since compelling the United States to spend disproportionately to defend against low-level threats globally is an integral element of al Qaeda's "bleed-until-bankruptcy" strategy, care should be exercised to avoid over-spending on defensive measures. While it is obviously desirable to make it as difficult as

[14] The author is indebted to Michael Vickers, CSBA's former Senior Vice President for Strategic Studies, who made substantive contributions to this section of the report, in particular, and provided valuable guidance throughout the drafting process. He was nominated by President Bush to serve as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict and Interdependent Capabilities on April 10, 2007 and was confirmed unanimously by the US Senate on July 23, 2007.

possible for terrorists to strike the US homeland or American interests overseas, the opportunity cost and defensive "return" on such investments must be carefully assessed.

The next chapter of this report examines in detail the Sunni-based, Salafi-Jihadi threat, including its ideological roots, key actors, goals, strategy, lines of operations, and relevant capabilities. Chapter III examines the same topics, but focused on violent Shi'a extremism or "Khomeinism." Chapter IV provides a quick overview of the status of Islamic radicalism in key regions of the world with increased emphasis on selected "front line" countries. Chapter V elaborates upon the seven strategic pillars for prevailing in the long war mentioned above and, where appropriate, suggests potential implications for US government investment and organization. The report concludes with a brief summary of the challenge posed by violent Islamic extremism and what US strategy should be for addressing it.

II. The Sunni-Based, Salafi-Jihadi Threat

The Sunni-based, Salafi-Jihadi threat, while substantially different in form, has not abated since September 11, 2001. One could argue that, while significant progress has been made in dismantling the al Qaeda organization, the overall situation is considerably worse for three reasons:

- The metastasis of al Qaeda from a highly centralized organization headquartered in Afghanistan into a growing, stateless, global movement comprising loosely coupled regional "franchises" and quasi-independent cells and individuals inspired by Salafi-Jihadi propaganda;

- The success of al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in inflicting American casualties (and thus, demonstrating US vulnerability), promulgating al Qaeda's call to defensive jihad, recruiting and training fighters for operations in Iraq and elsewhere, and waging a well-crafted "media war" portraying the United States and its allies as new "crusaders" that threaten the very survival of Islam; [15] and

[15] Al Qaeda in Iraq is also referred to currently as al Qaida in Mesopotamia. It was formerly named the al Qaida Jihad Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers, as well as Jama'at al-Tawhid wa'al-Jihad. In mid-2005, al Qaeda in Iraq joined an umbrella organization called the Mujahideen Shura Council (MSC), which comprised seven additional jihadi groups operating in Iraq: Victorious Army Group, the Army of al-Sunnah Wal Jama'a, Jama'a al-Murabiteen, Ansar al-Tawhid Brigades, Islamic Jihad Brigades, the Strangers Brigade, and the Horrors Brigade. In October 2006, the MSC morphed into the AQI-controlled Islamic State of Iraq.

- The emergence of a de facto sanctuary in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area that is exploited by al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other Salafi-Jihadi groups—posing an immediate threat to both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In December 2001, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who is second only to Osama bin Laden within al Qaeda and generally recognized as the "brains" behind the organization, characterized the current conflict as "a battle of ideologies, a struggle for survival, and a war with no truce."[16] Ideology is central to the Salafi-Jihadi movement. Accordingly, the first section of this chapter provides an overview of the ideological roots of today's Salafi-Jihadi movement to provide valuable context for comprehending the movement's goals and strategies for achieving them. The second section will examine how al Qaeda has changed over the past six years. While a central core remains, the organization has spawned a number of independently operated "franchises" and inspired small cells to strike out on their own in furtherance of the cause. The chapter concludes with a detailed examination of the movement's goals, strategy, and lines of operations, as well its capabilities (i.e., leadership; command, control, and communications; fundraising; recruitment, indoctrination, and training; and current operations) for realizing them. This discussion, however, should not be construed as suggesting that the Salafi-Jihadi movement is monolithic. While constituent groups share many beliefs, there are important ideological divides within and among them. Since it is impractical to address all of these competing views, al Qaeda is used as the archetype Salafi-Jihadi group and the work of ideologues and strategists associated with the broader movement are incorporated when relevant.

Ideological Roots

Nearly all of the ideas espoused by al Qaeda and other violent jihadi groups today are nothing new; they are borrowed from the works of Islamic scholars writing at least as far back as the Middle Ages. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a detailed history of more than a millennium of radical Islamic thought, offering a brief overview of a few seminal thinkers will pay handsome dividends in terms of

[16] Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner* (Casablanca, Morocco: Dar-al-Najaah Al-Jadeedah, 2001), English Translation, Part VI.

understanding the thinking and behavior of modern jihadis.[17] The ideas motivating today's jihadis are derived, in large part, from the works of Ahmad ibn Abd al-Halim Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328), Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1794), and Sayyid Qutb (1903–1966). Among other important influences, which will not be addressed in detail here, are the 20th century revivalists:[18]

- Muhammad Rashid Rida, who was the first modern Islamic scholar to rediscover the works of Ibn Taymiyya and apply them to the modern day;

- Hassan al-Banna, who not only created the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928, but also argued that the West posed both a physical and intellectual threat ("mental colonization") to Islam that had to be combated internally through *da'wa* (revival through education, application of *sharia* law, social reformation, and missionary work) and externally through jihad; and

- Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi, who called for an internal Islamic revival to resist foreign occupiers, sought the creation of a true Islamic state through the imposition of the *sharia*, and asserted that as "God's representatives on earth," Islamic rulers had plenary authority to regulate the public and private life of Muslims.

While the writings of these three men are often quoted by modern jihadis—including Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri—most of their ideas are either derivative of Ibn Taymiyya and Wahhab, or assimilated into the work of the more influential Qutb.

[17] For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see Habeck, *Knowing the Enemy—Jihadist Ideology and the War on Terror*. See also: Youssef Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Pinter, 1997).

[18] For an expanded discussion of 20th century revivalists, see: Habeck, pp. 27–39.

Ibn Taymiyya

Ibn Taymiyya was a widely respected Islamic scholar who grew up in Damascus, Syria while Mongol armies were invading the Muslim heartland.[19] Having already conquered much of Central Asia, Mongols captured Baghdad, the seat of the Abbasid caliphate, in 1258, and after consolidating their control over Mesopotamia, advanced into Syria and Palestine. While Ibn Taymiyya was at the pinnacle of his career near the turn of the century, the Mameluks of Egypt, then protectors of Mecca and Medina in Arabia, were under mounting pressure. Many of his contemporaries asserted a defensive jihad was not justified since the Mongol king, Ghazan Khan, had already converted to Islam. Ibn Taymiyya argued that the Quran requires Muslims to follow and implement all of God's commandments; none could be ignored or disobeyed in even the smallest way.[20] Therefore, since Mongol rulers failed to enforce the entire *sharia* code and continued to use their native system of laws (*yasa*) to make some legal judgments, they were not Muslims at all, but infidels who should be fought and killed.[21] As he put it:

> Any group of people that rebels against any single prescript of the clear and reliably transmitted prescripts of Islam has to be fought…even if members of this group publicly make a formal confession of the Islamic faith by pronouncing the shuhada [There is no god but the true God and Mohammed is His prophet].[22]

As will be discussed later, today's jihadis use this argument frequently to charge Muslim rulers who do not rule *exclusively* by the *sharia* with apostasy. Arguably the most influential Salafi-Jihadi theologian living today, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, frequently cites Ibn Taymiyya when condemning democracy, denouncing Arab regimes for

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[19] Ibn Taymiyya is recognized as a "Shaikh al-Islam," the highest Sunni title for a cleric. For additional information on the life and writings of Ibn Taymiyya see: Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought from the Prophet to the Present* (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2001); Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam—Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 94–100; and Abdelwahab Meddeb, *The Malady of Islam* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2003), pp. 44–49.

[20] Shaykh al-Imam Ibn Taymiyya, *Public Duties in Islam — The Institution of the Hisba* (Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundation, 1982), pp. 22–23, and 117.

[21] Habeck, pp. 19–20.

[22] As quoted in J.G. Jansen, *The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 37.

their apostasy, and providing ideological guidance for jihadis.[23] Similarly, Osama bin Laden has stated in no uncertain terms that "the text of the Quran, the sunna, and the sayings of the nation's scholars all say that anyone who legislates human laws that are contrary to the laws of Allah is an infidel and is outside the faith."[24]

Unsurprisingly, given the times in which he lived, Ibn Taymiyya extolled the virtue of jihad. He called it the "best of all the voluntary (good actions) which man performs," even better than the *hajj* (one the five obligatory duties of every Muslim who can afford it). He equated jihad with love of God, writing that "Jihad involves absolute love for that which Allah has commanded and absolute hatred for that which He has forbidden."[25] Based on his interpretation of the Quran and Sunna, Ibn Taymiyya also significantly broadened the scope of jihad. Not only should every able-bodied Muslim fight against all heretics, apostates, hypocrites, sinners, and unbelievers until "all religion was for God alone," but also against any Muslim who refused to participate in the jihad.[26] This reconsideration, which was revolutionary at the time, is used by al Qaeda and other jihadi groups today to justify attacks against Muslim "supporters" of apostate regimes, as well as against fellow Muslims judged to be heretical in some way (i.e., Shiites and Sufis) or those who fail to engage in militant jihad against the West. Salafi-Jihadi ideologues, who elevate jihad to a virtual sixth pillar of Islam, frequently cite Ibn Taymiyya in their writings. His voice reverberates, for example, in Maqdisi's assertion that:

> I believe and continuously pronounce that carrying out jihad against the enemies of Allah who substitute [their own laws for] His sharia and are overpowering the Umma today, is one of the most important obligations…

[23] William McCants et al, *Militant Ideology Atlas* (West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center, 2006).
[24] Usamah bin Muhammad bin Ladin, "Open message to King Fahd on the Occasion of the Last Ministerial Shuffle," see Harmony Database, Document AFGP-2002-003345.
[25] Ibn Taimiyya, *Ibn Taimiyya on Public and Private Law in Islam* as translated by Omar A. Farrukh (Beirut, Lebanon: Khayats, 1966), p. 138; and Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, *Al-Ubudiyyah—Being A True Slave of Allah* (London, Ta-Ha Publishers, 1999), pp. 112–113.
[26] Ibn Taymiyah, *Al-Ubudiyyah—Being A True Slave of Allah*, pp. 140–148; and Habeck, p. 21.

> of the Muslims. In fact, in my opinion, it is more important than and [should be] given preference over the jihad against the Jews who occupy Palestine.[27]

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab

The writings of Ibn Taymiyya gathered dust for several hundred years before being uncovered by Wahhab in the 18th century. After the humiliating defeat of the 140,000-man army under the command of Kara Mustafa during the Battle of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman Empire entered a period of a decline relative to its European rivals. In 1699, under the Treaty of Karlowitz, the Ottomans ceded large territories in Eastern Europe to Austria, Poland, and the Republic of Venice. Wahhab's explanation for this decline was that the *ummah* had wandered off the true path of Islam. His remedy was to purify the faith, stripping away innovations (*bidah*) and idolatrous practices (*shirk)* that had accumulated since the first century after the *Hijra* (Mohammed's migration from Mecca to Medina in 622). In his effort to guide Muslims back to the original principles of Islam, he denounced Sufism and called for the destruction of religious images, tombs, and shrines. Echoing Ibn Taymiyya, Wahhab interpreted the doctrine of *tawhid*, the belief in the absolute unity of God, to mean that no human being could make laws or alter in any way the God-given *sharia*, for to do so was to set oneself up as a god in the place of the true divinity—the worst form of apostasy. Leaders who refused to implement the *sharia* without deviation, and misguided Muslims who persisted in idolatry and heresy, were "unbelievers" who should be fought and killed.[28]

Wahhab's heterodox ideology did not have a major influence of Islamic thought in his day. His vision of "true Islam," however, did take root in pockets of the Arabian Peninsula. Most critically, he forged a pact with a rising chieftain in the Najd region, Muhammad Ibn Saud, who agreed to spread Wahhab's vision to lands that his tribe conquered. Over the next 140 years, Ibn Saud and his descendants gained control

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[27] As quoted in Steven Brooke, "The Preacher and the Jihadi," in Hillel Fradkin et al, *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology–Volume 3* (Washington, DC: Hudson Institute, 2006), p. 57.

[28] Habeck, p. 23–24. For additional discussion on Wahhabism, see: Hamid Algar, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay* (Oneonta, NY: Islamic Publications International, 2002); Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, pp. 7–11; and Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought*, p. 58.

of the Peninsula and outlying areas, which were unified into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. With the discovery of oil in the Kingdom in 1938, the state was able to provide Wahhabi *muftis* and Imams the resources needed to fund madrassas to teach Wahhabist interpretations of Islam, as well as to proselytize abroad. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s, however, when Muslims migrated in large numbers to the Kingdom for employment in its burgeoning oil industry, were exposed to the Wahhabist ideas, and returned home that the movement gained a truly international character. Since then, Saudi Arabia has spent over $80 billion promoting Wahhabism, including building and operating schools, charities, and mosques.[29]

Wahhab's interpretation of *tawhid* is often cited by al Qaeda as justification for attacks on apostate regimes and Muslims who have failed to embrace "true" Islam. His condemnation of idolatry was the inspiration for the Taliban's destruction of the Bamyan Buddhas, as well as for Zarqawi's antipathy toward Shiites, who, in his view, give far too much veneration and supplication to Ali (and his descendants) and Shi'a clergy.

Sayyid Qutb

Qutb, a revivalist and early member of the Muslim Brotherhood, was a contemporary of Al-Banna and Mawdudi. While in prison in Egypt between 1954 and 1964, Qutb wrote his multi-volume masterwork on the Quran, *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, which was subsequently abridged and widely disseminated as *Milestones Along the Way*. With *Milestones*, Qutb poured the ideological and theological foundation of the modern jihadist movement.[30]

Most of his ideas, however, were repackaged versions of those put forth by Ibd Taymiyyah and Wahhab. Like his predecessors, he argued that a state was not Islamic unless it fully and exclusively implemented *sharia* law; and that Muslims who did not strictly follow the *sharia* were unbelievers, and thus, subject to attack. In his view, any state that was not ruled by the *sharia*, regardless of whether a majority of its people viewed themselves as Muslims, was part of the house of war (*dar al-harb*);

[29] Zeyno Baran, Nixon Center, "Combating al Qaeda and the Militant Islamic Threat," Prepared Statement for House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, February 16, 2005, p. 4.
[30] Habeck, pp. 35–39.

and thus, neither their lives nor property were protected.[31] He asserted that Muslims had to reject democracy not only as a false idea, but as a false religion. Building upon al-Banna, Qutb held that Muslims had an obligation to engage in a continuous jihad—both armed and intellectual—to eliminate the worship of anyone or anything other than God. Violence, in his view, was not only justified, but demanded against everyone—unbelievers, apostate rulers, and Muslims who had fallen into a state of "ignorance"[32]—who rejected his vision of "true" Islam.[33] The latter was adopted as the core "theology" of al Qaeda. In *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*, for example, al-Zawahiri borrows directly from Qutb, declaring that the "battle between Islam and its enemies is primarily an ideological one over the issue of unification [*tawhid*]. It is also a battle over to whom authority and power should belong—to God's course and the shari'ah, to man-made laws and material principles, or to those who claim to be intermediaries between the Creator and mankind."[34]

Key Actors in the Salafi-Jihadi "Movement"

The ideas espoused by Ibn Taymiyya, Wahhab, Qutb, and others have inspired a new generation of violent jihadists. Currently, the Salafi-Jihadi "movement" among Sunni Muslims can be disaggregated into three types of groups:

- Surviving core elements of al Qaeda that offer inspiration and ideological guidance for the militant jihadi movement, and may retain limited capabilities for global coordination and execution of high-profile attacks;

- Independently operated "franchises," several with sworn allegiances to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, that conduct jihad operations mostly at the country and sub-regional level, but whose resources could potentially be tapped for global operations; and

[31] Sayyid Qutb, *In the Shade of the Qur'an, Vol. 4* (Markfield/Leicester, England: The Islamic Foundation, 2001), pp. 81–82, 88; and Habeck, pp. 36–37, 166.
[32] A term used to refer to the pre-Mohammed period.
[33] Habeck, pp. 36–37.
[34] Zawahiri, *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*, Part III.

- Small cells and individuals with weak or no links to al Qaeda inspired by its call to defensive jihad.

Together, these three groups constitute what is often referred to as the Al Qaeda Associated Movement (AQAM). The goals, grand strategy, lines of operation, capabilities, and vulnerabilities of AQAM will be summarized later in this assessment.

The Al Qaeda Core

Several senior level al Qaeda leaders remain at large—most notably: Osama Bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Saif al-Adel, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, and Suleiman Abu Ghaith. Aside from Saif Al Adel and Suleiman Abu Ghaith, who are believed to have found sanctuary in Iran, there is a good chance the surviving core is hiding out in urban areas; most likely ones in Pakistan, given the location of other senior al Qaeda leaders when they were arrested or killed over the past six years. As will be discussed in more detail later, while these high-ranking individuals were on the run and under-pressure from 2001 through 2005, they began to regroup in Pakistan's remote Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), and Baluchistan in 2006. They may have also found refuge in the rugged mountains of extreme eastern Afghanistan (e.g., Konar and Nuristan).[35] As evidenced by the frequency and content of released audio and video tapes, as well as Internet postings, the ability of the al Qaeda core to monitor and coordinate the activities of its global franchises has improved steadily over the past two years. In addition, although Saif al-Adel and other senior al Qaeda leaders are supposedly under arrest by the Iranian government, they reportedly have considerable freedom of movement and access to communications. Based on communications intelligence and other sources, it is believed that Saif al-Adel planned and organized the bombings of three housing compounds in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on May 12, 2003, as well as several attacks in Europe, while in Iran.[36] In 2005,

[35] Michael Scheuer, "Assessing the Six Year Hunt for Osama bin Laden," *Terrorism Focus*, September 25, 2007, pp. 6–7.

[36] Kenneth Katzman, *Al Qaeda: Profile and Threat Assessment*, CRS Report for Congress, RL33038, p. 6; J. Cofer Black, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, US Department of State, Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on International Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Human Rights, Hearing on "Al Qaeda: The Threat to the United States and its Allies," April 1, 2004, p. 3.

he posted a lengthy dispatch on operations in Iraq and Iran on a jihadist website that detailed how he was able to meet repeatedly with Zarqawi and his lieutenants.[37] Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, in addition to trying to maintain some measure of strategic oversight over high-profile operations underway in Iraq and Afghanistan, have continued to provide ideological inspiration to the jihadist movement, primarily through dozens of audio- and video-recordings. Their statements have been played and replayed repeatedly on *Al-Jazeera* and other channels, and have been posted and distributed widely on the Internet for easy, global access.

Reinforcing this surviving central core, several former lower level members have risen quickly through the ranks to replace commanders that have been captured or killed. In addition, many of the mujahedeen recruited, trained, and indoctrinated by al Qaeda in Afghanistan between 1995 and 2001 remain committed to the organization.[38] While only a small fraction of these dedicated al Qaeda fighters probably remain operational, the organization still has a pool of probably a thousand or more trained, well-indoctrinated personnel upon which to draw. As CIA Director Michael Hayden testified to Congress in November 2006, "al Qaeda has a deep bench of lower-ranking personnel capable of stepping up to assume leadership responsibilities."[39] Al Qaeda is believed to have a presence in more than 60 countries around the world.[40]

Both bin Laden and Zawahiri have repeatedly threatened new, large-scale attacks against the West, and the United States in particular. Whether or not the Al Qaeda core still has the independent capability to plan, organize, fund, and execute a large-scale attack within the US homeland is very much an open question. While it could sub-contract

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[37] See Peter Finn, "Al Qaeda Deputies Harbored by Iran," *Washington Post*, August 28, 2002, p. 1; Aamir Latif, "Al Qaeda Said to Have Migrated to Iran," Washington Times, July 6, 2003, p. 1; Robin Wright, "U.S. Ends Talks with Iran over Al Qaeda Links," Los Angeles Times, May 21, 2003, p. 1; Barbara Slavin, "Iran Might Swap Terrorists for Help From U.S.," USA Today, August 4, 2003, p. 7; John Mintz, "Saudi Says Iran Drags Feet Returning Al Qaeda Leaders," Washington Post, August 12, 2003, p. 2; and Josh Meyer, "Some U.S. Officials Fear Iran is Helping Al Qaeda," Los Angeles Times, March 21, 2006, p. 1.

[38] According to some estimates, up to 60,000 jihadis trained in Afghanistan during this period. Riedel, "Al Qaeda Strikes Back," p. 25.

[39] General Michael V. Hayden, Director, Central Intelligence Agency, "Current Situation in Iraq and Afghanistan," Statement for the Record before the Senate Armed Services Committee, November 15, 2006.

[40] See, for example: James Phillips, "The Evolving Al Qaeda Threat," Testimony before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities, February 16, 2006, p. 6.

out an attack to one of its "franchises," only a few of them have anything close to the capabilities required to carry out an attack approaching the sophistication of September 11th. The National Counterterrorism Center stated in its annual report for 2005, not a single attack worldwide "can be definitively determined to have been directed by the Al Qaeda central leadership."[41] As will be elaborated upon below, however, many of the jihadis involved in successful attacks since 2001 had connections with known al Qaeda operatives who, in several cases, provided material, logistical, financial, or technical support.

The plot to blow up commercial airliners while in flight from Great Britain to United States, which was disrupted by British authorities on August 9, 2006 may be an ominous sign of al Qaeda central's resurgence. In what was essentially a replay of the failed 1995 Bojinka plot to down aircraft over the Pacific Ocean,[42] the plan was to smuggle liquid-explosive devices aboard as many as ten US-bound flights in drink bottles, contact lens solution bottles, or other containers in carry-on luggage. The explosive solutions would be detonated, using either a heat source or an electrical charge, as simultaneously as possible while the aircraft were over the Atlantic Ocean.[43] Had it been successful, more

[41] One exception prior to 2006 could be the November 2003 truck bombings in Istanbul. National Counterterrorism Center, *Reports on Incidents of Terrorism—2005*, April 11, 2006, p. 11; and Karl Vick, "Al-Qaeda's Hand in Istanbul Plot," *Washington Post*, February 13, 2007, p. 1.

[42] The Bojinka Plot was devised in 1995 by Ramzi Ahmed Yousef and his uncle, Khalid Sheik Muhammad. The plot was aborted, however, after a fire erupted in the Yousef's Manila apartment while he was attempting to prepare the bombs.

[43] According to a Joint Homeland Special Assessment, drafted by the FBI and Department of Homeland Security, entitled "Possible Terrorist Use of Liquid Explosive Materials in Future Attacks," the London bombers intended to use a hydrogen-peroxide based explosive—either triacetone triperoxide (TATP) or hexamethylene triperoxide diamine (HMTD) in the attack. Both of these chemicals, however, are extremely sensitive to heat, shock, and friction—making them very unstable, and thus, difficult to use operationally. To avoid this problem, several sources have suggested that the terrorists planned to carry precursors aboard targeted aircraft and produce the explosive in-flight, presumably in the cabin lavatory. This process, however, would require an ice-bath to control temperature, demand careful acid titration and laborious stirring, and would release noxious, easily detected fumes. It would take several hours, moreover, to combine the precursors and dry the explosive precipitate. Given those inherent difficulties, carrying the explosive itself onboard, possibly slightly dampened with water or acetone for enhanced stability, would have offered better odds of success. While prone to accidental detonation, terrorists have used TATP successfully in the past as a main explosive charge: a mixture of TATP and ammonium nitrates was used by suicide bombers in Casablanca

than 2,500 people might have perished—rivaling the attack on September 11th. What is especially disturbing about the plot are the apparent links both to al Qaeda franchises and its senior leadership. The British plotters had ties to al Qaeda-linked terrorist operatives in Pakistan and Germany. Pakistan quickly rounded up ten suspects, including two British citizens of Pakistani descent, believed to be involved in the plot. One of those Britons, Rashid Rauf, who is the brother of one of the 24 plotters (Tayib Rauf) arrested in the United Kingdom, trained in al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan in the late 1990s and was affiliated at the time with Islamic terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM).[44] Rashid Rauf later aligned himself with al Qaeda. During the planning phase of the plot, which appears to have commenced as early as 2003, he met with Hafiz Mohammed Saeed, the leader of Lashkar-e Taiba (renamed Jamaat ud-Dawa), which also has ties to al Qaeda. According to Pakistani officials, Rashid Rauf had an "Afghanistan-based Al Qaeda connection," possibly Matiur Rehman or Ayman al Zawahiri.[45] Rauf was also related by marriage to another veteran terrorist, Maulana Masood Azhar, who reportedly played a role in the attack on US troops in Somalia in 1993 and the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.[46] At least two plotters arrested in the United Kingdom traveled to Pakistan in the weeks prior to their arrest and may have received

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in May 2003, four of the suicide bombers in the London subway attacks in July 2005 reportedly used peroxide-based explosives, and Palestinian suicide bombers have used TATP for years in carrying out attacks against Israel. See Brian Bennett and Douglas Waller, "Thwarting the Airline Plot: Inside the Investigation," Time (on-line), August 10, 2006; and "Details Emerge in British Terror Case," New York Times, August 28, 2006.

[44] JEM, founded by Masood Azhar, is focused primarily on contesting Indian rule of Kashmir. It has openly declared war against the United States. JEM is reported to be involved in or responsible for numerous suicide car bombings in Kashmir, the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament, two assassination attempts against Musharraf in December 2003, and the abduction and murder of US journalist, Daniel Pearl.

[45] Paul Watson and Mubashir Zaidi, "7 British Terror Suspects Also Pakistani Citizens," *Los Angeles Times*, August 19, 2006, p. 1; Munir Ahmad, "Al Qaeda's No. 2 Linked to London Terrorism Plot," *Miami Herald*, August 18, 2006; Alyssa Ayres, "Regional Terror Goes Global," *Wall Street Journal*, August 18, 2006; Dan Murphy, "A New Generation of Jihad Seekers," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 18, 2006, p. 1; Paul Watson and Mubashir Zaidi, "British Case Renews Focus on Pakistan," *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 2006; Bryan Bender and Susan Milligan, "Terror Inquiry Expands Globally," *Boston Globe*, August 13, 2006, p. 1; and Daniel McGrory, Zahid Hussain, and Karen McVeigh, "Top Al Qaeda Trainer 'Taught Suspects to Use Explosive'," *London Times*, August 12, 2006.

[46] Watson and Zaidi, "7 British Terror Suspects Also Pakistani Citizens," p. 1.

explosives training.[47] Consistent with al Qaeda modus operandi, several of the suspects recorded martyrdom videotapes as part of their preparations for the attack.

As will be elaborated upon later in this report, by taking advantage of a de facto sanctuary in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area, al Qaeda central has managed to improve significantly its ability to exercise effective command and control over its far-flung jihadi network over the past two years. Although its operational capabilities are still much reduced relative to 2001, its global ideological influence has spread geographically and intensified. This trend, which was highlighted in the US State Department's report on global terrorism in 2004, has continued:

> ...al-Qa'ida has spread its anti-US, anti-Western ideology to other groups and geographic areas. It is therefore no longer only al-Qa'ida itself but increasingly groups affiliated with al-Qa'ida, or independent ones adhering to al-Qa'ida's ideology, that present the greatest threat of terrorist attacks against US and allied interests globally.[48]

It is to those affiliated groups or "franchises" motivated by the violent, Salafi-Jihadi ideology that is aggressively promoted by al Qaeda that we now turn.[49]

Independently Operated "Franchises"

As intended by its founders, al Qaeda, which literally translates as "the base," has spawned dozens of violent, jihadi groups across Europe, Africa, and Asia (see Figure 1 and Table 1). While most of these groups

[47] In addition to the Pakistan connections, at least one of the men arrested in the United Kingdom had contact with the wife of Said Bahaji in Germany, who is alleged to have been the link between the Hamburg al Qaeda cell that organized the September 11th attacks and Osama bin Laden. Alan Cowell, Dexter Filkins, and Mark Mazzetti, "Suspect Held in Pakistan Is Said to Have Ties to Al Qaeda," *New York Times*, August 12, 2006, p. 1; McGrory, Hussain, and McVeigh, "Top Al Qaeda Trainer 'Taught Suspects to Use Explosive'"; and Bender and Milligan, "Terror Inquiry Expands Globally," p. 1.

[48] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2004* (Washington, DC: Department of State, April 2005), p. 7.

[49] Peter Grier, "The New Al Qa'ida: Local Franchiser," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 11, 2005.

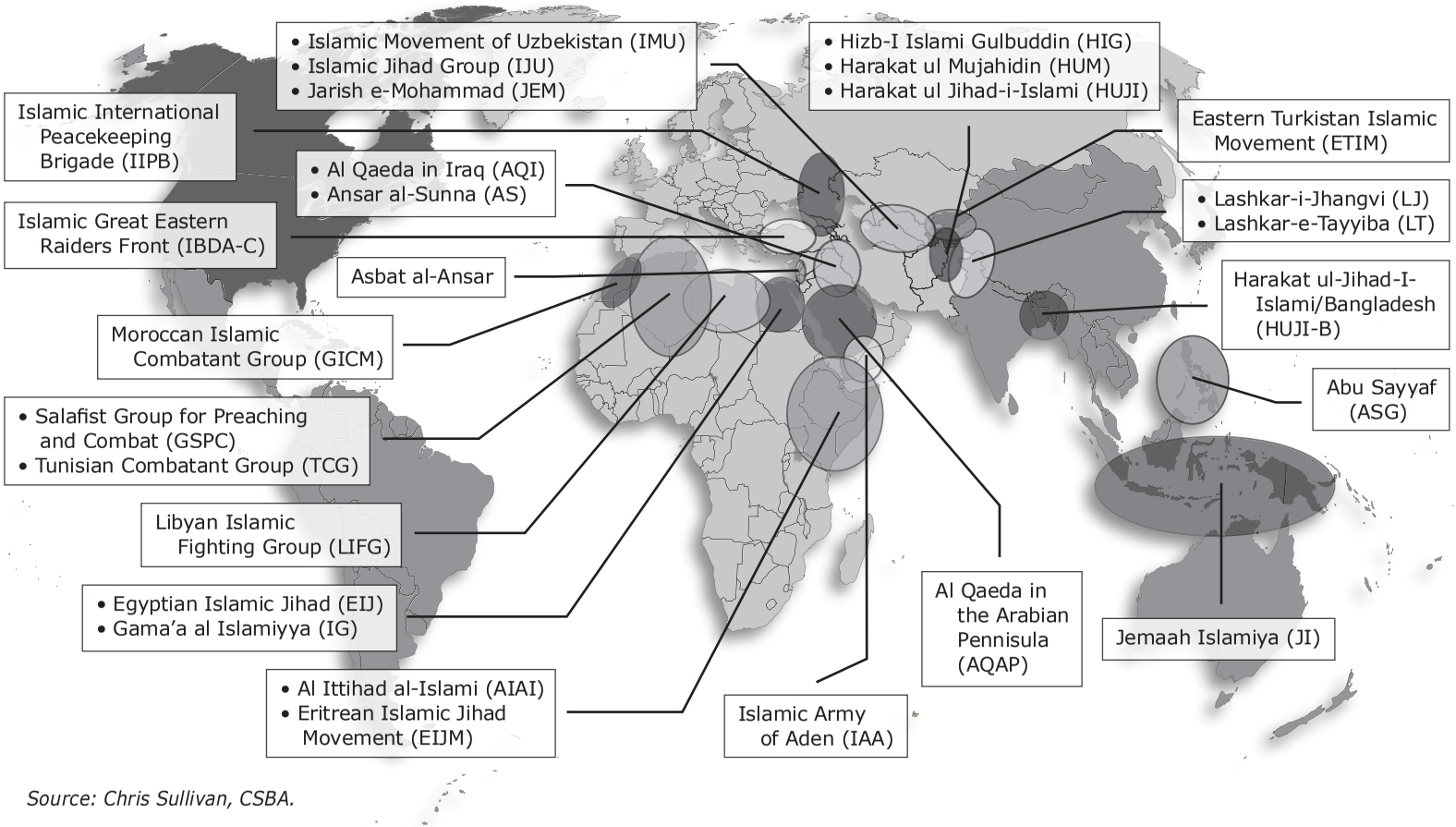
are focused at the sub-regional, national, or sub-national level, several have an international presence with operatives in Europe (particularly the United Kingdom), North America, Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia—most notably: Al Jihad (AJ)/Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC)/Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM), and Takfir wa Jijra.

EIJ, which was formerly headed by al-Zawahiri and officially merged with al Qaeda in 2001, is based in Egypt, but is believed to have members in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Yemen, Sudan, and the United Kingdom. Since 1992, GIA has focused on overthrowing the Algerian government and creating an Islamic state. In response to a ruthless but effective crackdown by the government, GIA members went underground in Algeria and fled to Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and several countries in Europe. GSPC, a splinter group of GIA, is currently the largest and most effective terrorist group operating in Algeria. While its attacks are focused primarily against Algerian government and military targets, it publicly declared its support for al Qaeda in late 2003 and announced a formal alliance in September 2006. It is believed to have a presence not only in Algeria, but also in Mali, Mauritania, Canada, and Western Europe. Although LIFG is focused primarily on overthrowing the apostate regime of Muammar Qadhafi, a portion of the group has committed itself to al Qaeda's broader defensive jihad against the West.[50] While LIFG almost certainly has a clandestine presence in Libya, most of its members currently reside in countries in Europe, the Persian Gulf, Africa, and Asia. It is believed to have planned the May 2003 suicide bombings in Casablanca. A splinter group of Shabiba Islamiya, GICM seeks to establish an Islamic state in Morocco and actively supports the defensive jihad against the West championed by al Qaeda. Its members interact regularly with other terrorists groups operating in North Africa and it may have played a role in the Casablanca bombings.[51] The membership of Takfir wa Jijra, which is more of an extremely fundamentalist sect than an organized terrorist group, includes Egyptians, Syrians, Palestinians, Lebanese and other Arabs. It operates throughout the Muslim world and has numerous cells in Europe. Members of the group were linked to the November 2004 murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh.

[50] In November 2007, Zawahiri claimed that LIFG had formally joined al Qaeda.

[51] For expanded descriptions of all of these groups, as well as other terrorist groups closely linked to al Qaeda, see: U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005*, pp. 183–262.

Figure 1: Known Terrorist Organizations Linked to al Qaeda



Source: Chris Sullivan, CSBA.

Table 1: Terrorist Groups Closely Linked to Al Qaeda

Group Name	Estimated Strength*	Primary Operating Area
Al Jihad (AJ) / Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ)	>300	Global presence
Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula	<100	Saudi Arabia
Al Qaeda in Iraq (formerly Jama'at al-Tawhid wa'al- Jihad)	Unknown	Iraq, Jordan, global support network
Ansar al-Islam / Ansar al-Sunna	500–1,000	Iraq
Armed Islamic Group (GIA)	<100	Algeria, Pan-Sahel, and Europe
Asbat al-Ansar	~300	Lebanon
Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM) / Jamiat ul-Ansar (JUA)	Several hundred	Pakistan / India
Hizb-I-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG)	Several hundred	Afghanistan
Islamic Army of Aden	Unknown	Southern Yemen
Islamic Group (IG) / Gama'a al-Islamiyya (GAI)	<500	Southern Egypt and urban areas in Egypt
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)	<500	Afghanistan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan
Jemaah Islamiya (JI)	100s–1,000s	Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Southern Philippines
Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG)	~300	Concentrated in eastern Libya, global presence
Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM)	Unknown	Western Europe, Afghanistan, and Morocco
Salafia Jihadia	>700	Morocco
Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) / Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)	~300	Algeria, pan-Sahel, Canada, and Western Europe
Takfir wa Hijra	Unknown	Algeria, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Netherlands, Spain, and United Kingdom

*Based on US Department of State estimates (2006) and National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) Terrorism Knowledge Base.

In addition to the groups listed in Table 1, nearly a score of other terrorist groups have been identified with weak or suspected links to al Qaeda.[52] Looking across al Qaeda's global franchise, the following characteristics stand out:

- Nearly all of the groups are focused primarily on the "local" enemy, overthrowing "apostate" regimes in their native country;

- Most groups, thus far, appear to be providing only rhetorical support to al Qaeda's defensive jihad against the West;

- The vast majority of attacks carried out by these groups are relatively unsophisticated (i.e., suicide bombings, car bombs, ambushes, and assassinations);

- With the possible exception of GSPC, none of the groups are believed to have a significant presence in North America;

- Several groups have a growing presence in Western Europe, and in the United Kingdom in particular, which could provide them with a "springboard" for operations against the United States; and

- Barring the existence of large, unknown groups or wildly inaccurate estimates of the strength of known groups, the aggregate manpower of the global "franchise" is very likely less than 10,000 dedicated fighters and probably less than 5,000.

[52] Among these groups are: Abu Haps al Masiri Brigades, Ahu Nayaf al-Afgani, Al Sala Haljatayah, Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Battalion of the Martyr Abdullah Azzam, Eastern Turkey Islamic Movement, Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EIJM), Hizbul Mujahideen, Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade, Islamic Jihad Group, Islamic Movement for Change, Jaish al-Taifa al-Mansoura, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Lasker Jihad, Pattani United Liberation Organization, Riyad us-Saliheyn Martyrs' Brigade, Tawhid and Jihad, Tunisian Combatant Group, and al-Ittihaad al-Islami.

Individuals and Small Cells Inspired by Al Qaeda

Over the past several years, a number of individuals, with distant or no links to al Qaeda and scant terrorist training, have responded to its call to defensive jihad against the West. Inspired by a common cause, these individuals coalesce for a limited campaign or even a single operation.[53] Some have loose associations with organized Islamic groups of various kinds while others do not. Although Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri, and other al Qaeda leaders have praised these "mujahideen" for their initiative and dedication to the jihad, al Qaeda central does not have effective control over them. Al Qaeda strategist Abu Musab al-Suri refers to this as the "jihad of individual terrorism," and asserts that waging such operations on "open fronts" around the world will likely be the prevalent form of jihad until a secure state sanctuary can be re-established.[54]

While it is difficult to generalize, it appears that the majority of these "grass roots" terrorists have been excluded from mainstream society for ethnic, economic, and religious reasons. In some cases, such as in Europe, they have grown up in relatively impoverished, segregated urban enclaves, exacerbating their sense of alienation. One should be wary, however, about over-attributing their radicalization to socio-economic factors. The spread of effective propaganda on the Internet, the creation and expansion of radical countercultures, and recruitment based on established social networks appear to be major contributing factors. Many of the "amateur" terrorists that have emerged to date have recently "rediscovered" their faith and have been radicalized by al Qaeda's on-line propaganda, in formal and informal prayer groups, and by sermons delivered in radical mosques. As a group, they are motivated by a shared sense of enmity toward the United States and the West.[55] Without access to formal training, they have taken advantage of detailed "handbooks" on jihadi websites to gather information on how to plan and conduct terrorist attacks.

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[53] Phillips testimony, p. 4.

[54] Abu Musab al-Suri, *The Call to Global Islamic Resistance*, published on-line in 2005, pp. 1361, 1379, and 1395 as cited in Brynjar Lia, "Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralized Jihad Training—Part I," Terrorism Monitor, January 18, 2007.

[55] Hoffman, p. 5; and Javier Jordan and Robert Wesley, "The Madrid Attacks: Results of Investigations Two Years Later," *Terrorism Monitor*, Volume 4, Issue 5, March 9, 2006.

Despite their lack of training and resources, these small cells and committed individuals can have a major impact—as evidenced by both the March 2004 attack on the train system in Madrid, Spain, which killed 191 people and injured another 1,800; and the July 2005 bombing of the London mass-transit system, which killed 49 people and injured more than 700 others. In both cases, the individuals involved were inspired by al Qaeda, but their links to the central organization were indirect.

The Madrid attack, for example, was organized and executed by a small cell, comprised mainly of Moroccan immigrants, which was able to barter 35-40 kilograms of smuggled hashish and a stolen Toyota Corolla for about 210 kilograms of stolen dynamite. The dynamite was then packed into rucksacks, carried aboard and left on Madrid trains, and set off by home-made cell phone detonators.[56] It was initially believed that the group, led by Serhane bin Abdelmajid Fakhet, a Tunisian, had no links to al Qaeda. Subsequent investigations, however, revealed otherwise: Fakhet was a member of GICM and his brother-in-law was Mustapha el-Mimouni, the leader of GICM's Madrid cell; two Syrian radicals, Moutaz and Mohammad Almallah Dabas, with established links to al Qaeda, played an important role in the indoctrination of the group's members; and one member, Allekema Lamari, was a former member of GIA.[57] When police raided Fakhet's residence on April 3, 2004, they found a written al Qaeda ultimatum to the Spanish government, a car packed with explosives, two backpack bombs, 10 kilograms of dynamite, and 200 detonators.[58] Similarly, the four suicide bombers responsible for the July 2005 attacks in London were radicalized British nationals of Pakistani descent. They were not members of any organized terrorist group and took advantage of the Internet for instructions on procuring the bomb parts and assembling them. Two of the bombers, however, did travel to Lahore, Pakistan in November 2004 and met with members of Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT), who may have provided them with some training. It appears that they also met with al Qaeda operatives to

[56] Although 13 rucksacks were prepared, only 10 were successfully detonated.
[57] Several members of the group also had some sort of link to GICM. Interestingly, the socio-economic situation of most of the cell members was modest. Several had above-average livelihoods and were married with children. Serhane was a student at Madrid University having received a scholarship from the Spanish government to pursue a doctorate in economics, and was working as a real estate agent. There is some circumstantial evidence that the attack may have been directed by al Qaeda central through GICM. Jordan and Wesley, "The Madrid Attacks: Results of Investigations Two Years Later," p. 1; and MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, "Serhan ben Abdelmajid Fakhet."
[58] MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, "Serhan ben Abdelmajid Fakhet."

receive explosives training and record farewell "martyrdom" videos.[59] The British government estimated that the total cost of the attack was less than $15,000.[60]

The current status of AQAM can be summarized as follows:

- The al Qaeda core survives and continues to operate at a low level—providing a source of inspiration and limited tactical support to franchises and small cells, as well as possible coordination for large-scale attacks (e.g., the August 2006 aircraft downing plot);

- Al Qaeda franchises have gained ground in some areas (e.g., Africa), but have suffered setbacks in Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East; and

- Autonomous, home-grown cells inspired by al Qaeda's violent jihadist ideology have emerged, most notably in Europe, and have demonstrated that a few committed individuals can inflict large numbers of casualties with no structured training and minimal resources.

The highly centralized, hierarchical al Qaeda organization that was built prior to September 11th, however, no longer exists. As one well-respected terrorism expert explains: "The current al Qaeda thus exists more as an ideology than as an identifiable, unitary terrorist organization. It has become a vast enterprise—an international franchise with like-minded local representatives, loosely connected to a central ideological or motivational base, but advancing the remaining center's goals at once simultaneously and independently of each other."[61]

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[59] Robert Block, "Al Qaeda or Not? U.S., U.K. Differ On Its Likely Role," *Wall Street Journal*, August 12, 2006, p. 1.

[60] Glenn Simpson, Zahid Hussein, and Keith Johnson, "Officials Seek Links to Al Qaeda in Blasts," *Wall Street Journal*, July 18, 2005, p. 3; Glenn Simpson, David Crawford, and Jay Solomon, "Al Qaeda's Hand Seen in Attacks," *Wall Street Journal*, July 15, 2005, p. 3; and Cassell Bryan-Low and David Crawford, "Terrorist Profile Gains Disturbing Features," *Wall Street Journal*, August 16, 2006, p. 5.

[61] Bruce Hoffman, "Combating Al Qaeda and the Militant Islamic Threat," Testimony before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, February, 16, 2006, p. 3.

Goals, Strategy, and Lines of Operation

Salafi-Jihadi groups are motivated by a similar set of core beliefs: Islam is the one true faith that will, in time, dominate the world; the Quran and *hadith* (statements and practice of Muhammad) contain all the guidance necessary for living a righteous life; there is no separation between religion and the rest of life; and Muslim rulers must govern by the *sharia*.[62] Derivative of these core beliefs, most groups share two overarching goals: expelling foreign military forces and influences from Muslim lands; and overthrowing apostate regimes that have misled the *ummah* and allowed Islamic society to retrograde back to the "period of ignorance" that preceded Muhammad. More extreme groups, of which al Qaeda is an archetype, believe that a violent jihad is required to revive and protect "true" Islam; seek to establish a new caliphate that encompasses all lands that have ever been under Islamic control; and aspire to convert or conquer all unbelievers.

The Sunni-based, radical Islamic threat is far from monolithic, however. Significant differences exist across, and sometimes even within, groups with regard to strategic goals and how the struggle should be waged. As will be discussed later, these and other differences could and should be exploited by the United States to weaken and divide the enemy. While the differences between various Salafi-Jihadi groups should not be minimized, neither should they be overly magnified. The following discussion of goals, strategy, and lines of operations will focus on the dominant jihadi voice and gravest Islamic terrorist threat facing the United States today: AQAM. While focusing on this threat certainly helps to narrow the discussion, AQAM does not speak for all groups in the broader Salafi-Jihadi movement and AQAM itself does not speak with one voice. Owing to aggressive US-led manhunting operations, al Qaeda's strategists have few opportunities to meet secretly behind closed doors to hammer out their differences. Instead, they are forced share their ideas by publishing in on-line journals, writing newspaper articles, recording videotapes and audiotapes, and, less frequently, writing letters to specific individuals. Scattered far and wide across the globe, they have struggled to make their case for how the movement should pursue its goals—oftentimes, this means critiquing the work of competing strategists. Much of this discourse is publicly

[62] Habeck, *Knowing the Enemy*, p. 17.

available.[63] The discussion that follows draws primarily from the writings of al Qaeda's most influential strategists, including: Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, the late Abu-Hajer Abd-al-Aziz al-Muqrin, Abu Ubyad al-Qurashi, Abu-Ayman al-Hilali, Abd-al-Hadi, Sayf-al-Din-al-Ansari, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Abu Bakr Naji, Abu Musab al-Suri, and the late Abu Musab Al Zarqawi.

As will be explained, below, while there are many common strategic themes and approaches in this cacophony of voices, so too is there discord. What follows is a composite picture of the movement's goals, strategy, and lines of operation.

The Evolution of AQAM Goals

Immediately following its founding in 1989, the core goals of al Qaeda were the withdrawal of US military "occupation" forces from the "Land of the two Holy Places" in the wake of the first Gulf War and the imposition of *sharia* law, untainted by man-made laws, in Saudi Arabia.[64] By 1996, calls for myriad government reforms in Saudi Arabia evolved into a declaration of *takfir* against the Saudi regime. In Osama bin Laden's "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," he chronicled the abuses of the ruling regime and charged it with apostasy. He stated, for example, that "it is not a secret that to use man-made law instead of the Shari'a and to support the infidels against the Muslims is one of the ten 'voiders' that would strip a person from his Islamic status."[65] At this time, al Qaeda also called for

[63] FBIS has translated a large corpus of al Qaeda documents. Transcripts of selected captured documents have been released by the US government through the Combating Terrorism Center at the US Military Academy at West Point. See: "Compilation of Usama Bin Ladin Statements 1994–January 2004," FBIS Report — GMP20040209000243, February 9, 2004; Combating Terrorism Center, *Harmony and Disharmony—Exploiting al'Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities* (West Point, NY: US Military Academy, 2006); and Christopher Blanchard, *Al Qaeda: Statements and Evolving Ideology*, CRS Report for Congress, June 20, 2005.

[64] See, for example, the letter of Shawwaal, May 1991; the Memorandum of Advice, July 1992; and a series of letters written by Osama bin Laden on behalf of "The Committee for Advice and Reform" to various Saudi Arabian government officials between April 1994 and May 1998 in Harmony Database, AFGP-2002-003345.

[65] Osama bin Laden, "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," originally published in *Al Quds Al Arabi* (London, in Arabic), August 1996.

a defensive jihad against "the main enemy," defined as "the armies of the American crusaders and their allies" defiling the holiest of Muslim lands and the "Zionist-Crusader alliance" that has "divided the Ummah into small and little countries and pushed it, for the last few decades, into a state of confusion."[66] Joining with other jihadist groups in 1998 under the banner of "The World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders," al Qaeda called not only for the liberation of the holy sites in Arabia, but also the withdrawal of infidel forces "out of all the lands of Islam."[67] With the official merger of al Qaeda with Ayman al-Zawahiri's Egyptian Islamic Jihad in 2001, the organization's current goals solidified:

- Eviction of military forces and corrupting foreign influences from all Muslim lands, most especially Saudi Arabia;

- The overthrow of apostate regimes, meaning all those that do not govern solely by the sharia; and

- Creation of an Islamic "caliphate" ruling over all current and former Muslim lands, including Israel (see Figure 2); and, in time, the conquest or conversion of all unbelievers.

Al Qaeda's constitutional charter summarizes its goal as "the victory of the mighty religion of Allah, the establishment of an Islamic Regime and the restoration of the Islamic caliphate, God willing."[68]

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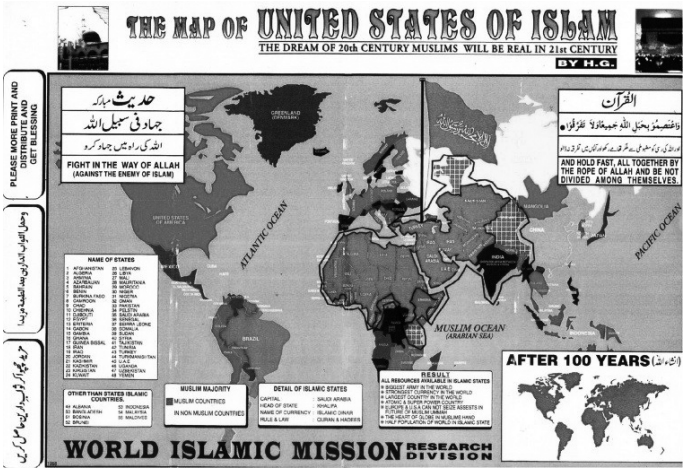
[66] Ibid.

[67] Other groups included Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Islamic Group, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan, and the Jihad Movement in Bangladesh. See Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahir, et al, "Fatwah Urging Jihad Against the Americans," originally published in *Al Quds Al Arabi*, February 23, 1998.

[68] DIA, translation of "Al-Qaida: Constitutional Charter, Rules, and Regulations," Translation No. AFGT-2002-600175, August 2002, p. 2.

Figure 2: United States of Islam (from Muttahid Jihad Council website)



Source: Joint Staff's standard unclassified brief on the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism (NMSP-WOT), 2006.

In an audiotape released on January 30, 2005 on an al Qaeda affiliated website and subsequently aired several times by *Al Jazeera* television in various forms, Zawahiri attempted to repackage earlier al Qaeda's statements to make its vision of an Islamic caliphate more attractive to the Muslim masses globally. He also sought to define the al Qaeda "brand" more clearly, contrasting its core principles with those of other Salafist groups. He explained that all of al Qaeda's reform efforts were focused on realizing "three foundations," none of which was subject to compromise:[69]

- "The Rule of the Shariah," which ineluctably follows from belief in God;[70]

[69] "Al-Zawahiri Denounces US, Argues for Reign of Islamic Law and Caliphate, Jihad Against Crusaders and Jews," FBIS Report — GMP20050131000021, January 31, 2005; and "Al-Jazirah TV's Treatment of Al-Zawahiri's Statement; Comparison," FBIS Report GMP20050210000280, February 10, 2005.

[70] "Al-Jazirah TV's Treatment of Al-Zawahiri's Statement; Comparison," pp. 1–2. The central ideological motivation for al Qaeda is the Islamic principle of tawhid, which is belief in the absolute unity of God and adoption of Islam as an all-encompassing religious, political, social, and economic system. Reflecting this, a frequent refrain of Osama bin Laden is that "Islam is one unit that can not be divided" and Islam is "a way of life revealed by God for men to abide by

- "The Liberation of the Homelands," defined as the "the freedom of Muslim lands and their liberation from every aggressor, thief, and plunderer";[71] and

- "The Liberation of the Human Being," which is essentially the "freedom" to live under *sharia* law.[72]

The first bullet casts al Qaeda's extreme position on *tawhid* and its litmus-test for "Islamic" rule being governance based exclusively on a strict, literalist interpretation of the *sharia* as a necessary extension of belief in God. Creating a false dichotomy, Zawahiri contends that "either you believe in God and abide by His judgment, or you have no faith in God" and asserts that "the Islamic faith denies unequivocally discrimination between belief in the existence of God and acknowledgement of His right to rule and legislate."[73] For al Qaeda, there is no middle ground; either a ruler governs exclusively by their inflexible interpretation of the God-given *sharia* or he is an apostate deserving death.

The "Liberation of the Homelands" slogan essentially recasts an offensive war to re-establish a caliphate spanning from Morocco to the Philippines into a defensive, liberation movement. Zawahiri believes that this liberation is a prerequisite to all reform, observing that "we should not imagine that we can carry out any reform so long as we are under the yoke of the US and Jewish occupation." He goes on to explain that "it is not possible to hold any free elections, establish any independent government, or safeguard our dignity and sanctities while the Crusader forces desecrate our land, kill whomever they want, bombard whatever targets they want, detain and torture whomever they want, and divide the people…"[74]

Zawahiri asserts that the "liberation of the human being" demands that the Muslim nation "forcibly seize its right to chose the ruler, hold him accountable, criticize him, and depose him." He then urges that the Muslim nation "seize its right to promote virtue and prohibit vice," "resist all forms of aggression against the people's sanctities, liberties,

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all of its aspects in all of their affairs." See FBIS Report FEA2004122700076, December 27, 2004.

[71] "Al-Jazirah TV's Treatment of Al-Zawahiri's Statement; Comparison," pp. 3–4.

[72] Ibid., p. 4.

[73] Ibid., p. 2.

[74] Ibid., p. 3.

and rights," and "resist oppression, tyranny, thievery, forgery, corruption, and hereditary rule."[75] It is worth noting that Zawahiri refers to protecting "*the people's* sanctities, liberties, and rights," not those of individuals. Moreover, while paying lip service to the collective "rights" of the *ummah*, he creates a positive religious obligation for every Muslim to resist and overthrow regimes that are deemed insufficiently Islamic.

In an effort to make the al Qaeda "brand" appear more mainstream, Zawahiri is silent about some of the implications of al Qaeda's ideological underpinnings that might alienate his audience; including, for example, that: Muslim "supporters" of apostate regimes are legitimate targets of jihad operations; self-identified Muslims who fail to abide by the *sharia* in all aspects of their lives, including those who fail to engage in a defensive jihad against the West, are infidels that should be attacked and killed; participation in the democratic process and support for freedom of speech and religion is tantamount to apostasy; and that all Shiites are infidels owing to their idolatry of Ali, his descendants, and Shia clerics (e.g., Ayatollah Khomeini).

Al Qaeda's Strategy

The centerpiece of al Qaeda's strategy for the "long war" is exploiting Muslims' sense of individual religious obligation (*fard ayn*) by declaring a defensive jihad (*jihad al-daf*) against the West and apostate regimes. It is hoped that by "moving, inciting, and mobilizing" the *ummah* to this call, the Islamic nation will eventually reach a revolutionary "ignition point," at which time the faithful will join forces globally to pursue al Qaeda's core goals.[76]

One of al Qaeda's central arguments has been that the presence of US and allied troops in Muslim lands (e.g., Iraq, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia), especially America's supposed "occupation of the land of the two Holy Places," is sufficient cause for a defensive jihad in and of itself. Using the writings of al-Banna and Qutb for legitimacy, al Qaeda leaders assert that the cultural, political, and economic "invasion" of Muslim lands by the West imperils Islam and the *ummah* just as much, if not more than, a physical attack. Democracy, in their view, is a direct threat

[75] Ibid., p. 4.

[76] "Bin Ladin Interviewed on Jihad Against U.S.," *Al Quds Al Arabi*, November 27, 1996. See also: "Usama Bin Laden's Message to Iraq," *Al-Jazeera*, February 11, 2003.

to "true" Islam because it gives sovereignty to the people and allows them to make their own laws rather than relying upon the God-given legal system of Islam, the *sharia*. Maqdisi argues that democracy is the preeminent threat to the *tawhid* of Allah. He asserts that "democracy is a religion, but it is not Allah's religion," and thus, all faithful Muslims must "destroy those who follow democracy, and we must take their followers as enemies—hate them and wage a great jihad against them."[77] Since the United States is perceived as the principal exporter of this "false religion," it is singled out for attack.[78] Drawing from Ibn Taymiyya, Wahhab, and Qutb, al Qaeda leaders argue that the failure of current rulers of Muslim lands to govern solely by the *sharia* is apostasy; and thus, they too are infidels and legitimate targets of defensive jihad.[79] While, in theory, this charge would be applicable to every Muslim country in the world, the jihadis reserve their strongest vitriol for the governments of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan.[80]

Al Qaeda statements repeatedly assert that it is the religious obligation of every Muslim to join the struggle to expel American forces and corrupting foreign influences from Muslim lands. If individuals are too infirm to take up arms, they are expected to donate financially to the cause, provide safe haven to fighters, or offer other forms of support.

[77] Borrowing directly from Maqdisi, Zarqawi compared democracy to a rival "religion" and declared that adherence to democratic principles like freedom of speech and religion is apostasy punishable by death. Osama bin Laden has taken a similar, but less hard-line view, arguing the Muslims have a right to participate in the selection of their rulers, but only when Muslim lands are free from the influence of occupying powers, broadly defined, and candidates have committed to rule solely according to Islamic law. Abu Musab al-Suri espouses yet another view, arguing that al Qaeda should exploit democracy because it provides "a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere to spread out, reorganize their ranks, and acquire broader public bases." See Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, *Democracy: A Religion!*, translated by Abu Muhammad al-Maleki and Abu Sayf Muwahhid (At-Tibyan Publications, no date), pp. 5, 16; Steven Brooke, "The Preacher and the Jihadi," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Volume 3, 2006, p. 54; "Abu Mus'ab Al-Zarqawi's Message on Democracy, Iraqi Elections, Shiites," FBIS Report GMP20050123000140, January 23, 2005; "Al-Zarqawi's Group Issues Post Election Statement, Claims Attacks Against US Embassy, Mosul Targets," FBIS Report FEA20050201001026, February 1, 2005; FBIS Report FEA20041227000762, December 27, 2004; and Abu Musab al-Suri, "Call for Worldwide Islamic Resistance," December 2004.

[78] Habeck, p. 162.

[79] Ayman Zawahiri, "Response to the Serious Accusations against Sheikh Albani," date unknown. Harmony Database, document AFGP-2002-601041.

[80] Osama bin Laden, "Letters from bin Laden: A Collection of Letters from Osama Bin Laden to various persons in Saudi Arabia," April 21, 1994 to May 7, 1998. Harmony Database, document AFGP-2002-003345.

Osama bin Laden's "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places" in 1996 restates these themes dozens of times—holding, for example, that "there is no more important duty than pushing the American enemy out of the holy land."[81] Similarly, the 1998 *fatwa* written by Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and several others asserts that:

> The ruling to kill the American and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim....We call on every Muslim who believes in God and wishes to be rewarded to comply with God's order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. We also call on Muslim ulema, leaders, youths, and soldiers to launch the raid on Satan's U.S. troops and the devil's supporters allying with them...so that they may learn a lesson.[82]

Al-Muqrin has called this the "first axis of jihad" and has asserted that it demands complete victory over the infidels. This goal, he argues, "is not subject to discussion" and permits "no half-solutions" and "no bargaining."[83]

Al Qaeda leaders have emphasized, however, that the call for universal participation in the jihad does not mean that each Muslim should act on his or her own, but rather in unity with other Muslims. "A feeling of [individual responsibility]," al-Ansari has cautioned, "does not mean embodying jihad in scattered individual actions. The feeling needs to be deepened by striving for well-planned actions emanating from a position of collective activity."[84] Al Muqrin, Abu-Ayman al Hilali, and

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[81] Osama bin Laden, "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," *Al Quds Al Arabi* (London), August 1996.
[82] Sheikh Usamah Bin-Muhammad Bin-Ladin, Ayman al-Zawahiri, et al, "Fatwa Arging Jihad against Americans," *Al Quds Al Arabi* (London), February 23, 1998.
[83] Michael Scheuer, "Al Qaeda's Insurgency Doctrine: Aiming for a 'Long War'," *Terrorism Focus*, Jamestown Foundation, February 28, 2006, Volume III, Issue 8, p. 5.
[84] Ibid.

other strategists have noted that the form of this "collective activity," which is often referred to as the "second axis of jihad," is flexible and should be adapted to exploit local conditions and circumstances. Al Qaeda considers this operational and tactical flexibility to be a major strategic strength. Abu-Ubayd al-Qurashi has remarked, for example, that "jihadi military doctrine is constantly changing, thus denying America the chance to know it well or train its troops how to confront it decisively and permanently."[85]

It is important to highlight the fact that most al Qaeda strategists take a very long view with respect to the implementation of this strategy. They view the defensive jihad as a multi-generational struggle between "infidelity and Islam." In *The Management of Barbarism*, Abu Bakr Naji stresses that while today's mujahideen may not live long enough to see al Qaeda's vision fulfilled, they should find solace in the knowledge that future generations of Muslims will benefit from their actions.[86] Similarly, al-Muqrin has advised that the mujahideen must be prepared to fight a "long war of attrition," a struggle in which "the enemy of God will feel that it is impossible to finish off the mujahideen's military power."[87] He goes on to advise jihadi commanders to "know the enemy" they are fighting, to be "psychologically prepared for the worst," and to be build an organization "so if one link fails, whatever its organizational size is, the organization [as a whole] does not suffer lethal blows."[88]

While Osama bin Laden has referred several times to the jihadi movement eventually reaching an "ignition point," he has never given any indication as to when that point will arrive. In contrast, both he and Zawahiri have frequently held up the Crusades between the 11th and 13th centuries as analogous to the contemporary jihad.[89] In *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*, for example, Zawahiri reminds his audience that "the Crusaders in Palestine and Syria left after two centuries of continued jihad" and calls for patience and resolve in the present struggle:

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[85] Ibid.

[86] The identity of Abu Bakr Naji is not known with any certainty. Some commentators describe him as a Tunisian, while others claim he is a Jordanian. What is known, however, is that he has high standing within the Salafi-Jihadi movement and his works have been published on *Sawt al-Jihad*, which is al Qaeda's authoritative Internet magazine.

[87] Scheuer, "Al Qaeda's Insurgency Doctrine," p. 5.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Al Qaeda strategists also frequently compare the current jihad with that waged in the 1980s against the Soviet Union, which they portray as a far more formidable threat than the United States today.

"We must not despair of the repeated strikes and calamities. We must never lay down our arms no matter how much losses or sacrifice we endure. Let us start again after every strike, even if we have to begin from scratch."[90]

In 2005, Fouad Hussein, a radical Jordanian journalist, wrote a book entitled, *Al Zarqawi: The Second Generation of Al Qaeda,* which purports to provide the movement's long-term plan for war against the West. The book is reportedly based on Hussein's extensive interviews with Maqdisi, Zarqawi, Abu-al-Muntasir Billar Muhammad, and Saif al-Adl, as well as primary source documents. Hussein presents a time-phased plan, which is summarized below in Table 2.[91] Whether Hussein's plan represents anything more than his thoughts, inspired perhaps by the musings of some of his fellow jihadi travelers, remains an open question. It has, however, been widely circulated among jihadi websites and appears to have some credence among movement strategists and ideologues.

[90] Ayman al-Zawahiri, *Knights under the Prophet's Banner* (2001), Part VI and Part XI.

[91] A serialized version of Hussein's book has been translated by the Open Source Center. Table 2 draws mainly from Parts 14–15. "Fourteenth Part of Serialized Book on Al-Zarqawi and Al-Qa'ida Published," from Al-Quds al-Arabi (in Arabic), May 28, 2005, p. 17; and Part 15, published on May 30, 2005, p. 17. Open Source Center Document Numbers: GMP20050601712014 and GMP20050601712013.

Table 2: Fouad Hussein's Timeline for Implementing al Qaeda's Long-Term Strategy

Time Period	Name	Defining Characteristic or Goal
2001–2003	"The Awakening"	America is lured into striking a Muslim country, Afghanistan and then Iraq, to "awaken" the "Islamic nation" from a "state of hibernation." The truth that a "Zionist-Anglo-Saxon" coalition is at war with the Islamic nation is revealed.
2003–2007	"Eye Opening"	Al Qaeda is transformed from a "network into a mushrooming invincible and popular trend" that deprives the West of energy, denies "proxy regimes" oil revenue, prepares for "the stage of electronic jihad via the Internet," establishes power in "vital areas of the Arab and Islamic world," exploits Iraq as "a base to build an army of jihad of new blood," and disseminates "shari'ah studies" to encourage charitable donations to the movement.
2007–2010	"Re-Awakening and Standing Upright"	The movement creates "a major transition in the process of change" in "Al-Sham," meaning Syria, Lebanon, and northern Jordan. "By the end of this stage, Al Qa'ida will have completed its preparations to engage in direct clashes with the State of Israel, both in Palestine and on Israel's border," as well as within "some Islamic countries where Jews have powerful influences," meaning Turkey. Al Qaeda will amass a "huge supply of human and financial resources," including "large numbers of trained and educated young men who are no longer affected by the complex of defeats and catastrophes."
2010–2013	"Recuperation and Possession of Power to Create Change"	This stage "will focus on overthrowing regimes by means of direct and fierce clashes with them" and "when the regimes gradually disintegrate, Al-Qa'ida and the Islamic jihad trend will grow persistently." Economic warfare will be waged against the United States and the West more broadly—including burning "Arab oil" and conducting electronic attacks against critical infrastructures. Gold is restored as the "standard exchange value in international markets," leading to the "collapse" of the US dollar.
2013–2016	"Declaration of the State"	"The Western fist in the Arab region will loosen, and Israel will not be able to carry out preemptive or precautionary strikes" and a "persistent increase in self-power will provide Al-Qa'ida and the Islamic jihadist trend with a golden opportunity to declare the establishment of an Islamic state."
2016–2020	"All-Out Confrontation"	With the creation of the caliphate, there will be "an all-out confrontation between the forces of faith and the forces of global atheism." As a result, "falsehood will come to an end" and "the Islamic state will lead the human race once again to the shore of safety and the oasis of happiness."
2020–	"Final Victory"	"The enormous potential of the Islamic state will terrify the enemy and prompt them to retreat rapidly. Israel will not be able to withstand the substantial Islamic power that will frighten the heart of the enemy."

Lines of Operation

To implement its long-term strategy, AQAM appears to be pursuing five major lines of operation that are, to varying degrees, mutually supporting:

- Attacking the "far enemy," meaning the United States and its Western allies, directly, including carrying out high-profile, mass-casualty attacks within the US homeland;
- Exhausting the United States and its allies through protracted guerrilla warfare and carrying out low-to-medium level "vexation operations" globally;
- Dividing the "Zionist-Crusader" alliance;
- Waging a modern "media war" to win over the hearts and minds of the Muslim masses; and
- Regaining an operational sanctuary by overthrowing apostate regimes in the Muslim world and creating enclaves of "barbarism" as a precursor to the establishment of a pan-Islamic caliphate.

While there is no single authoritative document that integrates all of these lines of operation into a coherent overarching strategy, they are discussed repeatedly—both individually and in various combinations—across a wide body of Salafi-Jihadi literature. What follows, therefore, is a description of AQAM's major lines of operation as they have organically evolved over the past six years.

Attacking the "Far Enemy" and Conducting Mass-Casualty Attacks against the US Homeland

In the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s, the operations of Sunni jihadists were directed overwhelmingly against individual states. The Afghan mujahideen sought to push out occupying Soviet military forces and then wrest political control away from Afghan Communists. Egyptian terrorists groups—including, most notably, the Islamic Group and Egyptian Islamic Jihad—concentrated on overthrowing the apostate regime of Hosni Mubarak. In Algeria, GIA fought, often savagely, to

oust the secular government in Algiers, especially after the military government suspended legislative elections in 1992 to forestall the anticipated landslide victory of the Islamic Salvation Front. The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) was fixated on overthrowing the un-Islamic regime of Muammar Qadhafi. In the Philippines, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Abu Sayyaf focused their energies on creating an independent Islamic state in western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.

A consensus was reached among a handful of senior al Qaeda leaders in around 1992–1993 to shift the focus of the jihad from the "near enemy" to the "far enemy," meaning the United States and its Western allies. This decision had immediate results on the ground—as evidenced by operations in Somalia and the bombing of the World Trade Center towers in 1993; major bombing attacks against US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1998; the small-boat attack against the USS *Cole* in the port of Aden, Yemen in 2000; and, most painfully, the attacks of September 11, 2001. Testifying to Congress in February 2006, Director of National Intelligence John D. Negroponte cautioned that, "attacking the US homeland, US interests overseas, and US allies—in that order—are *al Qaeda's top operational priorities*" and "the group will attempt high-impact attacks for as long as its central command structure is functioning and affiliated groups are capable of furthering its interests…."[92]

It appears that there were at least four major arguments in favor of the shift from the near to the far enemy: [93]

- Dissuading the United States and other Western powers from supporting apostate regimes in the Muslim world;

- Prompting US retaliatory strikes against Muslim states to galvanize popular support for al Qaeda's call to defensive jihad and creating more grist for al Qaeda's propaganda mill more broadly;

[92] Emphasis added. Negroponte testimony, February 2, 2006, p. 4.

[93] Several prominent Salafi-Jihadi ideologues, including Maqdisi, were opposed to this shift. Maqdisi argues that the near enemy's "influence and all his evil and tribulation are greater and far more serious than the farther one" when it comes to undermining the *tawhid* of Allah. Steven Brooke, "The Preacher and the Jihadi," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Volume 3, 2006, pp. 56–57.

- Establishing al Qaeda as the accepted "vanguard" of the jihadi movement and putting an end to internal rivalries; and

- Precipitating, in time, the collapse of the already strained US economy by hitting vital "nodes" and population centers.

In his masterwork, *Knights under the Prophet's Banner,* Zawahiri claims that Qutb's writings helped him to realize that "the internal enemy was not less dangerous than the external enemy was and that the internal enemy was a tool used by the external enemy and a screen behind which it hid to launch its war on Islam."[94] The external "Jewish-Crusade alliance," he argued, leverages its economic and military power to prop up corrupt, un-Islamic regimes that would otherwise fall of their own weight. In exchange for this support, their internal Muslim proxies subjugate the faithful while the new Crusaders plunder Muslim lands of their God-given natural resources. He assessed the situation as follows:

> The Jewish-Crusade alliance, led by the United States, will not allow any Muslim force to reach power in any of the Islamic countries. It will mobilize all its power to hit it and remove it from power…Therefore, to adjust to this new reality we must prepare ourselves for a battle that is not confined to a single region, one that includes the apostate domestic enemy and the Jewish-Crusade external enemy….the Jewish-Crusade alliance will not give us time to defeat the domestic enemy then declare war against it thereafter….The Islamic movement and its jihad vanguards, and actually the entire Islamic nation, must involve the major criminals—the United States, Russia, and Israel—in the battle and do not let them run the battle between the jihad movement and our governments in safety. They must pay the price, and pay dearly for that matter…Therefore, we must move the battle to the enemy's grounds to burn the hands of those who ignite fire in our countries.[95]

By making the far enemy "pay dearly," it was hoped that the cost of continuing to provide support to apostate regimes would outweigh the material benefits; and thus, external powers would withdraw their assistance, leaving their proxies vulnerable and exposed.

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[94] Zawahiri, *Knights*, Part III.
[95] Ibid, Part XI.

Zawahiri also argued that by attacking US interests throughout the world, the United States would be more likely to strike Muslim lands directly, rather than relying upon Muslim proxies to do its bidding. With this "screen" of deception removed, Muslims would see the United States for what it was: the leader of a new Western Crusade against Islam. That realization would, in turn, convert the current battle into a clear-cut jihad against infidels. Continually baiting the United States into attacking Muslim lands would also yield tremendous public relations benefits. As he put it, based on his experiences in Egypt, "stepping up the jihad action to harm the US and Jewish interests creates a sense of resistance among the people, who consider the Jews and America a horrible symbol of arrogance and tyranny."[96]

Building upon Zawahiri, Naji more strongly emphasizes the propaganda value of compelling the United States to strike Muslim lands directly. The primary intent of attacks on the US homeland and American interests around the world, he argues, is to "force America to abandon its war against Islam by proxy and force it to attack directly so that the noble ones among the masses and a few of the noble ones among the armies of apostasy will see that their fear of deposing the regimes because America is their protector is misplaced and that when they depose the regimes, they are capable of opposing America if it interferes."[97] He contends that the physical destruction and loss of life, especially of women and children, caused by the Zionist-Crusader alliance will enrage the masses, not only against the United States, but also against apostate regimes that provide it support of any kind. To Naji, the deployment of large numbers of US troops on Muslim soil, as in Iraq, is to be welcomed because it infuriates the *ummah*, adds credibility to al Qaeda's call to defensive jihad, and provides a low-cost opportunity to inflict casualties on American soldiers. Clashes with the US military, moreover, disabuse the *ummah* of the notion that America is invincible, elevate the status of the mujahideen, and provide an invaluable training and indoctrination crucible in which to forge a new generation of mujahideen.

Prior to September 11, 2001, the leadership role of Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda organization more broadly in the jihad against the Zionist-Crusader alliance was not yet firmly established. As can be seen in many vitriolic memorandums between al Qaeda central in Afghanistan and affiliated groups and cells abroad, the jihadi movement

[96] Ibid, Part VI.
[97] Naji, *The Management of Barbarism*, p. 10.

was rife with internal rivalries.[98] The merger between al Qaeda and Egyptian Islamic Jihad, more akin to a "friendly" takeover by Zawahiri, that had been agreed to earlier in the summer had not yet taken hold. Senior Islamic Jihad leaders in Egypt were in open rebellion against Zawahiri and the intended shift in focus away from Mubarak regime toward the "distant enemy."[99] Part of the motivation for carrying out a high-profile attack against the "distant enemy" was to solidify al Qaeda's position as the "vanguard" of the jihadi movement, as well as to elevate the personal status of Osama bin Laden and his key lieutenants.

Direct attacks against the United States are also integral to al Qaeda's narrative about how conditions are ripe for the downfall of the United States as a great power. Jihadi propaganda portrays the United States, and the West more broadly, as on the brink of collapse due to internal moral decay and corruption, as well as the economic pain caused by successful jihadi operations, especially the attacks of September 11, 2001. The intended message to the mujahideen is that with a few more hard hits, preferably at low cost to the movement, America will tumble over the precipice just like the former Soviet Union did in the late 1980s. With respect to the September 11th attack, Osama bin Laden commented that "al Qaeda spent $500,000 on the event, while America…lost, according to the lowest estimate, $500 billion….Meaning that every dollar of al Qaeda defeated a million dollars" of the American Treasury.[100] Based on his experience in Afghanistan and September 11th, he offered the following assessment:

> America is definitely a great power, with an unbelievable military strength and a vibrant economy, but all of these have been built on a very weak and hollow foundation….Therefore, it is very easy to target the flimsy base and concentrate on their weak points, and even if we're able to target one-tenth of these weak points, we will be able [to] crush and destroy them…[101]

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[98] Alan Cullison, "Inside Al Qaeda's Hard Drive," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2004.
[99] Ibid.
[100] "Full Transcript" of bin Laden's message, posted on *Al Jazeera*, November 1, 2004.
[101] Translation of purported bin Laden audiotape, posted on Islamist website, February 14, 2003. See also: George W. Bush, "President Discusses Global War on Terror," Capital Hilton Hotel, September 5, 2006.

Reflecting this belief, writing three weeks after September 11th, Osama bin Laden exhorted the faithful to strike blows against the American economy to both weaken it directly and shake foreign confidence, causing "investors to refrain from investing in America or participating in American companies, thus accelerating the fall of the American economy…"[102] In a public address in December 2001, while on the run from US forces, Osama bin Laden boldly (and ironically) declared: "America is in retreat by the grace of God Almighty and economic attrition is continuing up to today. But it needs further blows. The young men need to seek out the nodes of the American economy and strike the enemy's nodes."[103]

There have been many reports that al Qaeda is planning to launch new attacks against the US homeland on a scale similar to that witnessed on September 11, 2001.[104] In an audiotape message broadcast by *Al Jazeera* on January 19, 2006, for example, bin Laden explained to the American people that "the delay" in carrying out major attacks in the US homeland was "not due to failures to breach your security measures" and threatened that "operations are under preparation, and you will see them on your own ground once they are finished…"[105] Fortunately, thus far, bin Laden's threat has not materialized. Assessments vary widely regarding whether surviving elements of al Qaeda central and its affiliated "franchises" have the capability to plan, organize, and conduct a sophisticated, mass-casualty attack in the US homeland. That being said, many senior-level AQAM leaders have a strong personal interest, including avenging the death of family members and close friends, in retaliating against the United States for its actions in the war on terrorism to date. They have publicly committed the movement to conducting attacks against the US homeland and, to vary degrees, have put their personal reputations on the line. One must be concerned, therefore, that the adage, "when there's the will, there's a way," may be all too relevant to the current situation.

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[102] Cullison, "Inside Al Qaeda's Hard Drive."
[103] As quoted in Hoffman, Testimony to House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, February 16, 2006, p. 8.
[104] John D. Negroponte, Director of National Intelligence, "Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence," Statement before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 2, 2006, p. 3.
[105] "Text: Bin-Laden Tape," as translated by BBC News. Available on-line at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi.middle_east/4628932.stm.

Speculation on what that "way" might be has filled countless newspaper and magazine pages over the past six years. The theory that causes the most anxiety is the acquisition and use of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons against American population centers. What makes this threat especially alarming is the fact that it is discussed extensively in internal al Qaeda documents.[106] In a December 1998 interview with *Time* magazine, bin Laden declared that the acquisition of WMD was a "religious duty." Numerous internal memoranda and letters reveal a determination to acquire nuclear weapons, in particular.[107] Reflecting the priority given to this task, prior to 2001, al Qaeda's military committee in fact had a standing "nuclear weapons" section.[108]

Intelligence collected since 2001 is not encouraging. According to the Central Intelligence Agency, "Documents recovered from Al Qaeda facilities in Afghanistan show that bin Laden was pursuing a sophisticated biological weapons research program."[109] Al Qaeda was apparently trying to develop several different biological and chemical agents for attacking people, livestock, and crops.[110] Two agent production centers in Afghanistan, which were preparing to manufacture botulinum and salmonella toxins, were found and destroyed by Coalition forces in 2001. Since then, traces of ricin, an extremely lethal biological toxin, have been discovered along with related production equipment during raids on al Qaeda-affiliated cells in Britain, France, Spain, Russia, Georgia,

[106] Interestingly, it appears that al Qaeda did not initially have any plans to develop WMD, but was attracted to the option because of Western press coverage in the wake of its high-profile attacks in the late 1990s. In a letter to Muhammad Atef on April 15, 1999, Zawahiri states that "we only became aware of them [WMD] when the enemy drew our attention to them by repeatedly expressing concerns that they can be produced simply with easily available materials..." As quoted in Cullison, "Inside Al Qaeda's Hard Drive."

[107] In a 1994 letter from Hassan al-Tajiki to al Qaeda's "Africa Corps," for example, the author refers to nuclear weapons more than a dozen times. Harmony Database, document AFGP-2002-600053 (letter three).

[108] See Harmony database, documents AFGP-2002-000078 and AFGP-2002-60053.

[109] As quoted in Michael Gordon, "U.S. Says it Found Al Qaeda Lab Being Built to Produce Anthrax," *New York Times*, March 23, 2002, p. 1. See also Judith Miller, "Lab Suggests Qaeda Planned to Build Arms, Officials Say," *New York Times*, September 12, 2002; and Judith Miller, "Qaeda Videos Seems to Show Chemical Tests," *New York Times*, August 19, 2002, p. 1.

[110] Miller, "Lab Suggests Qaeda Planned to Build Arms, Officials Say"; Gordon, "U.S. Says it Found Al Qaeda Lab Being Built to Produce Anthrax"; Jonathan Weisman, "Possible Anthrax Lab Unearthed," *USA Today*, March 26, 2002, p. 10; and "Al Qaeda Bioterror Study Went Further than Thought," *USA Today*, January 8, 2003, p. 6.

and Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq.[111] In an undated letter that was written shortly after the attacks on September 11, 2001, an unknown al Qaeda operative, Abu Abullah Al-Kuwaiti, makes the following threat to the US government:

> If the American people are ready to die as we are ready to die, then our combat groups along with our military, nuclear, and biological equipment will kill hundreds of thousands of people we don't wish to fight....We warn you that our war against you has not ended, but its effects will increase. Isn't it time to end American arrogance and begin listening to your people before you experience more devastating disasters? [112]

In June 2002, al Qaeda spokesmen, Suleiman Abu Gheith, declared in an online article, "Why We Fight America," that "we have the right to kill 4 million Americans" and "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 [American] chemical and biological weapons."[113] Raising the spectre of a WMD attack against the US homeland yet again, in May 2003, Osama bin Laden asked for and received a *fatwa* from Shaykh Nasir bin Hamid al-Fahd entitled, "A Treatise on the Legal Status of Using Weapons of Mass Destruction Against Infidels," which condones their use as part of a defensive jihad. In February 2006, Director of National Intelligence Negroponte testified that al Qaeda "remains interested in acquiring chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials or weapons to attack the US homeland, US troops, and US interests worldwide."[114] The

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[111] Although a pinhead-quantity of ricin can be fatal if introduced directly into the bloodstream, a substantially larger quantity (approximately 3 micrograms per kilogram of body weight) must be inhaled to kill a healthy adult. It can also be introduced into the body by the consumption of contaminated food or water. Ricin, which is derived from commonly available castor beans, is relatively easy to produce, but difficult to weaponize. Joby Warrick, "An Al Qaeda 'Chemist' and the Quest for Ricin," *Washington Post*, May 5, 2004, p. 1. See also: http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/ricin/facts.asp.

[112] Harmony database, "Letter of Threat to Americans," written by Abu Abullah Al-Kuwaiti, undated, document number AFGP-2002-001120.

[113] Suleiman Abu Gheith, "Why We Fight America," online article published on the website of the Center for Islamic Research and Studies (www.alneda.com), June 12, 2002. Subsequently translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (www.memri.org). Available on-line at: http://www.memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?ID=SP38802

[114] Negroponte testimony, p. 4.

consensus view of the US intelligence community, as captured in the July 2007 NIE on *The Terrorist Threat to the US Homeland* is that "al Qaeda will continue to try to acquire and employ chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear material in attacks and would not hesitate to use them if it develops what it deems is sufficient capability."[115] Similarly, in September 2007, CIA Director General Michael Hayden remarked that, "our analysts assess with high confidence that al Qaeda's central leadership is planning high-impact plots against the American homeland."[116]

Exhausting the United States with Guerrilla Warfare and Global "Vexation Operations"

Al Qaeda leaders frequently assert that a critical element of their strategy is to wear the new Zionist-Crusaders down over time through low-to-medium scale attacks conducted by small, mobile, elusive mujahideen units. Al Qaeda strategist al-Muqrin refers to this as the "1,000 wound policy."[117] In a videotape broadcast on October 29, 2004, Osama bin Laden explicitly endorsed this line of operation, asserting that "we are continuing this policy in bleeding America to the point of bankruptcy."[118] There are, in essence, two elements to this policy: engaging US and allied military forces, where and when possible, in protracted guerrilla warfare (e.g., Iraq and Afghanistan); and conducting attacks globally to force the "Zionist-Crusader alliance" to spread out its forces and expend tremendous energy and resources to protect soft, but highly valued targets.

The value of guerrilla warfare, especially in urban areas, for imposing high costs—both in terms of casualties and financial resources—on a militarily superior adversary at minimal cost to the mujahideen was recognized by al Qaeda long before the current war in Iraq. Writing in 1994, for example, al Qaeda strategist Hassan al-Tajiki observed that:

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[115] NIC, *NIE—The Terrorist Threat to the US Homeland* (Washington, DC: NIC, July 2007), p. 1.

[116] General Michael Hayden, CIA Director, Speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, September 7, 2007. See also: Dr. Thomas Fingar, Deputy Director for Analysis, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Global Security Assessment," Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, July 11, 2007, p. 3.

[117] Scheuer, "Al Qaeda's Insurgency Doctrine," p. 5.

[118] "News: Arab World—Full Text of bin Laden's speech," as released on al-Jazeera on November 1, 2004. See also: http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/11/01/binladen.tape/index.html.

> In Mogadishu and Beirut, urban deterrence operations caused the American forces to flee in a shameful and humiliating manner. Doesn't this demonstrate the importance of this type of warfare and the need to develop our warfare capabilities in terms of personnel, training syllabi, equipment being used, its level of technological advancement, development of security syllabi, development of security procedures, and training of competent elements for the security field.[119]

When Osama bin Laden made his war against the United States public with his "Declaration of Holy War on the Americans Occupying the Country of the Two Sacred Places," in August 1996, he also stressed the importance of guerrilla warfare, remarking:

> ...it must be obvious to you that, due to the imbalance of power between our armed forces and the enemy forces, a suitable means of fighting must be adopted i.e., using fast moving light forces that work under complete secrecy. In other words to initiate a guerrilla warfare, where the sons of the nation, and not the military forces, take part in it.[120]

While al Qaeda did not plan to conduct guerrilla operations in Iraq, it took full advantage of the opportunity that presented itself. With war looming on the horizon in February 2003, Saif al-Adel, a former Egyptian special forces officer and key operational planner for al Qaeda, wrote two installments in a series of on-line articles entitled, "In the Shadow of the Lances," in which he gave advice to Iraqi and foreign jihadis on how guerrilla warfare tactics could be used against American troops. "Turn the mujahedin military forces into small units with good administrative capabilities," he suggested, since this "will spare us big losses." He cautioned that "large military units pose management problems" and "occupy large areas which are difficult to conceal from air reconnaissance and attack."[121]

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[119] Harmony database, document AFGP-2002-600053 (letter three), Hassan, "The Five Letters to the African Corps," May 24, 1994.

[120] First published in *Al Quds Al Arabi*, a London-based newspaper, in August 1996. Available on line: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html.

[121] As quote in Hoffman testimony, p. 10. See also Anonymous, *Imperial Hubris*, pp. 60–61.

Although some of Zarqawi's tactics and statements have undermined al Qaeda's broader "media war" and have exasperated al-Zawahiri, in particular, jihadi guerrilla operations in Iraq have, on balance, been spectacularly successful from al Qaeda's point of view. They have clearly demonstrated that the United States is vulnerable and that the mujahideen have the strength to stand up to the new "superpower" Crusader. As will be discussed later, these are important themes in al Qaeda's "media war" against the West. Moreover, while it is difficult to say precisely how many American casualties were inflicted by AQI jihadis or how much of the ever-mounting cost of the war should be ascribed to them, they clearly have exacted a heavy toll in American blood and treasure. Anecdotally at least, the publicity gained from jihadi operations in Iraq has been a boon for recruitment and fundraising.

Al Qaeda strategists strongly believe that ongoing guerrilla operations against Crusader forces in Iraq and Afghanistan should be complemented by periodic small-to-medium scale attacks in multiple countries around the globe. The intent of this second element of al Qaeda's "exhaustion" policy is to force the US military to spread itself thin and expose exploitable vulnerabilities. This tactic is explicitly endorsed by Abu Bakr Naji who urges the mujahideen to "diversify and widen vexation strikes against the Crusader-Zionist enemy in every place in the Islamic world, and even outside of it if possible, so as to disperse the efforts of the alliance of the enemy and thus drain it to the greatest extent possible."[122] One of al Qaeda's other leading strategists, Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, put it this way: "neither the United States nor ten armies of its like will be able to fight in hundreds of Fallujahs throughout the Arab and Islamic world."[123] Putting this cost-imposing strategy in the context of al Qaeda's larger "bleed-to-bankruptcy" plan, Osama bin Laden explained:

> All that we have to do is send two mujahideen to the furthest point east to raise a piece of cloth on which is written al Qaeda, in order to make the generals race there to cause America to suffer human, economic, and political losses without achieving anything of note... this is in addition to our having experience in using

[122] Naji, *Management of Barbarism*, p. 19.
[123] Abu Mus'ab al-Suri (also known as Mustafa Setmarian Nasar and Umar Abd al-Hakim), "A Statement by Abu Mus'ab al-Suri in Response to the Announcement by the U.S. State Department," in *Majallat risalat al-mujahidin*, No. 3, p. 9.

> guerrilla warfare and the war of attrition to fight tyrannical superpowers, as we, alongside the mujahideen, bled Russia for 10 years, until it went bankrupt and was forced to withdraw in defeat.[124]

To gain the maximum "draining effect" from low-to-medium scale attacks, Naji and others call for striking soft, but highly valued targets such tourist sites, banks, and oil and gas infrastructure. He recommends this approach not so much because of the high intrinsic value of these targets, although that is a plus, but because the enemy will feel compelled to spend enormous amounts of time and energy in a futile effort to defend similar targets elsewhere from follow-on attacks. In *The Management of Barbarism*, he states:

> If a tourist resort that the Crusaders patronize in Indonesia is hit, all of the tourist resorts in all of the states of the world will have to be secured by the work of additional forces, which are double the ordinary amount, and a huge increase in spending. If a usurious bank belonging to the Crusaders is struck in Turkey, all of the banks belonging to the Crusaders will have to be secured in all of the countries and the (economic) draining will increase. If an oil interest is hit near the port of Aden, there will have to be intensive security measures put in place for all of the oil companies, and their tankers, and the oil pipelines in order to protect them and draining will increase. If two of the apostate authors are killed in a simultaneous operation in two different countries, they will have to secure thousands of writers in other Islamic countries. In this way, there is a diversification and widening of the circle of targets and vexation strikes which are accomplished by small, separate groups. Moreover, repeatedly (striking) the same kind of target two or three times will make it clear to them that this kind (of target) will continue to be vulnerable.... Hitting economic targets will force (the enemy) to goad the regimes, who are (already) exhausted from protecting the other remaining targets

[124] Osama bin Laden, statement aired on al-Jazeera, November 1, 2004. See Chris Heffelfinger, "Al Qaeda's Evolving Strategy Five Years after September 11," *Terrorism Focus*, September 12, 2006, pp. 4–5.

> (economic or otherwise), into pumping in more forces for its protection. As a result, feebleness will start to appear in their forces, especially since their forces are limited...[125]

In addition to the draining effect of these global "vexation operations" on US and allied military power, they are also repeatedly cited as an important ingredient of al Qaeda's propaganda campaign. They are seen as critical, in particular, for maintaining the movement's profile is the media and creating the perception of global reach (and relevance) in the eyes of the *ummah*. Al Muqrin stresses that a wider war is essential because "[there must be] no trace of doubt left on anybody's minds that they [the mujahideen] are present all over the land. This will prove the mujahideen's power, rub the nose of the enemies in the dirt, and encourage young men to take up arms and face the enemy—Jews, Christians, and their collaborators."[126]

Dividing the Zionist-Crusader Alliance

Since 2001, but especially over the past three years, Al Qaeda has made a concerted effort to divide the US-led coalition arrayed against it. Al Muqrin has written, for example, that broad and continuous mujahideen "military activity" is important to the struggle because it will send a warning "through the language of blood or fire" to the people in countries allied with America that "their governments are getting them involved in wars and conflicts with which they have nothing to do."[127]

Hassan al-Tajiki, in his letters to the "Africa Corps" in 2004, points out that this "[enemy] alliance is fragile and just as the 11th and 12th century Crusaders succumbed to infighting, so too will this alliance."[128] Building upon that idea, Naji argues that it is imperative to identify and capitalize on the self-interest of US allies in order to fracture their alliances. In *The Management of Barbarism*, he writes that the:

> ...ideological alliance against Islam is a fragile alliance and limited by a ceiling of material interests that each faction among them possesses. Therefore, we should formulate our military and political plans after properly

[125] Naji, p. 19.
[126] Scheuer, "Al Qaeda's Insurgency Doctrine," p. 6.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Harmony Database, Document AFGP-2002-60053.

> understanding and appraising the ceiling of interest which limits the action of each one of our enemies and work to widen the gap of the interests between hostile factions. *Therefore, the map of interests must be clear in the minds of our leaders of action. It is a map that is just as important as military maps.*[129]

Roughly a month after the Madrid train bombing, in April 2004, Osama bin Laden pursued this line of operation by extending a public truce offer to America's European allies. After a lengthy diatribe railing against European politicians who inflict "injustice" against their peoples by sending their sons against their will to "kill and get killed" in Muslim lands and blood-sucking "warlords" like the "White House gang" and the "Halliburton Company" that profit from war, he stated:

> I also offer a peace initiative to [European peoples], whose essence is our commitment to stopping operations against every country that commits itself to not attacking Muslims or interfering in their affairs—including the US conspiracy on the great Islamic world....The peace will start with the departure of its last soldier from our country. The door of peace is open for three months of the date of announcing this statement.[130]

The sincerity of bin Laden's peace offer will never be known since every European country rejected it out of hand as soon as it was extended.

On November 29, 2007, Osama bin Laden made another public effort to drive a wedge between Europe and the United States. In a statement aired on *al-Jazeera*, he appealed to "the peoples of the states allied to America in the invasion of Afghanistan, and I mention specifically Europe," to restrain their politicians from supporting US aggression,

[129] Emphasis added, Naji, p. 52.
[130] Osama bin Laden, "Bin Laden Threatens Revenge on Israel, US, Offers Truce with Europeans," translated version of audio recording aired on Dubai Al-Arabiyah Television in Arabic, April 15, 2004, FBIS Document No. GMP20040415000029.

especially its unjust "invasion and occupation" of Afghanistan.[131] To make his case, he intentionally highlighted several issues he knew would resonate with his European audience, including the number of Afghan civilians who have been killed by NATO and US forces, as well as US soldiers not "being held to account by European courts."[132]

One should expect, however, that AQAM will extend truce offerings, including ones tailored to specific countries in the West, in the future in an effort to drive a wedge between the United States and its partners in the war on terrorism.

Waging a Modern "Media War"

Al Qaeda and its ideologically linked franchises have proven to be very effective in exploiting modern communications not only to spread their violent, jihadist ideology, but also to recruit new mujahideen and raise funds for what is expected to be a protracted struggle. Considering that AQAM longs for a return to the early Muslim community of the Salafs, it is ironic that they have taken full advantage of modern communications technologies such as the Internet, satellite television, cell phones, and video-recording. The Internet, in particular, has emerged as a key weapon in al Qaeda's media war.[133] As the senior Salafi-Jihadi strategist Abu Musab al-Suri put it, "the revolution in communications and the global satellite channels and the Internet have opened the minds of the people…"[134] Reflecting that thinking, an e-magazine found on the computer belonging to Younis Tsouli, the 22-year old Moroccan who provided technical assistance to jihadi webmasters around the globe and had links to both Al Qaeda in Iraq and al Qaeda central, advised:

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[131] Osama bin Laden, "To the European Peoples: A Message from Sheikh Osama bin Laden," as aired on Al Jazeera on November 29, 2007, *Intel Center—Threat and Claim Monitor*, November 30, 2007; and Michael Scheuer, "Bin Laden Attempting to Strip U.S. Allies from Anti-Terrorism Coalition," Terrorism Focus, December 5, 2007.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Timothy Thomas, "Al Qaeda and the Internet: The Danger of 'Cyberplanning'," Parameters, Spring 2003; and Jarret Brachman, "High-Tech Terror: Al Qaeda's Use of New Technology," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Summer 2006, pp. 149–163.

[134] Al-Suri, *A Call to Global Islamic Resistance*, book published on-line in 2004. Available at www.fsboa.com.

> Film everything; this is good advice for all mujahideen. Brothers, don't disdain photography. You should be aware that every frame you take is as good as a missile fired at the Crusader enemy and his puppets.[135]

The senior leadership of al Qaeda is keenly aware of the strategic importance of the media war. In a letter to Mullah Mohammed Omar, for example, Osama bin Laden observes that propaganda is one of the jihadist's most powerful weapons. "It is obvious," he says, "that the media war in this century is one of the strongest methods; in fact, its ratio may reach 90% of the total preparation for the battles."[136] In Zawahiri's letter to Zarqawi in July 2005, he asserts that "we are in a battle, and that *more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media*" and that the jihadi movement is "in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma."[137]

Given the importance of the "media war" to the jihadi movement, it is perhaps not surprising that the number of jihadi websites has grown from a dozen or so in the 1990s to more than 5,000 today.[138] Al Qaeda maintains a half-dozen major websites and distributes propaganda materials to hundreds of other jihadi websites, which in turn pass them along to others, on a daily basis. To provide content for all those websites, as well as for television broadcasts and cell-phone videos, al Qaeda has invested heavily in media production capabilities such as the Pakistan-based *As-Sahab* (The Clouds) Foundation.[139] In comparison to 2002 when al Qaeda posted a few quasi-weekly electronic journals, in

[135] Similarly, a report allegedly authored by the Ministry of Information for the Islamic State of Iraq and posted on several jihadi forums in September 2007 stated: "Praise be to God for [the mujahideen's] great efforts in triggering the jihadi awakening among the children of the ummah. How great [are the] fingers which sit behind the computer screens, day and night, awaiting a statement or releasing a production for their mujahideen brothers in the forums." Andrew Black, "Jihadi Statement Extols Virtues of the Internet," *Terrorism Focus*, September 18, 2007, p. 1; and "A Worldwide Web of Terror," *The Economist*, July 12, 2007.

[136] Osama bin Laden, Letter to Mullah Mohammed Omar, undated. Harmony database, AFGP-2002-600321, p. 2.

[137] Emphasis added. Letter from al-Zawahiri to Zarqawi, July 9, 2005. Available on-line at: http://www.dni.gov/letter_in_english.pdf.

[138] Steve Coll and Susan Glasser, "Terrorist Turn to the Web as Base of Operations," *Washington Post*, August 7, 2005, p. 1; and Josh Meyer, "Extremists Are Homing In On The Internet, Says Gonzales," *Los Angeles Times*, August 17, 2006.

[139] Hassan Fattah, "Growing Unarmed Battalion in Qaeda Army is Using Internet to Get the Message Out," *New York Times*, September 30, 2006.

the first nine months of 2007, *As-Sahab* alone cranked out more than 75 high-quality, professional videos (with subtitles in multiple languages)—averaging one every three days.[140]

Senior al Qaeda leaders have taken great pains to integrate the media effort with global jihad operations. Looking back to mid-1990s, internal critiques indicated that the organization could have done more to exploit the publicity value of mujahideen operations in Somalia, as well as the embassy bombings in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. In one memorandum, written in June 2000, the author laments the "horrible informational and political shortfall regarding these events" and decries the fact that immediately following the embassy bombings, people had to resort to "western foreign media to quench their thirst for the true news."[141] AQAM has learned from these mistakes. Today, the movement is very quick to link itself publicly to successful jihadi attacks (including ones carried out by cells whose only link to al Qaeda is a shared ideology) and squeezes as much propaganda value as possible out of each one. Websites update written content and post newly edited video streams (with "inspirational" music and commentary), frequently featuring successful jihadi operations in Iraq and highlighting supposed American "attacks" against Muslim civilians, on an almost hourly basis.

In addition to using it to influence public opinion, AQAM and other terrorist groups rely upon the Internet to communicate securely, recruit and indoctrinate new jihadis, conduct fundraising activities, pool tactics and knowledge, provide training to jihadis (e.g., instructional videos and detailed manuals), collect intelligence on enemy targets, and organize and plan attacks. Jihadi websites feature a wide array of media formats ranging from simple text files, video clips, and audio messages to professionally produced music videos, movies, and interactive videogames.[142] Terrorism experts at the Center for Combating Terrorism at West Point have assessed that:

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[140] IntelCenter tracking report, September 2007; and Shaun Waterman, "Al Qaeda Tapes Grow in Number, Expertise," *Washington Times*, September 24, 2007.

[141] Abu Huthayfa, Memo to the Honorable Sheikh Abu Abdullah, June 20, 2000, pp. 9–11. Harmony database, AFGP-2002-003251.

[142] For an excellent summary of how terrorists exploit the Internet see: Evan F. Kohlman, "The Real Online Terrorist Threat," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2006, pp. 115–124; Abdul Hameed Bakier, "The New Issue of Technical Mujahid, a Training Manual for Jihadis," *Terrorism Monitor,* March 29, 2007, p. 8–10; and Brachman, "High-Tech Terror: Al Qaeda's Use of New Technology," pp. 151–156. See also: "A Worldwide Web of Terror," *The Economist*, July 12,

> As a repository of images, videos and stories, the Internet has come to codify a particular jihadi foundation myth, accessible to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Publishing their ideas in short forum postings, longer articles floated online or in voluminous books, jihadi strategists not only recruit new members into this worldview, but they spoon-feed recruits with their virulent (and tedious) vocabulary for expressing their anger, and provide direction to operators on the ground, both in Iraq and beyond.[143]

AQAM's approach to the media war is sophisticated, targeting different audiences around the world with messages finely tuned to local conditions. AQAM remains very effective in getting its message out. Public opinion surveys and anecdotal evidence suggest, moreover, that it is resonating with a significant cross-section of the Muslim world.

As will be detailed later, however, the dramatic weakening of al Qaeda's command and control capabilities since 2001 may have had a deleterious effect on the coherence of its message. Despite repeated efforts, for example, al Qaeda central was unable to rein in Zarqawi. In his July 2005 letter, Zawahiri reproves Zarqawi for his videotaped beheadings of hostages, his self-declared "all out war" against Shiites, and his indiscriminate attacks against Muslim civilians. These actions, he explains, are alienating the masses and detracting from al Qaeda's broader media war. Zawahiri's closing rebuke is curt and stinging: "we don't need this."[144] However, given Zarqawi's behavior over the subsequent year, it was also wholly ineffective.

Overthrowing Apostate Regimes and Creating Enclaves of "Barbarism"

While several of al Qaeda's senior leaders expected, indeed hoped, that the United Stated would retaliate for the attacks of September 11, 2001

2007; Coll and Glasser, "Terrorist Turn to the Web as Base of Operations," p. 1; Mimi Hall, "Terrorists Not Countered on Web," USA Today, May 3, 2007, p. 1; and Philip Kennicott, "Iraq Militants' Skillful Video Colors Perception of the Enemy," *Washington Post*, June 5, 2007, p. C1.

[143] Similarly, the current US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism states, "the Internet provides an inexpensive, anonymous, geographically unbounded, and largely unregulated virtual haven for terrorists." Harmony and Disharmony, pp. 51–52.

[144] Letter from al-Zawahiri to Zarqawi, July 9, 2005, pp. 4–5, 10.

by launching strikes into Afghanistan, the speed and intensity of Operation Enduring Freedom caught them by surprise.[145] Firm believers in the myth of American military weakness—as evidenced, in their view, by cowardly retreats from Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia—they anticipated air and missile strikes, not the use of highly trained special forces to overthrow the Taliban regime in a matter of weeks through skillful unconventional warfare operations on the ground supported by precision air strikes. As will be discussed later, the loss of its state-sponsored sanctuary in Afghanistan was a crippling blow to al Qaeda for myriad strategic and operational reasons. A key line of operation for AQAM, therefore, is creating a new sanctuary where its leaders can find refuge from unrelenting US-led manhunting operations; re-establish some measure of centralized command and control of the movement; supervise recruitment, training, and indoctrination activities; manage expanded fundraising efforts; and plan, organize, and direct large-scale, coordinated attacks against the West, including against the US homeland.

To that end, AQAM will certainly continue ongoing efforts to overthrow apostate regimes—in particular, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan—and install Islamic regimes in their place. As Zawahiri concludes in *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, "the mujahid Islamic movement will not triumph against the world coalition unless it possesses a fundamentalist base in the heart of the Islamic world" and that this base "constitutes the hope of the Muslim nation to reinstate its fallen caliphate and regain its lost glory."[146] Later, he laments, however,

[145] Some of al Qaeda's senior leaders, however, held deep reservations about the wisdom of attacking the US homeland to prompt an attack on Afghanistan, where al Qaeda enjoyed an operational sanctuary. Abu al-Walid al-Masir, who was member of the inner council, wrote after the devastating US led offensive in October 2001 that "everyone knew that their leader was leading them to the abyss and even leading the entire country to utter destruction, but they continued to carry out his orders faithfully and with bitterness." Abu Musab al-Suri, Maqdisi, and Zarqawi also questioned the strategic prudence of the attack on September 11th. See Lawrence Wright, "The Master Plan," *New Yorker*, September 11, 2006.

[146] He also states that "Victory for the Islamic movements…cannot be attained unless these movements possess an Islamic base in the heart of the Arab region." Ayman al-Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, published in *Al-Sharq al Awsat* (London), December 2–10, 2001 and translated by FBIS (FBIS-NES-2001-1202). Zawahiri re-affirmed this position in a July 2005 letter to Zarqawi, in which he writes: "It has always been my belief that the victory of Islam will never take place until a Muslim state is established in the manner of the Prophet in the heart of the Islamic world, specifically in the Levant, Egypt, and the neighboring states of the Peninsula and Iraq; however, the center would be in the Levant and Egypt." Zawahiri letter to Zarqawi, p. 2.

that "the establishment of a Muslim state in the heart of the Islamic world *is not an easy goal or an objective that is close at hand*."[147]

There appears to be recognition among AQAM leaders that the movement is unlikely to overthrow an apostate regime and create a state "established in the manner of the Prophet" anytime soon. Many commentators on the war in Iraq have suggested that AQAM is now focused on creating an Islamic state there to replace the sanctuary lost in Afghanistan. This assessment, however, is belied by the writings and statements of Zawahiri, Naji, and numerous other AQAM strategists. They are painfully aware that it is impractical to install a Sunni regime to govern a Shia-dominated state, at least in the short run. The best that can be hoped for is to create an enclave or "amirate" where the jihadi movement can take root and expand over time. In his July 2005 letter to Zarqawi, for example, Zawahiri advised that after expelling the Americans from Iraq, the goal of the movement should be to "establish an Islamic authority or amirate, then develop it and support it until it achieves the level of a caliphate over as much territory as you can to spread its power in Iraq."[148] He envisioned a *sharia*-based amirate, initially rooted in the so-called "Sunni triangle," reaching out *in time* to encompass portions of "the secular countries neighboring Iraq," meaning Jordan and Syria, and ultimately, extending into Israel.[149] Zawahiri harbored no illusions, however, about how difficult it would be to defend this amirate in a sea of Shiites and cautioned that it would be "in a state of constant preoccupation with defending itself" from one generation to the next.[150] Interestingly, precisely because of Zarqawi's extreme behavior that Zawahiri strongly counseled against in the same letter, Zawahiri's vision of an amirate in the Sunni triangle was shattered not by Shiites, but infuriated Sunnis.

Naji took Zawahiri's amirate concept in Iraq and generalized it to the broader Muslim world. He exhorted the "groups and separate cells in every region of the Islamic world" to create zones of "barbarism" in which "savage chaos" reigns as in pre-Taliban Afghanistan. As a tactic for accomplishing this, he advised the mujahideen to attack tourist sites, oil facilities, and other relatively soft, high value facilities to compel states to pull their security forces out of remote areas and outlying

[147] Emphasis added. Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, Section XI.
[148] Zawahiri letter to Zarqawi, p. 3.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid.

cites, thereby creating exploitable security vacuums. During this "stage of vexation and frustration," he argued that operations should focus on the following "priority" states: Jordan, the countries of the Maghreb, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. After sowing the seeds of chaos in these areas and allowing "barbarism" to take root, jihadi "administers" would eventually step in to restore order. During this stage, aptly named "the administration of barbarism," a cadre of specially trained jihadi administrators would establish "*sharia* justice," secure the region from external enemies by "setting up defensive fortifications and developing fighting capabilities," and provide food, medical treatment, and other basic services to a welcoming, desperate people. Finally, once control over these individual regions was established, they could be gradually stitched together into a caliphate during the "stage of establishment."[151]

In short, AQAM will continue to undermine apostate regimes in hopes of precipitating their collapse. If this occurs, especially in a Sunni-dominated state in which Islamic extremism is well established and the mujahideen have a significant presence (e.g., Pakistan), AQAM will undoubtedly try to exploit the opportunity. There appears to be a growing acceptance within the organization, however, that this unlikely to occur for several years. In the interim, AQAM may strike out on a new path toward its long-term goal of a pan-Islamic caliphate: the creation and agglomeration, both virtually and physically, of multiple *sub-national* enclaves. It appears to have taken an important first step in this direction with the creation of a de facto sanctuary in the rough, tribal border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Capabilities

There is no question that the al Qaeda organization has been badly battered over the past six years by counter-terrorism operations conducted by the United States and its partners in the war on terrorism. Al Qaeda's high-ranking leadership has been decimated; it no longer has a state-protected sanctuary in Afghanistan to plan, coordinate, and train for complex operations, as well as to recruit and indoctrinate new jihadis; its senior leaders have limited situational awareness of the global

[151] Naji, pp. 14–21, especially, p. 16. Brachman and McCants, pp. 8, 19.

"arenas of jihad" and their command, control, and communications (C3) links have been significantly degraded; and it has gone from being the central banker for global operations to pleading for financial assistance from its more profitable franchises.

The organization, however, is surprisingly resilient. Through the skillful exploitation of modern communication technologies, AQAM continues to spread its violent, jihadist ideology and inspire new recruits to join the movement. Owing to the success of some its "franchises," most notably AQI, the profile of the organization remains high in the Muslim world. New franchises appear to be "opening for business" in previously "under-served" areas of the world. In addition, Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri, Suleiman Abu Gheith, and others have repeatedly threatened new mass-casualty attacks on the US homeland, and against the West more broadly. As Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte cautioned, "the organization's core elements still plot and make preparations for terrorist strikes against the Homeland and other targets from bases in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border area."[152]

This section of the assessment will critically examine AQAM's current ability to pursue the lines of operations discussed above by taking a closer look at four key capability areas: leadership; strategic-level command, control, and communications; fundraising; and recruitment, indoctrination, and training. It will also examine AQAM operations since September 11, 2001 to identify relevant trends, as well as to gain further insight into the organization's capabilities.

Leadership

More than two-thirds of al Qaeda's known senior leaders as of September 11th have been captured or killed, mostly by partner nations' police and security forces, and oftentimes with US intelligence support. Most of the top AQAM leaders and operatives captured or killed since September 11, 2001 were found in urban areas (see Table 3).[153]

[152] John D. Negroponte, Director of National Intelligence, "Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligences," Statement before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 2, 2006, p. 3.
[153] Kenneth Katzman, "Al Qaeda: Profile and Threat Assessment," CRS Report for Congress, August 17, 2005, p. 6.

Table 3: Key AQAM Leaders Captured or Killed since September 11, 2001

Name	Description	Location and Date
Muhammed Atef	Former head of the al Qaeda's military committee; senior field commander; linked to jihadi operations in Somalia (1992–1993), Luxor bombing in Egypt (1997), West African embassy bombings (1998); named by Osama bin Laden as his successor (2001)	Killed in bombing raid, Kabul, Afghanistan, November 2001
Ibn al-Sheikh al-Libbi	Head of al Qaeda training infrastructure in Afghanistan, Khalden training camp commander	Captured crossing into Pakistan, December 2001
Yazid Sufaat	Senior leader of JI; played role in planning attack on USS Cole and September 11th hijackings; linked to foiled plot to detonate truck bombs against Western embassies in Singapore	Arrested in Kuala Lumpur, December 2001
Abu Zubaydah	30-year old, Saudi-born Palestinian; one of al Qaeda's chief recruiters/trainers and intimately involved in its global operations	Arrested in Faisalabad, Pakistan, February 2002
Omar al-Faruq	31-year old Kuwaiti who was reportedly responsible for planning al Qaeda operations in Southeast Asia	Arrested in Indonesia, June 2002
Ramzi Bin al Shibh	Organizer of Hamburg cell that supplied September 11th hijackers; logistics handler and financier	Arrested in Karachi, Pakistan, September 2002
Saif al-Islam al-Masri	Al Qaeda ruling council member	Captured in Georgia, October 2002
Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri	Senior al Qaeda commander; mastermind behind the USS Cole attack; linked to the attack on Limburg tanker and East African embassy bombings; directed al Qaeda operations in Saudi Arabia	Arrested in the UAE, November 2002 (Escaped, February 2006)
Khalid Sheik Mohammed	September 11th mastermind and head of al Qaida's military committee following Atef's death. Involved in 1993 World Trade Center bombing, foiled 1995 plot to down a dozen airliners over the Pacific, the bombing of US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the attack on the USS Cole, the bombing of a Tunisian synagogue in April 2002, and the beheading of Daniel Pearl	Arrested in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, March 2003

Table 3 Continued

Name	Description	Location and Date
Tawfiq bin Attash (Khallad)	Head of bin Laden's security detail; al Qaeda trainer; senior-level communications courier; and planner of the 1998 West African embassy bombings, USS Cole attack, the September 11th attacks, and the attack on the US Consulate in Pakistan in 2002	Arrested in Karachi, Pakistan, April 2003
Nurjaman Riduan bin Isomoddin (Hambali)	38-year old Indonesian militant; served as al Qaeda's liaison to radical Islamic groups in Southeast Asia; operational leader of JI; believed to be responsible for the Bali bombing	Arrested in Indonesia, August 2003
Assem al-Makki	Commander of al Qaeda operations in Yemen; linked to attack on USS Cole and French oil tanker Limburg	Arrested in Sanaa, Yemen, December 2003
Abdulaziz al-Muqrin	Al Qaeda trainer; operative in Afghanistan, Spain, Algeria, and Bosnia; and leader of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula	Killed by Saudi authorities, June 2004
Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani	Senior-ranking operational planner for al Qaeda, involved in 1998 embassy bombings	Captured by Pakistani authorities, July 2004
Amjad Hussain Farooqi	Senior member of al Qaeda; linked to beheading of Daniel Pearl, and two assassination attempts of President Musharraf in 2003	Killed by Pakistani authorities, September 2004
Abu Farraj al-Libbi	Born in Libya; senior al Qaeda commander and operative; mastermind behind two attempted assassinations of President Musharraf	Arrested near Peshawar, Pakistan in May 2005
Mustafa Setmariam Nasar (Abu Musab al-Suri)	Instructor at terrorist camps in Afghanistan, specializing in poisons and CW; linked to 9/11 and Madrid bombings; important ideologue and propagandist for the jihadi movement	Arrested in Quetta, Pakistan, November 2005
Abu Hamza Rabia	Egyptian; senior al Qaeda operations officer; headed operations in/around Pakistan after the arrest of Khalid Sheik Mohammed	Killed in Asorai, Pakistan, December 2005
Abu Omar al-Saif	High-ranking al Qaeda military commander in Chechnya; linked to the group responsible for the Beslan bombing	Killed by Russian security forces, December 2005

Table 3 Continued

Name	Description	Location and Date
Fahd Faraaj al-Juwair	Former leader of al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia	Killed by Saudi security forces, February 2006
Muhsin Musa Matwalli Atwah	Senior al Qaeda operative involved 1998 West African embassy bombings	Killed in North Waziristan, April 2006
Abu Musab Zarqawi	Former leader of al Qaeda in Iraq	Killed in US air strike, June 2006
Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi	Senior al Qaeda operative; paramilitary commander in Afghanistan; involved in plots against Musharraf; close associate of Zawahiri	Arrested in late 2006
Akhtar Mohammad Osmani	Head of Taliban operations in Afghanistan's Helmand province; senior Taliban leader/ financial officer; close associate of Osama bin Laden	Killed in US air strike, December 2006
Abul Haq Haqiq (Mohammad Hanif)	Taliban spokesman, associate of Mullah Muhammed Omar	Arrested in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, January 2007
Abu Sulaiman (Jainal Antel Sali Jr.)	Senior leader of Abu Sayyaf Group	Killed by Philippine military, January 2007
Zarkasih and Abu Dujana	Acting leader of JI and head of JI's military wing, respectively	Arrested in Java, Indonesia, July 2007

In addition, more than 4,000 lower-level operatives have been arrested or detained in over 100 countries.[154] Cells linked to al Qaeda have been rolled up in America, Europe, Southwest Asia, Central/South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa. As the State Department's CT coordinator testified to Congress, the pre-9/11 al Qaeda organization:

> ...has been put under catastrophic stress. Seventy percent of their leadership has been arrested, detained, or killed. The majority of the rest of them are essentially primarily defensive, concerned primarily about their own personal security. There is a massive global hunt for them underway. It is relentless, 24 hours a day.[155]

Nevertheless, many senior leaders of al Qaeda remain at large, including most notably: Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Saif al-Adel, Suleiman Abu Ghaith, Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, Jamal Mohammad al-Badawi, and Mahfouz Ould Walid (Abu Hafs 'the Mauritanian').

Many analysts have argued that the long-term significance of "manhunting" operations is negligible because vacancies in the organization can be quickly and easily filled through a combination of internal advancement and off-the-street recruitment. In reality, however, senior leaders and operatives are difficult to replace. Strategic judgment, operational experience, technical expertise and tradecraft, and charismatic leadership cannot be regenerated rapidly. Part of what made the al Qaeda organization work in the past, moreover, was the personal trust forged between key individuals over years of shared experiences in Egypt, Afghanistan, Sudan, and elsewhere. It will take time to rebuild this network of trust. In the interim, there is likely to be cleavage in the organization between long-time veterans of the movement and

[154] J. Cofer Black claimed that "more than 3,400 lower-level operatives or associates have been detained or killed in over 100 countries" as of 2004. Since then, several hundred al-Qaeda-linked individuals have been reported killed or captured in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Philippines, and elsewhere. Cofer Black, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, US Department of State, Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on International Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Human Rights, Hearing on "Al Qaeda: The Threat to the United States and its Allies," April 1, 2004, p. 38.

[155] During the same testimony, J. Cofer Black stated that "ongoing operations against al Qaeda have served to isolate its leadership and sever or complicate communications links with its operatives scattered around the globe. Unable to find easy sanctuary in Afghanistan or elsewhere, the al Qaeda leadership must now devote much more time to evading capture or worse." Ibid., pp. 6, 14.

recent recruits. The former will be constantly on guard, fretting about treachery and betrayal, while the latter try to earn their spurs and dispel clouds of suspicion.

What is perhaps the most revealing about al Qaeda's current leadership situation are the *internal* assessments that have emerged since 2001. For example, in a letter written to Khalid Sheik Mohammad in June 2002 *before* the arrest or death of more than a score of additional high-ranking al Qaeda leaders (including Khalid Sheik Mohammad himself), a senior al Qaeda figure, Abd-al-Halim Adl, assessed that the organization was "experiencing one set back after another and [has] gone from misfortune to disaster." He implores his close friend and colleague to "completely halt all external actions until we sit down and consider the disaster we have caused" and ends his letter with the following plea:

> The East Asia, Europe, America, Horn of Africa, Yemen, Gulf, and Morocco Groups have fallen, and Pakistan has almost been drowned in one push…Stop all foreign actions, stop sending people to captivity, stop devising new operations, regardless of whether orders come or do not come from Abu-Abdalla [Bin Laden].[156]

While the recent creation of a sanctuary in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area might lift Abd-al-Halim Adl's spirits somewhat, one can imagine that his assessment today would be far graver considering the major losses that al Qaeda's leadership structure has absorbed since his letter was written.

Despite these losses, however, the al Qaeda core has survived. In addition to providing ideological leadership and inspirations for the movement, it appears to be slowly regaining the reins of operational control. At a minimum, it is supervising the activities of its "franchises," which in several cases are now run by effective, seasoned leaders. According to some reports, the leadership council or "shura" has been reformed, possibly in Quetta (in the Baluchistan region of Pakistan), and meets regularly; and some 200 people are on the salaried pay roll of al Qaeda central.[157]

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[156] Harmony database, "Letter to Mukhtar," document name: Al Adl Letter.
[157] Craig Whitlock, "The New Al-Qaeda Central," *Washington Post*, September 9, 2007, p. 1; and Riedel, "Al Qaeda Strikes Back," p. 26.

Command, Control, and Communications (C3)

Al Qaeda built a very centralized, hierarchical management apparatus in Afghanistan between 1996 and 2001.[158] The central "ruling council" supervised six subordinate general committees: military, political, information, administrative and financial, security/surveillance, and foreign purchases.[159] Each committee, in turn, typically oversaw several branches and sections. The information committee, for example, which was charged with "spreading the Al-Qa'ida vision of jihad to all Muslims," had seven distinct branches for computers, printing, foreign relations, photography, phonetics, translations, and microfiche.[160] Just like a commercial business, al Qaeda had detailed administrative and personnel policies, including employment contracts and compensation schedules, furniture and housing reimbursement allowances, medical coverage, disability benefits, holiday and home leave allowances, and severance benefits.[161] Mujahideen in the field had to submit detailed expense summaries back to al Qaeda central in Afghanistan on a regular basis for auditing. Internet and telephone communications flowed freely between headquarters and the field. All of that ended abruptly in the weeks prior to the start of Operation Enduring Freedom on October 7, 2001.

Today, al Qaeda is a much flatter, decentralized organization with strained communication links. With more than two-thirds of its veteran commanders killed or captured and the remainder on the run around the world or hiding out in remote areas (e.g., Pakistan's FATA and NWFP), the top-level of al Qaeda's C3 hierarchy has been relegated to the sidelines of the global jihad. Forced to spend most of their time

[158] For a more detailed discussion of structure and operations of the al Qaeda organization, especially prior to Operation Enduring Freedom, see: Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2002); Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama Bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2002); Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qa'ida* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002); and Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

[159] Harmony database, "(Al-Qa'ida Goals and Structure)," document number AFGP-2002-000078; and "Interior Organization," document number AFGP-2002-000080.

[160] Detailed position descriptions and specific qualifications were developed for all committee positions. See "Al Qaeda Goals and Structure," Harmony Document, AFGP-2002-000078. See also: Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden*.

[161] Harmony database, document numbers: AFGP-2002-600045 and AFGP-2002-600048.

trying to evade capture or worse, surviving senior leaders have scant opportunity to manage franchise operations and far-flung individual cells. Moreover, even if they had the time and energy to do so while hunkered down in caves in Waziristan or the urban slums of Pakistan, they may not have safe, reliable access to news and reporting links. As revealed in Zawahiri's letter to Zarqawi in July 2005, as well as in the numerous tapes that he and Osama bin Laden have released since 2001, the situational awareness of the senior leadership is sketchy and episodic. In the Zarqawi letter, for example, Zawahiri clearly seems to be out of touch, admitting that "I don't have detailed information about the situation of the mujahedeen" in Iraq and around the world.[162]

Ongoing operations by the United States and its partners have made outgoing communications more difficult and dangerous. Physical communication links have been compromised. Several high-level communications coordinators have been apprehended (e.g., Safwan ul-Hasham, captured in Pakistan in May 2003; and Mohammed Naeem Noor Khan, captured in Pakistan in July 2004), restricting the number of access points to the communications network and heightening paranoia about the security of old links. Whether for lack of physical access or out of fear of detection, senior al Qaeda leaders rarely communicate directly to their field commanders. Most of their communications are in the form of hand-delivered letters, faxed statements, Internet postings, and pre-taped audio and video messages. With all of these communication methods, it is possible to separate the sender temporally and geographically from the actual transmission of the message, reducing the risk of exposure in the event the message is intercepted. The inability or unwillingness of senior al Qaeda leaders to communicate directly has had a significant operational impact. The former State Department coordinator for counterterrorism reported, for example, that "we have also seen examples of terrorist activities delayed for extended periods as al Qaeda affiliates await instructions from an increasingly isolated central leadership."[163] In the absence of timely and reliable C3 from above, decision-making on the full range of operational matters (i.e., recruitment, training, financing, and attack planning and execution) has devolved almost entirely to the leaders of individual franchises and cells.

Even bits and pieces of news, however, are apparently sufficient for the leadership to grasp the strategic landscape. While Zawahiri may not

[162] Zawahiri letter to Zarqawi, p. 6.
[163] Black, Testimony, "Al Qaeda: The Threat to the United States and its Allies," p. 6.

have had all the tactical and operational details at his fingertips while writing his letter to Zarqawi in the summer of 2005, his assessment of the strategic situation was insightful and his recommendations compelling. Similarly, while their communications links are tenuous, senior leaders remain capable of providing ideological inspiration, offering broad strategic guidance on key issues (e.g., Iraq), and articulating their long-term vision for the movement. Their exploitation of the Internet, as well as professionally produced audio- and video-recordings, for this purpose has been impressive.

Many analysts have suggested that loss of centralized C3 has had the perverse effect of making the movement even stronger than it was prior to September 11, 2001. The amorphous, decentralized AQAM, it is argued, is much more difficult to attack than a hierarchical network with more easily defined critical nodes and links. While there is certainly an element of truth to that assessment, it is often exaggerated. First of all, the ideological dimension of the movement, which motivates franchises and inspires home-grown cells, would still exist if the center's C3 capabilities remained intact. Indeed, the ideological base might even be stronger given unimpeded communications by the movement's strategists and charismatic leaders. It is fair to say, however, that the loss of centralized C3 has forced franchises to become more self-sufficient, which does make them less vulnerable to some disruption operations. Second, and more importantly, the degradation of centralized C3 has two costly penalties: the movement's global operations are no longer as coordinated; and it makes it more difficult to rein in overly zealous operatives.

The breakdown in global coordination is important because, without it, al Qaeda will be hard-pressed to orchestrate another catastrophic attack on the US homeland. It is not clear that any of al Qaeda's franchises have the independent wherewithal to plan, organize, finance, and execute attacks with the complexity and sophistication of those of September 11, 2001. Whether enough centralized C3 has been restored over the past few years to plan, prepare for, and execute a multi-franchise operation that requires the pooling of divided resources and capabilities is a critical open question. (In terms of preventing future attacks on the US homeland, the policy prescription is clear: the less centralized C3 within AQAM, the better.)

The inability of "high command' to rein in overly zealous commanders has been highlighted by Naji, Zawahiri, and other strategists as a vexing problem that threatens the long-term survival of the entire movement. They are concerned that by conducting a large-scale attack against the wrong target at the wrong time, loose cannons in the movement could inadvertently trigger a crippling crackdown on the mujahideen around the world and alienate the Muslim masses. Naji, for example, implores commanders not to conduct "qualitative operations" without prior consultation and approval from "High Command."[164] Similarly, Zawahiri voices the need for the mujahideen to avoid "any action that the masses do not understand or approve."[165] Much to the frustration of senior al Qaeda strategists, their appeals for restraint can be easily ignored by those actively engaged in the arenas of jihad. In his letter to Zarqawi, for example, Zawahiri clearly spells out why deliberate attacks against Iraqi Shiites and the videotaped beheading of Western hostages are not in the strategic interest of the movement. After explaining why winning the hearts and minds of the *ummah* is central to the struggle, he tells him that "many of your Muslim admirers amongst the common folk are wondering about your attacks on the Shia. The sharpness of the questioning increases when the attacks are on one of their mosques…"[166] After pointing out that there is no way to win a sectarian war in Iraq against a Shi'a majority and reminding him that Shi'a regime in Iran is holding "more than one hundred [al Qaeda] prisoners" whose lives could be put in jeopardy, he pointedly instructs Zarqawi to knock it off.[167] Zarqawi, however, apparently more annoyed than chastened, subsequently declared "all out war" on the Shiites.

While keeping al Qaeda central's command and control capabilities as degraded as possible is clearly in the interest of US national security for all of the reasons specified above, recent trends in this area are not encouraging. As mentioned above, al Qaeda leaders and operatives, as well as foreign jihadists, are now exploiting a de facto sanctuary in Pakistan, especially in the FATA and NWFP.[168] In January 2007, John Negroponte, then Director of National Intelligence, testified that

[164] Naji, *Management of Barbarism*, pp. 17, 25, 31–33 (original text); and Brachman, p. 8.
[165] Zawahiri letter to Zarqawi, p. 5.
[166] Ibid, pp. 8–9.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Robert Kaplan, "The Taliban's Silent Partner," *New York Times*, July 20, 2006; Peter Bergen, "The Taliban, Regrouped And Rearmed," *Washington Post*, September 10, 2006, p. B1; and David Rhode, "Al Qaeda Finds Its Center of Gravity," *New York Times*, September 10, 2006, p. WK3.

elements of al Qaeda central "continue to maintain active connections and relationships that radiate outward from their leaders' secure hideout in Pakistan to affiliates throughout the Middle East, northern Africa, and Europe."[169] Mr. John Kringen, head of the CIA's Director of Intelligence testified to the House Armed Service Committee in July that al Qaeda seems "to be fairly well settled into the safe haven and the ungoverned spaces of Pakistan." He testified that: "We see more training. We see more money. We see more communications. We see that activity rising."[170] Two months later, CIA Director General Michael Hayden stated that the CIA assessed with "high confidence" that:

> Al Qaeda has protected or regenerated key elements of its homeland attack capability. That means safe haven in the tribal areas of Pakistan. That means operational lieutenants. That means a top leadership engaged in planning. Al Qaeda's success with that last remaining element, which is planning operatives [sic] in this country, is less certain.[171]

It is imperative for the United States to take whatever steps are necessary to deny al Qaeda sanctuary in Pakistan. As the core's ability to command and control its far-flung franchises and affiliates improves, the probability of al Qaeda's orchestrating a major attack on the US homeland increases.

Fundraising

Numerous AQAM documents discuss the importance of fundraising to the long-term success of the Salafi-Jihadi struggle. The movement continues to rely on six major sources of funding:

- Tapping the personal wealth of Osama bin Laden, which is estimated to be between $280 and $300 million;[172]

[169] Director of National Intelligence John D. Negroponte, "Annual Threat Assessment," Unclassified Statement for the Record for the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, January 18, 2007.
[170] John Kringen, CIA Director of Intelligence, Testimony before the House Armed Service Committee, July 11, 2007.
[171] General Michael Hayden, CIA Director, Speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, September 7, 2007.
[172] Kim Thachuk, "Terrorism's Financial Lifeline, Can It Be Severed?" *Strategic Forum,* May 2002.

- Penetrating and siphoning off funds from legitimate Islamic charities;

- Forming "front" charities and organizations that defraud donators by publicly claiming to support popular causes while diverting a substantial funding stream to jihadi cells;

- Soliciting donations from wealthy patrons, most notably in the Gulf States and in Saudi Arabia, in particular;

- Trafficking and smuggling narcotics (e.g., opium and heroin from poppy plants grown in Afghanistan and Central Asia); and

- Profit-earning businesses.

Prior to September 11th, financial interdiction efforts against al Qaeda were half-hearted. Not only were enforcement activities in the United States under-staffed and poorly funded, but meaningful diplomatic and economic pressure was never placed upon reluctant friends and allies overseas.[173] An executive order issued by President Clinton in 1998 that sought to freeze al Qaeda's assets, for example, excluded many organizations with known or suspected links to al Qaeda and its affiliates.

In the wake of the attacks on the September 11, 2001, the US government cracked down seriously on terrorist financing. The US strategy had four main elements:

- Identifying and freezing terrorist-linked funds controlled by US operated financial institutions, as well as blocking suspicious transactions;

- Encouraging foreign governments to do the same, including providing them with financial intelligence;

- Working through the United Nations, the G-7, and Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (now comprising 33

[173] David E. Sanger and Joseph Kahn, "Bush Freezes Assets Linked to Terror Net," *New York Times*, September 25, 2001; and Maurice R. Greenberg (chair), *Terrorist Financing — Report of an Independent Task Force* (New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002).

states), and other multilateral forums to establish international standards to counter money laundering and terrorist financing more broadly, as well as to strengthen enforcement; and

- Providing direct training and technical assistance to "priority" countries considered vulnerable to terrorist exploitation because of lax financial controls and loosely enforced or nonexistent money-laundering laws.

Within four months of the September 11th attacks, by acting upon pre-existing intelligence, the US government froze $68 million in funds linked to al Qaeda. By the end of 2002, about $124 million in assets had been frozen worldwide in over 500 accounts with the cooperation of more than 160 countries.[174] Several major financial networks that were used by al Qaeda to raise and transfer funds internationally were shut down, including the Somalia-based Al Baraakat financial conglomerate and the Al Taqwa/Nada Management Group.[175] Al Baraakat, which had operations in over 40 countries including the United States, was a major funding source for al Qaeda. Prior to the US-led global crackdown, it wired some $500 million in annual profits to its central money exchange in the United Arab Emirates. Al Baraakat's founder and close associate of Osama bin Laden, Shaykh Ahmed Nur Jimales, reportedly gave al Qaeda a flat five percent cut, or about $25 million per year.[176] According to public reports, approximately $150 million had been frozen in over 1,400 accounts worldwide as of 2004.[177] Over the past three

[174] Department of the Treasury, "Contributions by the Department of the Treasury to the Financial War on Terrorism," Fact Sheet, September 2002, p. 8; Mike Allen, "U.S. Calls Financial War on Terror a Success," *Washington Post*, September 7, 2002, p. 6. See also: Reuters, "Al Qaeda's Wealth Still Intact, Says Swiss Official," *Washington Post*, September 5, 2002, p. 24; Edmund Andrews, "White House Denies Report Qaeda Funds are Flowing," New York Times, August 30, 2002; Greenberg, *Terrorist Financing—Report of an Independent Task Force*, pp. 12–17; and The White House, "Operation Enduring Freedom: One Year of Accomplishments," *Fact Sheet*, October 11, 2002.

[175] The Al Barakaat network was reportedly channeling as much as $15–20 million per year to al Qaeda (See The White House, "News about the War against Terror," Fact Sheet, November 16, 2002).

[176] Thachuk, "Terrorism's Financial Lifeline, Can It Be Severed?"

[177] See Phillips Testimony, p. 6. See also, J. Cofer Black, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, US Department of State, Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on International Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Human Rights, Hearing on "Al Qaeda: The Threat to the United States and its Allies," April 1, 2004, p. 9.

years that figure has crept up to around $265 million.[178] In addition, several prominent AQAM financiers have been apprehended, including Mustafa Ahmed al-Hawsawi, Yasser al-Jaziri, Ramzi Bin al Shibh, Ahmed Said al-Khadar, and Akhtar Mohammed Osmani.

These actions have clearly diminished AQAM's ability to raise funds and move them around the world as needed to support ongoing operations. In his now famous letter to Zarqawi, for example, Zawahiri is forced to grovel for funds, explaining that "many lines have been cut off" and "we need a payment while new lines are being opened." He pleads, "if you're capable of sending a payment of approximately one hundred thousand, we'll be very grateful to you."[179] The decision to open up an al Qaeda "franchise" in Saudi Arabia in 2003 apparently had a disastrous effect on a formerly lucrative funding source. In response to attacks in Riyadh in May 2003, the Saudi government began cracking down on suspicious charities, tightened up financial regulations, and strengthened enforcement of existing laws and regulations. Individual donors may also have been turned off by some of al Qaeda's tactics, especially the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent Muslims. By alienating wealthy patrons, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula may have killed the proverbial goose that laid the golden egg.

Few would argue, however, that AQAM cells are wilting on the vine just yet. Anecdotally at least, the war in Iraq has been a boon for fundraising globally. While no reliable estimates exist as to the specific amount, most experts agree that substantial terrorist funding continues to wind its way through the underground, unregulated hawala system. The latter requires neither physical nor electronic movement of funds, just a telephone call between trusted money handlers, called hawaladars, who have set up shop in thousands of cities around the world.[180] Although hawaladars may occasionally know the identity of the sender or receiver through social associations, personal identification is not required as part of the process and names are rarely recorded. More typically, the sender provides the hawaladar a codeword that is used on the receiving end as authorization for payment, keeping the identity of both the sender and receiver anonymous. All records are destroyed once the transfer is completed. Needless to say, the hawala network makes tracking terrorist financing extremely difficult. Borrowing a tactic

[178] Peter Grier, "Frozen Assets: US Has Crimped Al Qaeda Funds," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 30, 2007, p. 1.
[179] Zawahiri letter, pp. 10–11.
[180] Thachuk, "Terrorism's Financial Lifeline, Can It Be Severed?"

mastered by international drug traffickers and organized criminals, AQAM also moves funds by physically smuggling bulk cash, precious metals, and gems.

The amount of assets with suspected ties to designated terrorist groups frozen by the United States has fallen by more than an order of magnitude since 2001, from a high of $68 million in the accounts of 157 individuals and organizations between September and December 2001 to less than $5 million annually between 2005 and 2007.[181] Of course, part of the explanation for this precipitous decline is that in the wake of September 11, 2001, the US government acted upon intelligence that had accumulated over several years. The drop between 2003 and 2005, however, is more difficult to explain. The Departments of Treasury and State have both indicated that part of the answer lies in the fact that the government has had successes that cannot be disclosed publicly at this time because they are associated with ongoing classified operations.[182] A portion of the decline might also be attributed to the overall success of the interdiction effort; there may be fewer dollars being raised and moved. An equally plausible explanation, however, is that AQAM has adapted to US-led interdiction efforts and is now relying more heavily on the hawala network and other money-moving mechanisms that are difficult to monitor and interdict (e.g., black-market trade in gems and gold).

According to the Government Accountability Office and numerous financial-interdiction experts, the US government's financial interdiction effort has been stymied by a lack of interagency cooperation, leadership, and funding. Ongoing "turf battles" between the Departments of State and Treasury are frequently cited as the most pressing problem. According to a Senior Policy Advisor in the Treasury Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes (TFFC) unit, the interagency Terrorist Finance Working Group (TFWG) process is "broken" and "State creates obstacles

[181] Office of Foreign Assets Control, *Terrorist Assets Report—Calendar Year 2006, 15th Annual Report to Congress on Assets in the United States of Terrorist Countries and International Terrorism Program Designees* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Treasury, 2007), Exhibit A, p. 8; Kevin Johnson, "Fewer Terror Assets Frozen—'Lack of Urgency' Feared in Effort," *USA Today*, January 30, 2006; and Peter Grier, "Frozen Assets: US Has Crimped Al Qaeda Funds," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 30, 2007.

[182] See Johnson, "Fewer Terror Assets Frozen," p. 1; and GAO, *Terrorist Financing—Better Strategic Planning Needed to Coordinate U.S. Efforts to Deliver Counter-Terrorism Financing Training and Technical Assistance Abroad* (Washington, DC: GAO, 2005), Appendix 6, p. 6.

rather than coordinates efforts." Officials in the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, which chairs the TFWG, counter that the principal problem is the lack of Treasury's "acceptance of State's leadership over counter-terrorism financing efforts..."[183] Based on a detailed study of the problem, GAO summarized the situation this way: "the U.S. government lacks an integrated strategy to coordinate the delivery of counter-terrorism financing training and technical assistance to countries vulnerable to terrorist financing. Specifically, the effort does not have key stakeholder acceptance of roles and procedures, a strategic alignment of resources with needs, or a process to measure performance."[184]

Recruitment, Indoctrination, and Training

In his now famous "long, hard slog" memo dated October 16, 2003, former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld posed a critical question for assessing US progress in the war on terrorism: "Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training, and deploying against us?"[185] Today, the answer to that multi-part question is no clearer than it was four years ago. The scant information that is available on this topic is largely anecdotal in nature and conflicting in its implications. The United States and its partners have clearly taken steps to make recruitment, indoctrination, and training more difficult—most notably, by eliminating al Qaeda's sanctuary in Afghanistan and dramatically raising the cost of direct involvement through global manhunting operations. These steps have been offset, however, by the apparently positive effect on recruitment of

- The continued American military "occupation" of Iraq and Afghanistan (and American missteps such as the Abu Ghraib debacle);

[183] GAO, *Terrorist Financing—Better Strategic Planning Needed to Coordinate U.S. Efforts to Deliver Counter-Terrorism Financing Training and Technical Assistance Abroad*, p. 15.
[184] Ibid., p. 1.
[185] Donald Rumsfeld, "Global War on Terrorism," Memorandum to General Dick Myers, Paul Wolfowitz, General Pete Pace, and Doug Feith, October 16, 2003. Available on-line at: http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/executive/rumsfeld-memo.htm.

- The festering Palestinian problem;
- The clash between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon in the late summer of 2006;
- The backlash against anti-terrorism crackdowns in several Muslim states;
- Repeated strategic communications gaffes (e.g., Quran defilement incidents at the Guantanamo Bay detention facility, the Danish cartoons depicting Muhammad, and Pope Benedict XVI's unfortunate public reference to an assertion by a 14th century Byzantine emperor: "Show me just what Mohammad has brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman…");186 and
- The ongoing diffusion and intensification of jihadi ideology—owing in large part to al Qaeda's tremendously successful media campaign.

The net effect of these clashing forces is impossible to calculate precisely. It appears, however, that recruitment has remained more or less constant in terms of aggregate numbers and composition, principally drawing Muslims with middle- and upper-middle class backgrounds.[187] In his seminal study of the biographies of Salafi-Jihadi terrorists, Marc Sageman found that while most had strong occupational skills, few were employed immediately prior to joining the jihad.[188] Recent converts to Islam and women are also being recruited in growing numbers. Terrorist recruitment, according to Sageman, is best described as a three-stage process: social affiliation with the jihad accomplished through friendship, kinship and discipleship; progressive intensification

[186] Pope Benedict XVI, Meeting with the Representatives of Science, University of Regensberg, September 12, 2006. Available on-line at: http://www.radiovaticana.org/en1/Articolo.asp?c=94807, accessed May 4, 2007.
[187] Sageman observes that "just before they joined the jihad, the prospective mujahedin were socially and spiritually alienated and probably in some form of distress." Contrary to popular notions attributing the willingness of individuals to join terrorist groups to poverty, broken families, lack of education, brainwashing, mental illness, and criminality, it appears that most terrorist are middle-class, educated young men from caring and religious families. According to at least one study, a majority of them were married and most had children. Marc Sageman, Understanding Terrorist Networks (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), pp. 94–98.
[188] Ibid, p. 98.

of beliefs and faith leading to acceptance of Salafi-Jihadi ideology; and formal acceptance to the jihad.[189] Terrorism expert Stephen Ulph, described the recruitment and radicalization process as follows:

> The mujahideen attract the uncommitted broad armchair sympathizer, detach him from his social and intellectual environment, undermine his self-image hitherto as an observant Muslim, introduce what the ideologues claim is "real Islam," re-script history in terms of a perennial conflict, centralize jihad as his Islamic identity, train him not only militarily but also socially and psychologically for jihad and doctrinally to defend the behavior of the mujahideen against criticism.[190]

The key driver of recruitment for AQAM is its call to defensive jihad that, in theory, creates a positive religious obligation for every faithful Muslim to join actively in the struggle. The message carefully crafted and disseminated by the movement is that turning a deaf ear to this call is tantamount to apostasy—in the ongoing struggle between good and evil, there is no middle ground. As Osama bin Laden has exhorted, "The one who stays behind and fails to join the Mujahidin when Jihad becomes an individual duty commits a cardinal sin...The most pressing duty after faith is repelling the aggressor enemy. This means that the nation should devote its resources, sons, and money to fight the infidels and drive them out of its lands."[191] The wider and more deeply AQAM's call to defensive jihad resonates with Muslims, the larger its potential recruiting pool.

The presence of a large American "occupation" force in Iraq adds credibility to AQAM's call to defensive jihad. As will be discussed in more detail later, from a strategic communications perspective, AQAM has been very adept at portraying US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan as "Zionist Crusaders" and tapping into the deep-seated feelings of humiliation and resentment toward the West prevalent in the Muslim world. Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri, and other spokesmen recite an

[189] Sageman emphasizes the importance of social bonds to the recruitment process. As he summarizes, "It may be more accurate to blame global Salafi terrorist activity on in-group love than out-group hate." Ibid, pp. 120–135; and Edwin Bakker, *Jihad Terrorists in Europe* (Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2006), pp. 10–13.

[190] Stephen Ulph, Senior Fellow, The Jamestown Foundation, Testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, June 12, 2007.

[191] FBIS Report, FEA20041227000762, December 27, 2004.

ever-growing litany of supposed American war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan, draw attention to US complicity in the Israeli killing of Muslim innocents in Palestine, and highlight the ill-treatment of Muslim detainees at the Abu Ghraib and the Guantanamo Bay detention centers. They cast American abuses at Abu Ghraib as emblematic of its "reform plan" for the Muslim world and urge the faithful to avenge the shedding of innocent blood of Muslim women and children by the United States.[192] Anecdotally, at least, these messages are resonating across a broad swath of the Muslim world—especially young, unemployed males. According to the interrogations of captured terrorists and other operatives, key recruitment nodes continue to be mosques and Islamic study circles; schools, universities, and youth organizations; and health and welfare organizations, including charities.[193] Internet websites and chat rooms are an increasingly important means of recruitment as well.[194]

Conversely, however, recent US disaster relief and humanitarian assistance efforts have buoyed popular perceptions of the United States. Moreover, AQAM's bloody tactics and its intentional targeting of fellow Muslims, in particular, appear to be alienating mainstream Muslims. While perhaps overly optimistic, DIA recently assessed the ongoing battle over the "heart and minds" of Muslims world as follows:

> Across several Islamic states, positive public opinion toward al Qaida, Usama bin Ladin and Sunni extremism has waned, according to polling....Popular backlashes were observed in Iraq and Jordan in response to the most brutal al-Qaida tactics, including hostage beheadings and attacks on civilians, Shia, and public facilities...Public opinion of the U.S. improved in some predominantly Muslim states, especially those in Asia, following our assistance to tsunami victims. Public

[192] See, for example, "Text of Bin Laden's Remarks: 'Hypocrisy Rears its Ugly Head'," *Washington Post*, October 8, 2001.

[193] For an expanded discussion of the recruitment process, see: Angel Rabasa, Senior Policy Analyst at RAND, Prepared Statement for House Armed Services Defense Review and Radical Islam Gap Panel, November 3, 2005, p. 4; and Phillips, p. 5.

[194] The current National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, released in September 2006, asserts that "our enemies use the Internet to develop and disseminate propaganda, recruit new members, raise and transfer funds, train members on weapons use and tactics, and plan operations." Emphasis added. White House, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, DC: White House, 2006), p. 17.

> attitudes toward the U.S. and Western countries in Pakistan improved following their assistance to earthquake victims in Kashmir last fall.[195]

The situation with respect to indoctrination and training is similarly mixed. In the past, after passing an early screening, recruits were generally sent to foreign countries (e.g., Pakistan) for more rigorous religious "education." The most promising recruits would be sent to training camps, primarily in Afghanistan, for further indoctrination and training for jihad operations. With the elimination of the training camp network in Afghanistan, the movement now relies on actual combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; smaller training camps, most of which are located in "under-governed" areas of the world; and the Internet for indoctrination and training.

According to many accounts, the overall quality and consistency of recruit indoctrination has declined significantly since 2001.[196] Senior AQAM leaders question the commitment of new recruits, worry openly about the movement being penetrated by foreign intelligence services, and fret about their ability to control new recruits. For their part, new recruits reportedly have widely varying perspectives on the movement's goals and strategy.

From a purely tactical perspective, jihadi training may have actually improved since 2001, at least with respect to guerrilla warfare, because of the availability of Iraq and Afghanistan as active arenas of jihad. Zawahiri has likened Iraq today to Afghanistan in the 1980s in that it provides "an incubator" where the seeds of the jihadist movements can "grow and where it can acquire practical experience in combat, politics, and organizational matters."[197] As several observers have remarked, regardless of the outcome of the war in Iraq, surviving

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[195] Maples, "Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States," p. 5.

[196] Some terrorism experts dispute this contention. Michael Scheuer, for example, argues that based on the "admittedly imprecise information available," the next generation of al Qaeda recruits will be "at least as devout but more professional and less operationally visible;" larger in size than in the past; and "will be better educated and more adept at using the tools of modernity, particularly communications and weapons." See Michael Scheuer, "Al Qaeda's Next Generation: Less Visible and More Lethal," *Terrorism Focus*, Volume 2, Issue 18, October 14, 2005.

[197] Ayman al-Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, serialized in *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* (London, in Arabic), December 2001, translated by FBIS GMP2002010800097.

foreign jihadis will eventually return to their native countries or the émigré communities from which they came. When they do, they will have more experience, cachet, and credibility, which will be useful both for recruitment, as well as for planning, organizing, and conducting jihadi operations around the world. They will have first-hand experience in urban warfare—including construction and employment of IEDs, use of stand-off weapons like mortars and MANPADS, assassination and kidnapping techniques, and sniper and ambush tactics.[198] While this could lead to a major increase in bloodshed and destruction in urban centers throughout world, the threat may be especially high in Saudi Arabia—and to a lesser extent, Egypt and Jordan—from where the overwhelming majority of jihadis fighting in Iraq hail.[199]

While several al-Qaeda strategists place an emphasis on regaining a state-protected sanctuary to replace the one lost in Afghanistan for recruitment, indoctrination, and training; others disagree, asserting that state hosts can constrain or even sacrifice jihadi organizations in pursuit of their own interests. They also point out that large training camps are vulnerable to attack and tend to restrict participation in the jihad to a small number of elite mujahideen who can afford to travel great distances. Al-Suri, for example, in his 1,600-page treatise entitled *The Call to Global Islamic Resistance* assesses the strengths and weakness of secret training in safe houses; training in small secret camps; overt training in state-protected safe havens; overt training in "open fronts," meaning active jihad zones (e.g., Iraq and Afghanistan); and semi-overt training in under-governed, chaotic areas (e.g., Somalia) around the world.[200] He concludes that since "the areas of chaos are on the verge of coming under American control," the only training areas that "remain possible for us now, in the world of American aggression and international coordination to combat terrorism, are the methods of secret training in houses and mobile training camps."[201] He recommends that indoctrination and training efforts be moved to "every house, every quarter and every village of the Muslim countries."[202]

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[198] Douglas Jehl, "Iraq May Be Prime Place for Training of Militants, C.I.A. Report Concludes," *New York Times*, June 22, 2005.
[199] Hoffman, testimony, p. 12.
[200] Brynjar Lia, "Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralized Jihad Training—Part 2," *Terrorism Monitor*, February 1, 2007, p. 1.
[201] Abu Musab al-Suri, *The Call to Global Islamic Resistance*, p. 1419, as cited in Lia, "Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralized Jihad Training—Part 2," p. 2.
[202] Abu Musab al-Suri, *The Call to Global Islamic Resistance*, pp. 1414–1428, as cited in Brynjar Lia, "Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralized Jihad Training—Part 1," *Terrorism Monitor*, January 18, 2007, pp. 2–3.

Current Operations

Despite the loss of its sanctuary in Afghanistan, the capture or death of more than two-thirds of its senior leadership and numerous operatives, the rolling up of cells globally, the interdiction of C3 and financial links, and challenges with indoctrination and training, AQAM remains capable of global operations. Since September 11, 2001, exclusive of Iraq, it has been responsible for more than a score of major attacks ranging geographically from Spain to Indonesia (see Table 4). While it is often difficult to attribute attacks in Iraq to specific terrorist and insurgent groups, it is estimated that AQI has been behind more than 200 incidents, which have caused a total of more than 1,800 deaths and over 3,700 injuries.[203] According to the Defense Intelligence Agency, more than 100 terrorist attacks planned against the United States and its allies have been thwarted.[204]

[203] MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base. http://www.tkb.org/Group.jsp?groupID=4416.

[204] Richard Serrano and Greg Miller, "100 Terrorist Attacks Thwarted, U.S. Says," *Los Angeles Times*, January 11, 2003.

Table 4: Major Terrorists Incidents Linked to AQAM since September 11th Outside of Iraq

Incident	Location	Date	US Casualties	Total Casualties
Detonation of a natural gas truck outside a synagogue	Djerba, Tunisia	April 11, 2002	--	15 killed, 20 injured
Car bomb next to Navy shuttle bus	Karachi, Pakistan	May 8, 2002	--	12 killed, 19 injured
Truck bombing outside US Consulate and Marriott Hotel	Karachi, Pakistan	June 14, 2002	1 killed	11 killed, 51 injured
Speed boat attack on French oil tanker Limburg	Al Dhabbah, Yemen	October 6, 2002	--	1 killed, 4 injured
Massive car bombing of two nightclubs frequented by tourists	Bali, Indonesia	October 12, 2002	7 killed	202 killed, 300+ injured
Double bombing in shopping district	Zamboanga, Philippines	October 17, 2002	--	7 killed, 150 injured
Car bombing of Israeli-owned hotel and attempted downing of an Israeli airliner with SA-7 SAMs	Mombassa, Kenya	November 28, 2002	--	15 killed, 40 injured
Coordinated car bombings of 3 housing compounds for foreign workers	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	May 12, 2003	8 killed, 44 injured	35 killed, 216 injured
Coordinated suicide bombings against five targets	Casablanca, Morocco	May 2003	--	33 killed, 101 injured
Car bombing of J.W. Marriott hotel	Jakarta, Indonesia	August 5, 2003	2 injured	13 killed, 149 injured
Assault and bombing of a housing complex	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	November 8, 2003	--	17 killed, 120 injured

Table 4 Continued

Incident	Location	Date	US Casualties	Total Casualties
Suicide truck bombings of two synagogues	Istanbul, Turkey	November 15, 2003	--	25 killed, 300 injured
Bombing of British Consulate and HSBC bank	Istanbul, Turkey	November 20, 2003	--	41 killed, 555 injured
Sinking of Superferry 14	Manila Bay, Philippines	February 27, 2004	--	132 killed
Coordinated train bombing (ten bombs at four different locations)	Madrid, Spain	March 11, 2004	--	191 killed, 600+ injured
Armed attack against oil industry office and residential resort	Khobar, Saudi Arabia	May 30, 2004	1 killed	22 killed, 25 injured
Car bombing outside Australian Embassy	Jakarta, Indonesia	September 9, 2004	--	10 killed, 182 injured
Suicide bombing of Abdul Rab mosque	Kandahar, Afghanistan	June 1, 2005	--	21 killed, 51 injured
Coordinated bombing of London underground and double-decker bus	London, United Kingdom	July 7, 2005		56 killed, 700+ injured
Coordinated bombing of three western hotels	Amman, Jordan	November 11, 2005	1 killed	63 killed, 100 injured
Bombing of Askari Mosque	Samarra, Iraq	February 22, 2006	--	--
Attempted suicide VBED attack on Abqaiq oil-processing plant	Saudi Arabia	February 24, 2006	--	2 killed, 4 injured
Twin car bombings	Algiers, Algeria	April 11, 2007	--	33 killed, 162 injured

Al Qaeda claims that the movement is stronger and more capable today than it was on September 11, 2001. Propagandists on jihadi web sites pour forth a never-ending flow of unsubstantiated claims of increased vitality and cast small suicide attacks as epic events in an attempt to create a popular perception of positive progress. Ironically, while spending most of his time trying to evade capture, Zawahiri boasts in a tape released in December 2003 that, "we are still chasing the Americans and their allies everywhere, even in their homeland."[205] To support often outlandish claims, AQAM leaders point out that prior to September 11, 2001 the movement was only able to muster one major attack every two years and since then, it has been averaging at least two attacks per year.[206] The veracity of this claim of course depends upon what one means by the word "major."

Over the past six years, AQAM-linked attacks have mainly involved vehicle-borne and improvised explosive devices (especially in Iraq), suicide bombers, small-scale assaults, targeted shootings, and beheadings. None have caused casualties on a scale comparable to the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City in 2001 or even the August 1998 attacks on the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. There have been only three attacks that caused more than 100 fatalities: the Bali bombing in October 2002, the sinking of Superferry 14 in Manila Bay in February 2004, and the Madrid train bombing in April 2004. While several groups have demonstrated an ability to coordinate multiple bombings within a single city, none have shown an ability to coordinate jihadi efforts internationally. Nearly all of the attacks have focused on soft targets and most of those were in Muslim areas. As a result, Muslim civilians account for the overwhelming majority of total casualties—which obviously works at cross-purposes with winning over the hearts and minds of the *ummah*. There have been only two attacks directly against the West: the train bombing in Madrid, Spain in March 2004 and the coordinated bombing of the London underground subway system and a double-decker bus on July 7, 2005. Interestingly, both of those attacks were carried out by homegrown groups without any formal command and control links to al Qaeda. Excluding operations in Iraq, al Qaeda and its affiliates have been responsible for fewer than 20 American deaths since 2001.

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[205] Associated Press, "Purported al-Qaida Tape Warns of Attacks," December 19, 2003.

[206] Dana Priest and Walter Pincus, "New Target and Tone: Message Shows Al Qaeda's Adaptability," *Washington Post*, April 16, 2004; and Geoffrey Nunberg, "Bin Laden's Low-Tech Weapon," *New York Times*, April 18, 2004.

Despite propaganda to the contrary, a strong case can be made that AQAM's operational capabilities have waned considerably over the past six years. Whether or not the central core can regenerate enough C3 to pool and coordinate the efforts of its far-flung franchises or conduct independent global operations remains an open and intensely anxiety-producing question. As mentioned earlier, one cannot dismiss the possibility that al Qaeda leaders will make good on their threat to acquire and use WMD against Western targets.

III. Violent Shi'a Extremists — "Khomeinism"

Radical Shi'a ideologues and terrorist groups draw selectively upon the works of Sunni scholars like Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and Mawdudi, focusing narrowly on their rejection of the Western secular model of governance and the imperative to re-introduce the *sharia* as the blueprint for all aspects of life. The dominant inspiration for radical Shi'ism, however, is without question the works and public statements of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Rising from a firebrand, anti-Shah cleric in Qom in the 1960s to the *faqih*, or the supreme spiritual and political leader, of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he reformulated the Shi'a faith tradition in two fundamental, and still contentious, ways: introducing the concept of the *velayat-e faqih*, meaning direct rule by Islamic jurists; and replacing a tradition of passive acceptance of injustice on Earth while waiting for the return of the Mahdi at the end of days with a positive obligation to rise up against un-Islamic regimes in the present.

Khomeini-inspired Shi'a extremism has been responsible for numerous attacks against US interests, as well as those of US allies, over the past quarter century, including the following:

- Seizure of the US Embassy in Tehran on November 6, 1979 and the taking of 66 hostages, 52 of whom were held in captivity for 444 days.

- Abduction of some 30 Americans and other Westerners in Lebanon in the 1980s, many of whom were tortured and executed during their confinement, including the CIA's Chief of Station in Beirut, William Buckley.

- A suicide car-bomb attack against the US embassy in Beirut that resulted in 63 deaths, including 17 Americans, on April 18, 1983.

- The bombing of US and French military barracks in Beirut, killing 241 Marines and 58 French paratroopers, on October 23, 1983.

- A truck bomb attack against the US embassy and other targets in Kuwait City on December 12, 1983, killing five people and injuring 80.

- A truck bomb attack against US embassy annex in east Beirut, killing 24 people, on September 20, 1984.

- The hijacking of Kuwait Airways Flight 221 on December 3, 1984, resulting in the deaths of two Americans.

- The hijacking of TWA Flight 847 on June 14, 1985 and its subsequent diversion to Beirut, during which an US Navy diver was executed.

- The bombing of the Khobar Towers complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 US airmen and wounding 372 additional Air Force personnel in June 1996.[207]

- Scores of bombings and suicide attacks by Hezbollah within Israel and southern Lebanon, resulting in hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries.[208]

[207] While the attack itself was conducted by a Saudi branch of Hezbollah, the entire operation was planned, funded, and coordinated by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the MOIS. The execution of the attack was approved by "senior Iranian government officials." See National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, "Overview of the Enemy," Staff Statement No. 15, p. 5; and Louis Freeh, "Khobar Towers," *Wall Street Journal*, June 23, 2006, p. 10.

[208] According to the terrorist database maintained by the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT), Hezbollah is responsible for 836 fatalities and 1,535 injuries across 179 terrorist incidents since it was founded in 1982. Israelis account for the majority of those casualties.

In short, prior to September 11, 2001, Shi'a terrorists were responsible for killing and injuring far more Americans than the Sunni-based Salafi-Jihadi branch of Islamic radicalism. The section that follows provides an overview of the ideological roots of violent, Shi'a extremism, which is sometime referred to as "Khomeinism," and what distinguishes it from Sunni radicalism. Subsequent sections will examine key actors in the Shi'a branch (i.e., Iran and Hezbollah); their goals, strategy, and lines of operation for waging a defensive jihad; and their current capabilities for implementing them.

Ideological Roots

To understand the goals and motivations of today's Shi'a extremists, it is imperative to understand two key issues: the basic differences between the Shi'a and Sunni confessions; and innovations in traditional Shi'a thought introduced and institutionalized in Iran by, among others, Ayatollah Khomeini. As will become clear in the sections that follow, while they are separated by significant ideological/theological divides, radical Shi'a and Sunni "Islamists" offer nearly identical diagnoses of and remedies for curing the ills plaguing the modern Muslim world.

The Shi'a-Sunni Schism

Following the Prophet Muhammad's death in 632, there was an immediate succession crisis within the early Islamic community in Medina. The *shi'at Ali*, which translates in Arabic as the "faction" or "followers" of Ali, believed leadership should pass over bloodlines. Since Muhammad had no sons, they called for his patrilateral cousin and son-in-law, Ali, to become the infallible spiritual leader or "Imam" of the community.[209] The beliefs and traditions of the *shi'at Ali* eventually coalesced into what became known as Shi'a Islam. A rival group believed, however, that the elders of the Islamic community (initially, Muhammad's "companions") should choose his successor, or "caliph" (*khalifah*), from among the men of the prophet's tribe of Quraysh. Those who shared this view became known as "the People of the Sunna and the Community"

[209] Ali was the son of Muhammad's father's brother and was married to Fatima, one of Muhammad's daughters. Members of the shi'at Ali asserted that prior to his death Muhammad designated Ali as his heir.

and their beliefs and practices created the foundation of Sunni Islam.[210] The "People of the Sunna" carried the day in 632, electing three caliphs as successors to Muhammad before finally selecting Ali in 656.[211] Adherents to Shi'a Islam have been a minority within the Muslim world ever since. Today, only about 15 percent of the world's roughly 1.5 billion Muslims practice the Shi'a form of Islam.

In Iran, Shi'a Islam has been the official "state" religion since the founding of the Safavid dynasty in 1501 by Shah Ismail Safavi, who claimed to be the "Imam's deputy" and took on the royal title of the "Shadow of God on Earth." Today, Shi'a Muslims account for 89 percent of the Iranian population. Less dominant Shi'a majorities exist today in Iraq and Bahrain, and significant minority enclaves exist in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia as well. The vast majority of Shi'ites belong to the "Twelver" sect, which holds that there have been twelve pure and sinless Imams, beginning with Ali and ending between 874 and 940 AD. The earlier date is when the twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, went into physical seclusion in Samarra, Iraq, and the later date is when his spiritual connection with humanity was broken, which is referred to as his "greater occultation." This "hidden Imam," which is also referred to as the "Imam of the age" or al-mahdi, is expected to return as a messiah shortly before the end of time to fill the earth "with justice and equity."[212] While this apocalyptic world view also exists within the Sunni tradition, it is far less prominent. Reflecting its history as an oppressed minority group, Shi'a theology is also more keenly focused on the concept of divine justice.

From a theological/ideological perspective, contemporary Shi'a terrorist groups like Hezbollah have much in common with Sunni-rooted, Salafi-Jihadi groups like al Qaeda. As will be elaborated upon below, both groups provide a similar diagnosis of the ills plaguing the Muslim world: the *ummah* has been led astray by apostate regimes and

[210] Henry Munson, Jr, *Islam and Revolution in the Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 17.
[211] In the Sunni tradition, the first four caliphs of the Islamic community—Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali—are revered as the "rightly guided caliphs" and the period of their reign, running from 632–661, is considered to be an extension of the golden age of Mohammad's rule in Medina from 622–632. As mentioned in the previous chapter, AQAM calls for a return to this early period, prior to the accretion of corrupting foreign influences.
[212] Munson, *Islam and Revolution in the Middle East*, pp. 16, 26.

corrupted by Western influences. Their suggested cure is nearly identical: return to "true Islam" by, above all else, living in complete accordance with "revealed" Islamic law. Despite their shared Muslim identity and broad agreement on how to restore the vitality of the Muslim world, however, cooperation between Shi'a and Sunni extremists is more the exception than the rule. Relatively minor theological differences have, over time, grown into deep political divides that are difficult to straddle. These differences have also been compounded by more than 13 centuries of antagonism, punctuated by episodes of bloody struggle and persecution. Over this period, the Shi'a minority has cultivated a communal sense of victimization and oppression at the hands of the Sunni majority. Although Shi'a revolutionaries have occasionally resisted Sunni rule, as occurred during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates, the norm has been reluctant acquiescence. Meanwhile, at the risk of over-generalizing, Sunnis have adopted a sense of religious superiority over the Shi'a, viewing them as lesser Muslims or, at the extreme, as heretics deserving death. To understand the inspiration driving Shi'a terrorists groups today and why sustained cooperation with Sunni groups is problematic, it is imperative to highlight some of the theological/ideological differences between these co-religionists. Aside from the central debate over the proper method of succession after the death of Muhammad in 632, Shi'a Islam has incorporated a number of beliefs and practices over time that set it apart, including the following:

- Only the 12 preternatural Imams inherited the Prophet's understanding of Islam and thus, only they have the authority to offer infallible interpretations of the Quran and hadiths of Islam;

- Only the Imams, or those who act on their behalf, are the legitimate holders of political authority—and thus, they alone can declare an offensive jihad;[213]

- The "gates of *ijtihad*," or the use of individual reasoning to interpret the Quran and hadith in light of contemporary circumstances, were closed in the (10th century) within the Sunni world, but remain open for Shiite jurists, significantly increasing the flexibility and adaptability of Shi'a jurisprudence; and

[213] As will be discussed later, Ayatollah Khomeini departed from this tenet with his concept of *velayat-e-faqih* (rule by a supreme Islamic jurisprudent) in the 1970s.

- Shiite veneration of the Imams—especially Ali's younger son, Husayn, who was killed near Karbala, Iraq by the army of the Sunni caliph Yazid in 680—is alien to Sunnis and viewed by some as outright heresy because it violates the doctrine of *tawhid*, the belief in the absolute unity of God.[214]

Revolutionary Shi'a Ideology: The Innovation of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini

Consistent with the collective sense of victimization and oppression inherent to the Shi'a faith tradition, the refusal to accept the legitimacy of non-Imami rule has been historically fused with a conscious eschewal of rebellion. The fifth and sixth Imams, Muhammad al-Baqir and Jafar al-Sadiq, explicitly directed their followers not to rebel against their rulers under any circumstances. Jafar al-Sadiq, who was the source for much of the Imami hadith, went so far as to recommend "total abstention from even so much as verbal dispute with their opponents."[215]

What made Ayatollah Khomeini revolutionary was that he rejected this "quietistic patience" and passive waiting for the appearance of the Twelfth Imam. Reinterpreting more than a millennia worth of Shi'a hadith, as well as implicitly over-ruling the fifth and sixth Imams, he portrayed Shi'a Islam as a religion of rebellion. In *Islam and Revolution*, turning Islamic history on its head, he wrote: "This is the root of the matter: Sunni populated countries believe in obeying their rulers, whereas the *Shi'is have always believed in rebellion*—sometimes they were able to rebel, and at other times they were compelled to keep silent."[216] While other Shi'a scholars and clerics have attempted to usher in a more revolutionary form of Shi'a Islam in the past, Khomeini was the first to cultivate a sustained, broad-based movement sufficient to gain political power and institutionalize it.

[214] The events surrounding the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, most of his family, and followers in 680 are narrated and reenacted each year during the first ten days of the month of Muharram. The final day of mourning, Ashura, which marks the martyrdom of Husayn, is considered the holiest day of the Shi'a year.

[215] Hamid Algar, *Religion and State in Iran* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1969), p. 2.

[216] Emphasis added. Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, translated and edited by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: CA: Mizan Press, 1981), pp. 326–327.

Because of his public criticism of the Shah's policies, Khomeini was exiled to Turkey in 1964. The following year he moved to Iraq and then, in 1978, to France. From the safety of exile, his reproofs of the Shah became more strident and uncompromising. Building upon the work of Dr. Ali Shariati and many others, Khomeini argued for what is sometimes referred to as a "maximalist" version of Islam, meaning that the *sharia* offers a blueprint for all aspects of personal and public life. As he wrote later:

> Islam has a system and a program for all the different affairs of society: the form of government and administration, the regulation of people's dealings with each other, the relations of state and people, relations with foreign states and all other political and economic matters.[217]

To this "maximalist" view, which has roots in both the Shi'a and Sunni traditions, Khomeini popularized the belief that intervening in politics was not merely the right of Muslims, but an individual responsibility. In the years leading up to the 1979 revolution, Khomeini and others successfully recast Imam Husayn as a revolutionary leader who sought to liberate the oppressed peoples of Kufa from the tyrannical caliph Yazid.[218] They argued that rather than mourn him and passively pray for his intercession, the faithful should actively emulate the "Lord of Martyrs" by rising up against the Shah. On November 23, 1978, just prior to the month of Muharram and the Ashura holy day, Khomeini issued a statement to the Iranian people that read in part:

> We are about to begin the month of epic heroism and self-sacrifice—the month in which blood triumphed over the sword, the month in which truth condemned falsehood for all eternity and branded the mark of disgrace upon the forehead of all oppressors and satanic governments...the month that proves the superpowers may be defeated by the word of truth; the month in which the leader of the Muslims [Husayn] taught us how to struggle against all the tyrants of history.[219]

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[217] Ibid., pp. 249–250.
[218] This activist revolutionary interpretation of the martyrdom of Husayn had several precedents in Iranian history. See Munson, p. 25.
[219] Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, p. 242.

Less than four months later, in March 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran was established. The new constitution, drafted by the clerically dominated Assembly of Experts, was ratified by a popular referendum by the end of the year. The constitution enshrined the principle of direct rule by Shiite Islamic jurists and theologians, called *velayat-e faqih* or guardianship of the jurisconsult. The Islamic revolutionaries argued that in the absence of the Hidden Imam, Muslim society should be guided by Islamic law, the *sharia*, which could be best understood by Islamic jurists. Therefore, rather than just advising secular leaders, jurists should rule directly. The constitution named Ayatollah Khomeini the *faqih* for life, bestowing him with both supreme political and religious authority. This "innovative" concept was contentious at the time and remains so today.[220] Until Khomeini, Shiite *ulama* never acknowledged the religious legitimacy of temporal rule of any kind. Traditionally, spiritual leadership of the Shi'a community is vested solely with God, the Prophet Muhammad, and the infallible Imams. With the occultation of the Muhammad al-Mahdi in 10th century, there could, therefore, be no legitimate claims to spiritual authority on Earth.

On November 6, 1979, radicalized Iranian students and other followers of Khomeini stormed the US embassy in Tehran and took 66 Americans hostage. Of that number, 52 were held until January 21, 1981. In addition to marking the first attack by "Khomeinists" on US interests, the embassy seizure also precipitated the resignation of Mehdi Bazargan, a lay scholar who espoused an interpretation of the Quran consistent with the demands of modernity, as prime minister two days later. In the wake of Bazargan's departure, pragmatic, pro-modernity Iranian policymakers either resigned or were forced out of office. Khomeini viewed this "second revolution" as even more consequential than the overthrow of the Shah in that revolutionary Islamists were able to wrest the reins of government away from "liberal" centrists and nationalists.[221] The "second revolution" also brought about a major shift in Iranian foreign policy. Instead of trying to promote Iranian's national interests within the international system by playing the United States and Western Europe off the Soviet Union, which had been the policy under Bazargan, the cleric- dominated government characterized the

[220] The adoption of the faqih system was opposed by key figures in the 1979 Revolution, including the modernist lay leaders such a Mehdi Bazargan and Abul Hasan Bani-Sadr, as well as senior ayatollahs such as Shariamadari, Taleqani, and Tabatabai.

[221] R.K. Ramazani, "Iran's Export of the Revolution: Politics, Ends, and Means," in Esposito, *The Iranian Revolution*, p. 43.

international system as "illegitimate" and "unjust," rejecting the dominance of both the American and Soviet superpowers. The Islamic Republic of Iran committed itself to the long-term mission of creating an Islamic utopia on Earth with justice for all. The twin principles of "neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic" and "the export of the revolution" internationally have guided Iranian foreign policy ever since. As will be elaborated upon below, an integral component of Iran's effort to "export the revolution" has been supporting Shiite insurgents and terrorists groups.

Key Actors in the "Khomeinist" Branch of Global Terrorism

The Islamic Republic of Iran is unquestionably the prime mover behind Shi'a-inspired terrorism in the world today. Most of Iran's efforts to "export the revolution" over the past quarter-century have failed. The major exception, however, is Hezbollah, which was planted in Lebanon in 1982 and has grown into a quasi-autonomous actor with demonstrated global reach. It appears, however, that with its active support of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)[222] and Sadr Organization, and their associated Shiite militias (i.e., Badr and Mahdi Army, respectively), Iran is on the verge of creating a new Hezbollah-like organization in Iraq. While both organizations are strongly supported by Iran, they also pursue their own political agendas within Iraq. The Mahdi Army or Jaish al-Mahdi (JAM), nominally controlled by Muqtada al Sadr, has grown rapidly since its creation in June 2003 and has emerged as an important quasi-independent actor. Shiite radicals, who may or may not be linked to Iran or Hezbollah, continue to have a presence in other countries in the region (e.g., Saudi Arabia and Bahrain). In short, although "Khomeinism" as a revolutionary ideology was treading water for much of the past two decades, it is now resurgent. Bellwethers of this resurgence include the radicalization of Iranian domestic politics, Hezbollah's recent electoral victories in Lebanon, and Hezbollah's growing stature in the wake of its strategically successful battle with the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) in July–August 2006.

[222] In May 2007, SCIRI was renamed the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC). Because of inconsistent translation from Arabic, it is also sometimes referred to as the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI).

The Islamic Republic of Iran

Iran's constitution explicitly called for exporting the revolution to unify the Islamic world and, in time, to extend God's sovereignty over *all* peoples—not just Muslims. In Article 11, it states that the Iranian government should "exert continuous efforts in order to realize the political, economic and cultural unity of the Islamic world." In Article 154 it holds that the "Islamic Republic of Iran is concerned with the welfare of humanity as a whole and takes independence, liberty and sovereignty of justice and righteousness as the right of people the world over....The Islamic Republic of Iran supports the struggle of [the] oppressed anywhere in the world."[223] During his reign as *faqih*, Khomeini emphasized that the divinely guided quest for a new Islamic world order was not limited to the Muslim world. He asserted in 1979 that: "Islam is not peculiar to a country, several countries, a group [of people or countries] or even the Muslims. Islam has come for humanity....Islam wishes to bring all of humanity under the umbrella of its justice."[224] Over the past quarter-century, the practical implementation of that policy has shifted back and forth between Iran serving as an inspirational-model for others and the active propagation, including the use of force, of the ideas underpinning 1979 Revolution in what is commonly referred to as the "volcano theory."

In the wake of the Revolution, the more aggressive "volcano" approach dominated and it seemed to be working, as evidenced by the following: [225]

- Communal riots in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province;
- Terrorist attacks (e.g., car bombings), hijacking, and civil disturbances in Kuwait;
- Demonstrations and several coups attempts in Bahrain by the Iranian-backed Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain;
- Major Shiite uprisings in Karbala and Najaf in Iraq; and

[223] English translation of Iranian constitution, *Middle East Journal*, Spring 1980, pp. 180–204.
[224] FBIS, Daily Reports—Middle East and North Africa, December 18, 1979.
[225] See John Esposito, ed., *The Iranian Revolution—Its Global Impact* (Miami, FL: Florida International University Press, 1990).

- The deployment of Iranians Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) units to Lebanon and the founding of Lebanese Hezbollah in 1982.

In addition to these developments, which were supported in varying degrees by the Iranian government, the Revolution also served to reinforce and accelerate Islamist "liberation" movements from Egypt to the Philippines. While Sunni groups had no interest in replicating the Iranian model, they were inspired by how Islam could be used to mobilize the masses and hold an apostate government to account. As one leader of the Muslim Brotherhood explained at the time, the Iranian Revolution "is a matchless, powerful, and vital example of the [larger] Islamic revolution…and the important thing is not to put our hands at our sides and wait."[226]

During the mid-to-late 1980s, with the major exception of Hezbollah's activities in Lebanon, the export of the Revolution stalled. The eight-year war with Iraq not only pulled resources away from that endeavor, but also exacted a major toll on the Iranian people and its economy. The attractiveness of the Iranian model waned as the excesses of the Khomeini government, especially with respect to the denial of individual freedoms and suppression of internal dissent, gained increased media attention. In addition, states clamped down on internal Islamic opposition groups by linking them to Iranian extremism and the threat of "Khomeinism."[227] With the Iranian economy in tatters and the quality of life for Iranians badly eroded as a result of the war, the government largely abandoned the volcano strategy in favor of a renewed focus on the inspiration model. With pragmatists on the ascendancy within the Iranian bureaucracy, Iran sought to develop closer economic and diplomatic ties with the West.

With Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* in February 1989 condemning Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and calling for his execution for apostasy, the pendulum swung back toward the activist model. In his *fatwa*, Khomeini couched the Rushdie issue as part of a larger struggle

[226] Muhammad Abd al-Rahim Anbar as cited in Shahrough Akhavi, "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution in Egypt," in Esposito, ed., *The Iranian Revolution—Its Global Impact*, p. 145.

[227] In Iraq, for example, Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime outlawed the Islamic Call Society (al Dawa), the Mujahidin, and other Shi'a groups with suspected links to Iran; arrested or otherwise suppressed militant Shi'a leaders; and executed Iraq's most prominent and influential cleric, Ayatollah Muhammad Baqr al-Sadr. Esposito, ed., *The Iranian Revolution*, p. 33.

between the Islamic world and the West. He declared that: "the issue for them [Western powers] is not that of defending an individual—the issue for them is to support an anti-Islamic and anti-value current, which has been masterminded by those institutions belonging to Zionism, Britain and the USA which have placed themselves against the Islamic world, through their ignorance and haste."[228] Iran ramped up its support to Shiite extremist groups opposed to the Sunni monarchies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (i.e., Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the UAE). Those efforts, however, were unsuccessful and pushed several of the GCC states into closer relationships with the United States.

With the death of Ayatollah Khomeini on June 3, 1989 and the impressive routing of the Iraqi military by US forces in Operation Desert Storm, the pendulum swung back toward the inspirational model. By the mid-1990's, Iran was focused on economic development, reaching out to Europe, in particular. In 1999, former President Mohammad Khatami visited Saudi Arabia, the first senior level Iranian official to do so since the 1979 Revolution. During this period, however, Ayatollah Khamenei apparently approved the bombing of the Khobar Towers complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, which caused the deaths of 19 US airmen and seriously wounded 372 additional Air Force personnel.

With the failure of the so-called "reformist" movement, the pendulum appears to be swinging back toward sustained, active confrontation with the West. Conservatives, supported by Ayatollah Khamenei, have been gaining strength ever since the 2003 municipal elections that were boycotted by the reformists. In the run up to the February 2004 Majles elections, the Council of Guardians disqualified about 3,600 candidates, mostly reformists, including 87 sitting members of the Majles, enabling conservatives to gain a majority.[229] The June 2005 election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, an ultra-conservative, is also indicative of this trend. Ahmadinejad's rhetoric is intensely anti-American and anti-Israeli. In June 2006, he warned that unless the United States abandoned it current path of falsehood, "your doomed

[228] BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, February 24, 1989.
[229] Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: US Concerns and Policy Responses," CRS Report for Congress, January 20, 2006, pp. 3–4.

destiny will be annihilation" and then in August 2006, he informed the American people that: "If you would like to have good relations with the Iranian nation in the future…bow down before the greatness of the Iranian nation and surrender. If you don't accept [to do this], the Iranian nation will later force you to surrender and bow down."[230] In a student rally entitled "The World Without Zionism," on October 2005, he asserted that "the establishment of a Zionist regime was a move by the world oppressor [the United States] against the Islamic world" and that "the skirmishes in the occupied land are part of the war of destiny." Referencing Ayatollah Khomeini, he declared that "as the Imam said, Israel must be wiped off the map."[231] A year later on the eve of Qud's Day in 2006, Ahmadinejad announced that the state of Israel is "illegitimate from its foundation" and that "it has been imposed on the nations of the region, and it cannot survive." He continued that "the existence of this regime is the root of many problems of mankind today."[232]

Hezbollah (Party of God)

Hezbollah was founded in 1982 in response to Israel's invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon to push out Palestinian Liberation Organization, which had been using it as a base of operations for

[230] "President Ahmadinejad Says Iran to Respond to Nuclear Proposals by 'End of Mordad'," aired on Islamic Republic of Iran News Network Television (IRINN), June 21, 2006; "Ahmadinejad Says US, UK 'Resorted to Trick' to Postpone Cease-Fire," aired on Islamic Republic of Iran News Network Television (IRINN), August 15, 2006; and President George W. Bush, "President Discusses Global War on Terror," Capital Hilton Hotel, September 5, 2006.

[231] A few days later, the IRGC issued a statement of support that read in part: "In the face of the bestial behavior of the regime occupying Qods [Israel], and for its infinite oppression of Palestinians, the wrath of the hard done by Palestinian nation and intifadah will undoubtedly wipe Israel off the map and soon we will witness a world without the illegal regime of Israel." Nazila Fathi, "Iran's New President Says Israel 'Must Be Wiped Off The Map'," *New York Times*, October, 27, 2005, p. 1; "The President: We Will Experience a World Without the United States and Zionism," in www.sharifinws.com in Persian, as translated by the Open Source Center, IAP20051107368001; and "Iranian Guard Corps Says Palestinian Intifadah Will 'Wipe Israel Off The Map'," Tehran Mehr News Agency (in Persian), November 1, 2005, translated by Open Source Center, IAP20051101011047.

[232] Reuters, "Iranian President Labels Israel 'Illegitimate'," *Washington Post*, October 20, 2006, p. A18.

attacks into Israel.[233] Hezbollah aspires to realize the ideals of the Iranian Revolution in Lebanon, drawing upon the teachings of several prominent Shiite ayatollahs for ideological inspiration, especially the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini; Musa al-Sadr, who founded Lebanon's Amal militia and disappeared mysteriously on August 31, 1978 during a trip to Libya; Baqir al-Sadr, who founded Iraq's al-Da'wa party in 1968 and was executed by Saddam Hussein's regime in 1980; and increasingly, Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah.[234] Hezbollah adheres to a Manichean notion of the world as being sharply divided between the oppressed (*mustad'ifin*) and oppressors (*mustakbirun*).[235] In this divinely guided fight between good against evil, there is little room for compromise with one's enemies and nearly any action taken to liberate the oppressed can be justified. This worldview also enables Hezbollah to find common cause not only with Sunni "liberation" groups such as HAMAS, but even non-Islamic organizations.

Iran's IRGC, with Syrian government support, was instrumental in organizing, training, and equipping Hezbollah fighters, who soon began conducting operations against Israeli occupation forces, as well as multinational peacekeeping forces in Beirut.[236] Within two years of its founding, Hezbollah was responsible for a string of three major terrorist attacks against US targets: a suicide bomber drove an explosives-laden pickup truck into the US embassy in Beirut on April

[233] Other aliases included Islamic Jihad, Revolutionary Justice Organization, Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, and Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine. Hezbollah was founded by radical members of the more moderate Shiite militia, AMAL, which al-Sadr founded in 1975. For a good overview of the founding, ideological inspiration, and organization of Hezbollah, see: Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007). See also: Sami Hajjar, *Hizballah: Terrorism, National Liberations or Menace?* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College — Strategic Studies Institute, 2002).

[234] Since the death of Khomeini, there has not been an acknowledged *velayat-e faqih* to replace him. Ayatollah Khamenei holds the title "supreme leader." In the absence of a *faqih*, Fadlallah has become the de facto spiritual mentor for Hezbollah. There are, however, significant theological disagreements and personal tensions between Fadlallah and Hezbollah's senior leaders. Laura Deeb, "Hezbollah: A Primer," *Middle East Report Online*, July 31, 2006, http://www.merip.org/mero/mero073106.html.

[235] Hajjar, *Hizballah: Terrorism, National Liberations or Menace?*, p. 11.

[236] During the 1980s, the Iranian government spent an estimated $10-30 million per month to support Hezbollah and run myriad social services in Shiite-dominated Southern Lebanon. Some 1,000 members of the IRGC were sent to the Bekaa Valley to train, organize, and equip Hezbollah fighters in the early 1980s. Ibid, p. 5.

18, 1983, causing 63 deaths, including 17 Americans, some of whom were employees of the Central Intelligence Agency; the coordinated the truck bombing on October 23, 1983 of the US and French military barracks in Beirut, killing 241 Marines and 58 French paratroopers; and a truck-bomb attack on September 20, 1984 against the US embassy annex in Aukar, northeast of Beirut, killing 24 people, two of whom were US military personnel.[237] In addition, during the 1980s, Hezbollah kidnapped approximately 30 Americans and Europeans in Lebanon. Most were ransomed or released in exchange for weapons, but several were tortured and executed, including the CIA's Chief of Station in Beirut, William Buckley, who was abducted in July 1982, tortured, and killed in 1985.

With assistance provided by Iran, Hezbollah also quickly developed an operational reach outside of Lebanon. On December 12, 1983, it carried out coordinated truck bombing attacks against the US embassy and other targets in Kuwait City, causing extensive damage to the embassy, killing five people, and injuring 80 others. (Although the terrorists themselves were members of al Dawa, an Iranian-backed Shiite group operating against Saddam Hussein in Iraq, they had extensive links to Hezbollah.) A year later, Hezbollah was responsible for hijacking Kuwait Airways Flight 221 bound for Karachi, Pakistan, which was diverted in-flight to Iran. While on the ground at Tehran's Mehrabad airport, Hezbollah terrorists executed two employees of the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Six months later, on June 14, 1985, Hezbollah terrorists hijacked TWA Flight 847 en route from Athens to Rome and forced it to land in Beirut. The hijackers held the passengers, including 32 Americans, for 17 days. During the stand-off, Robert Dean Stethem, a US Navy diver, was shot and his body dumped onto the airport tarmac. Members of Hezbollah are believed to be responsible for bombings the Israeli embassy in Argentina in March 1992, killing 29 and injuring 242 people, as well as the car bombing of the Jewish cultural center in Buenos Aires in July 1994, killing nearly 50 people and

[237] There is some contention about whether Hezbollah, per se, was responsible for these attacks or groups associated with it. According to Hezbollah's own account and some academic studies, Islamic Jihad, which claimed responsibility for the bombings of the US embassy in Beirut and the US Marine and French barracks in 1983, was never part of Hezbollah's organizational structure. Others claim that Islamic Jihad was never actually an organization, but rather just the *nom de guerre* for Hezbollah. See: International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No. 7, "Old Games, New Rules: Conflict on the Israeli-Lebanon Border," 18 November 2002, p. 3; and Robin Wright, *Sacred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1985).

injuring some 200 more. A Saudi-branch of Hezbollah was responsible for the bombing of the Khobar Towers apartment complex housing US Air Force personnel in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia on June 26, 1998, which killed 19 Americans and injured another 372.[238]

Beginning in 1992, Hezbollah became actively involved in Lebanon's nascent democratic process.[239] Its political wing developed widespread support among the country's Shi'a population, and even among Christians and Druze, by providing critically needed medical care, food assistance, education, legal, other social services in southern Lebanon and south Beirut. Hezbollah's political status was elevated further with the withdrawal of Syrian military forces and overt intelligence operatives in 2005 and its better-than-expected performance in the Lebanese legislative elections that spring.

Israel's unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000 was hailed by Hezbollah and other jihadi groups, including those belonging to the Sunni-branch, as a major victory. Hezbollah immediately moved into the power vacuum in southern Lebanon, expanding its military infrastructure (e.g., weapon and equipment caches, underground bunkers, and "fighter" presence) and its already vast social service network. Hezbollah-controlled southern Lebanon is, in effect, a state within a state. Citing continued Israeli occupation of the disputed Sheba'a Farms area, Hezbollah continued to conduct small-scale attacks against Israeli Defense Forces and began launching artillery and rockets into northern Israel. As will discussed in more detail later, on July 12, 2006, Hezbollah members crossed into Israel, kidnapped two soldiers and killed three others, triggering 34 days of escalating violence.

Until September 11, 2001, Hezbollah had been responsible for more American deaths and casualties than any other terrorist group. With global reach, access to advanced weapons (e.g., Katusha rockets, short-range missiles, anti-tank weapons, anti-ship cruise missiles, surface-to-air missiles, and UAVs) from Iran and Syria, and the demonstrated

[238] In an intriguing example of cooperation between Shi'a and Sunni terrorist groups, al Qaeda operatives may have facilitated the shipment of high explosives to Saudi Arabia, conducted pre-attack surveillance, and provided additional support. See National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, "Overview of the Enemy," Staff Statement No. 15, p. 5.

[239] The question of whether or not to get involved in the political process prompted a serious internal debate within Hezbollah. Norton, *Hezbollah*, pp. 98–112; and Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, "Lebanon: Shiites Express Political Identity," *Arab Reform Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (May 2005).

ability to conduct complex operations, Hezbollah has matured into a formidable adversary. Reflecting that, former US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage commented in 2002 that "Hezbollah may be the 'A team' of terrorists, maybe al Qaeda is actually the 'B team'....They have a blood debt to us...and we're not going to forget it."[240] The July 2007 NIE on *The Terrorist Threat to the US Homeland* concluded that Hezbollah may be "likely to consider attacking the Homeland over the next three years if it perceives the United States as posing a direct threat to the group or Iran."[241]

Goals, Strategy, and Lines of Operation

Part of the reason that it is possible to gain insight into the goals, strategy, and lines of operations of the al Qaeda-launched jihadi movement is that many internal documents have been captured over the course of ongoing offensive military operations and that fact that, with its sanctuary in Afghanistan eliminated, globally distributed al Qaeda leaders and ideologues have been forced, at least in part, to air their internal debates on publicly accessible Internet sites. Unfortunately, neither is applicable in the case of Iran and Hezbollah. Much can be inferred, however, from public statements, documents, and actions taken by the Iranian government and Hezbollah.

Goals

Given their history, it is not surprising that the goals of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Hezbollah are closely interconnected. One of the core goals set forth in the Iranian constitution is "to perpetuate the revolution both at home and abroad," meaning spreading two universally applicable ideas: Islam is relevant to all aspects of life and the *sharia*

[240] Richard Armitage, remarks at a press conference in Brussels, September 5, 2002.

[241] NIC, *NIE—The Terrorist Threat to the US Homeland* (Washington, DC: NIC, July 2007), p. 2. See also: Dr. Thomas Fingar, Deputy Director for Analysis, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Global Security Assessment" testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, July 11, 2007, p. 4.

alone provides a sufficient blueprint for living a just life on Earth.[242] While the initial goal is to unite and liberate "oppressed Muslims," the long-term objective is to bring all of humanity under the umbrella of Islamic justice.

While it is a strong supporter of those overarching objectives, Hezbollah has defined a somewhat narrower set of goals in numerous documents and statements: establishment of a Shiite theocracy in Lebanon, the destruction of Israel, and the elimination of corrupting Western influences from Muslim lands. As it has become more involved in Lebanon's domestic political process, Hezbollah has eschewed public statements about creating a Shiite theocracy.[243] Whether this reflects an actual shift in long-term strategic focus or just short-term political expediency (i.e., the desire to form as broad of an opposition movement as possible), however, is uncertain. According to its founding documents, Hezbollah seeks the liberation of all occupied Arab lands and the expansion of God's sovereignty over all peoples. While the current conservative regime in Iran is strongly anti-American, Hezbollah is quite possibly even more so. As Hezbollah's General-Secretary Hassan Nasrallah put it a few years ago, "Let the entire world hear me. Our hostility to the Great Satan is absolute…Regardless of how the world has changed after 11 September, Death to America will remain our reverberating and powerful slogan: Death to America."[244]

Strategy

Elements of both the "volcano" and "inspirational" strategies of the past quarter century are clearly evident in Iran's current effort to "export" the revolution—most especially in Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank, and Iraq. In the wake of successful US-led regime changes in neighboring Afghanistan and Iraq, it appears that Iran is also putting a stronger emphasis on two other strategic elements:

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[242] "Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Middle East Journal*, Spring 1980, p. 185.
[243] International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No. 69, "Hizbollah and the Lebanese Crisis," 10 October 2007, p. 18.
[244] President George W. Bush, "President Discusses Global War on Terror," Capital Hilton Hotel, White House Press Office, September 5, 2006; and Daniel Byman, "Should Hezbollah Be Next?" *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2003, p. 54.

- Weakening the "Great Satan" financially and military, as well as limiting American strategic freedom of maneuver; and

- Deterring the United States and its allies from attacking the Islamic Republic by fielding long-range ballistic missiles and anti-navy capabilities, as well as by vigorously pursuing development of nuclear weapons and cultivating terrorist proxies (e.g., Hezbollah) with the ability to strike US interests globally if Iran is threatened or attacked.

The volcano strategy is clearly the driver behind Iran's extensive support to Islamic "liberation movements," including not only Hezbollah, but also HAMAS, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC).[245] While all these groups advocate the liberation of oppressed Muslims, and thus are deserving of support under Iran's constitution, Hezbollah is a special case in that it explicitly calls for the creation of an Islamic state in Lebanon modeled on Iran, including direct clerical rule (*velayat-e faqih*). The active export of Iran's Islamic revolution—through political action, lethal and non-lethal support to Shiite militias and gangs, and the direct use of force—is also underway in Iraq.

The application of the "inspirational" strategy for exporting the revolution has, by necessity, changed form. In the past, the goal was to transform Iran into a compelling success story—a country with a booming economy, in which Islamic laws and values were protected, and where divinely rooted "justice" reigned. The reality, however, has been altogether different. Iran's economy is beset with difficulties: growth is anemic, per capita GNP has fallen by more than fifty percent since the revolution, inflation is officially 16 percent but probably closer to 25 percent, unemployment within the "active" work force is around 14 percent (and much higher among youth), and 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.246 In sum, the standard of living for the average Iranian has fallen precipitously since the Revolution. The denial of civil liberties under cleric-administered sharia law, moreover, has been a source of mounting popular discontent. Prostitution and drug use are both on the rise. With a track record of poor governance, corruption,

[245] United States Department of State—Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, April 2006), p. 173.
[246] CIA World Factbook.

and waning popular enthusiasm for the Revolution, the legitimacy of the regime is eroding. Today's Iran is far from a paragon of success. Given that reality, the government is emphasizing an alternative theme worthy of admiration—and thus, emulation, in the broader Muslim world: liberation of Muslim territory from "Zionist-Crusader" occupiers, including all of present-day Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

As a client of Iran, Hezbollah's strategy is, in part, to take whatever actions are required to support Iran's strategy. Hezbollah, for example, facilitates the export of the Revolution by training terrorists from a diverse array of groups in its camps in the Bekaa Valley. Hezbollah personnel are also working with Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corp (IRGC) and Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) personnel to train, equip, and advise Shi'a militia and "special groups" in Iraq and Iran.[247]

With respect to its local war against Israel, Hezbollah's strategy for victory is rather opaque. Hezbollah members believe that creating an Islamic state in Lebanon that encompasses the "1948 borders of Palestine" is a religious duty and are willing to carry on that God-sanctioned struggle for eternity. Hezbollah's overall strategy appears to be waging a war of exhaustion that, in time, convinces the "Zionist occupiers" that leaving Palestine is preferable to interminable casualties. To implement that strategy, Nasrallah seeks to strengthen and broaden his resource base by consolidating Hezbollah's recent political gains in Lebanon, attracting support from anti-Israel groups and charities across the Muslim world, diversifying Hezbollah's fund-raising network, and working with like-minded groups such as HAMAS, PIJ, and PFLP-GC. Above all else, it is imperative to maintain Hezbollah's sources of external support: Syria and Iran.

Lines of Operation

Iran is currently pursuing six lines of operations to implement its overarching strategy:

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[247] John F. Burns and Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. Says Iran Helped Iraqis Kill Five G.I.'s," *New York Times*, July 3, 2007, p. 1; Mark Hosenball, "Tehran's Secret 'Department 9000'," Newsweek, June 4, 2007; Robin Wright, "Iranian Flow of Weapons Increasing, Officials Say," *Washington Post*, June 3, 2007, p. 14; and James Glanz and Mark Mazzetti, "Iran May Have Trained Attackers That Killed 5 American Soldiers, U.S. and Iraqis Say," *New York Times*, January 31, 2007.

- Providing financial support, weapons and equipment, training, and other assistance to anti-Israel "liberation" movements—most notably, Hezbollah, operating primarily in Lebanon, Gaza, and the West Bank;

- Granting the senior leadership of al Qaeda, as well as other terrorist groups, sanctuary within Iran;

- Engaging in aggressive political action within Iraq to ensure that an Iran-friendly, Shiite-dominated government maintains its grip on the reins of power;

- Providing covert financial assistance, as well as both non-lethal and lethal aid to Shiite militia, gangs, and "special groups" in Iraq;

- Developing nuclear weapons.

Supporting Islamic "Liberation Movements"

Iran's MOIS, elements of the IRGC, and the Qods Force have been in the business of supporting terrorists groups for the past quarter century. As mentioned previously, while most of Iran's support flows to Hezbollah, it also provides extensive assistance to several other anti-Israeli terrorist groups: HAMAS, PIJ, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and the PFLP-GC. Qods Force personnel have had a strong presence in Lebanon since 1982, providing logistical support (i.e., overseeing weapon imports), training, intelligence support, and tactical advice. Prior to the recent conflict with Israel in July-August 2006, Iran reportedly had tens if not "hundreds" of technical advisors in Lebanon who trained Hezbollah fighters how to use modern anti-ship and anti-tank missiles, UAVs, and long-range rockets. During the conflict, they provided hands-on tactical "advice" to Hezbollah fighters.[248] IRGC personnel are strongly suspected of having directly operated some of the weapon systems (e.g., C-802 anti-ship cruise missiles) used in the conflict. Iranian funding

[248] The Iranian government has denied it has IRGC trainers or advisors in Lebanon. US intelligence officials have claimed that the IRGC presence was "in the hundreds" and Israeli intelligence has estimated it at "about 100." Bolstering the US and Israeli claims, several soldiers killed in southern Lebanon were found with Iranian identification papers. See David Fulghum and Douglas Barrie, "The Iranian Connection," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, August 14, 2006, p. 20; and "Iranians Advising Hezbollah On Use of Missiles, UAVs," *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report*, August 10, 2006.

to various "liberation" movements has fluctuated over time. Today, it is estimated that it provides $80-120 million annually to Hezbollah, $20-30 million annually to HAMAS, and lesser amounts to PIJ, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and the PFLP-GC.[249] In March 2007, the head of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, publicly declared that HAMAS personnel were being trained in Iran.[250] Iran presumably supports these groups for at least three reasons: liberation of Muslims from Jewish/Zionist oppression is one of the defining goals of the Republic and is enshrined in the Iranian Constitution; supporting these groups has tremendous propaganda value, reinforcing Iran's rhetorical claims to be the vanguard of a universal Islamic liberation movement; and, while the Iranian government does not necessarily "control" these groups, it has considerable influence over them—providing it with a powerful, yet deniable mechanism for threatening or attacking regional governments, as well as the United States and its allies.

Despite the fact that Sunni-based Salafi-Jihadi ideology has strong anti-Shi'a elements, which were highlighted by Zarqawi's statements and actions in Iraq, Iran has been willing to reach across the Sunni-Shi'a divide in attacking common enemies: apostate Muslim regimes and corrupt Western "Crusaders." Iran's support to al Qaeda reaches back well before September 11, 2001. In the 1990s, Qods Force personnel and Hezbollah operatives reportedly provided al Qaeda operatives explosives training in Lebanon. In the run-up to the attack to September 11th, Iran allowed AQ operatives—including at least eight of the terrorists involved in the actual attacks, to travel freely back and forth across the Iranian border into Afghanistan and Pakistan without documentation (a practice that is reportedly still going on today).[251]

[249] Jay Solomon and Karby Leggett, "Amid Ties to Iran, Hezbollah Builds Its Own Identity," *Wall Street Journal*, July 21, 2006, p. 1.
[250] Yuval Diskin, the head of Shin Bet, asserted that "We know that Hamas has started to dispatch people to Iran, tens, and a promise of hundreds." He characterized this training program as a "strategic danger, more than any weapons smuggled into Gaza." Steven Erlanger, "Israeli Says Iran is Training Hamas Men," *New York Times*, March 6, 2007, p. 8.
[251] Scott Paltrow, "9/11 Report on Tie to Iran May Raise Pressure on Bush," *Wall Street Journal*, July 19, 2004, p. 3; and Josh Meyer, "Some U.S. Officials Fear Iran is Helping Al Qaeda," *Los Angeles Times*, March 21, 2006, p. 1.

Granting Terrorists Sanctuary

In the wake of Operation Enduring Freedom, several high-ranking al Qaeda leaders and operatives escaped over the border into Iran. While many transited through Iran to other locations, "dozens" were detained, including several senior level figures: Saif al-Adel, the head of al Qaeda's Security Committee and a key operational planner; Mahfouz Ould Walid (Abu Hafs the Mauritanian); bin Laden's eldest son, Saad bin Laden, who was being groomed as his replacement; Yaaz bin Sifat, a senior-level planner; Abu Mohammad al-Masri, who masterminded the embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998 along with al-Adel and probably directed the attack on an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, Kenya in November 2002; Abdallah Mohammad Masri (Abu Khayer), the former head of al Qaeda's leadership council; Abdel Aziz Masri, a biological weapons expert who was responsible for al Qaeda's effort to acquire WMD; and Suleiman Abu Ghaith, a key media spokesmen. Reports vary widely on how much freedom of movement Iran has granted its al Qaeda "guests." Although Tehran has claimed that that they are under strict "house arrest," evidence to the contrary has piled up over time. According to several reports and his own Internet postings, Saif al-Adel not only has access to telecommunications, but is also able to meet regularly with operatives from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan who are given free passage over the border by Iranian authorities. While a "guest" in Iran, Saif al-Adel reportedly helped plan and organize the suicide bombings in Saudi Arabia in May 2003 and several attacks in Europe.[252] Other reports indicate that an al Qaeda hub, separate from the senior leaders detained in 2002, has been established in

[252] Most al Qaeda guests are believed to be staying in hotels and guesthouses in Mashhad, Zabol, Zahedan, and possibly Tehran under the supervision of MOIS and the IRGC. In 2005, Saif al-Adel posted a lengthy dispatch on operations in Iraq and Iran on a jihadist website, which among other things detailed how he was able to meet repeatedly with Zarqawi and his lieutenants. See Peter Finn, "Al Qaeda Deputies Harbored by Iran," *Washington Post*, August 28, 2002, p. 1; Aamir Latif, "Al Qaeda Said to Have Migrated to Iran," *Washington Times*, July 6, 2003, p.1; Bill Gertz, "Al Qaeda Terrorists Being Held by Iran," *Washington Times*, July 24, 2003; Robin Wright, "U.S. Ends Talks with Iran over Al Qaeda Links," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 2003, p. 1; Barbara Slavin, "Iran Might Swap Terrorists for Help From U.S.," *USA Today*, August 4, 2003, p. 7; John Mintz, "Saudi Says Iran Drags Feet Returning Al Qaeda Leaders," *Washington Post*, August 12, 2003, p. 2; Bill Gertz, "CIA Points to Continuing Iran Tie to Al Qaeda," *Washington Times*, July 23, 2004; Josh Meyer, "Some U.S. Officials Fear Iran is Helping Al Qaeda," *Los Angeles Times*, March 21, 2006, p. 1; and Kenneth Katzman, *Al Qaeda: Profile and Threat Assessment*, CRS Report for Congress, RL33038, p. 6.

Iran as a bridge between al Qaeda central in Waziristan and AQI.[253] It has also been alleged that AQ training camps may have been established in eastern Iran.[254]

Part of the reason that Iran has extended a *de facto* sanctuary to al Qaeda leaders is almost certainly the fact that its core goals—the eviction of military forces and corrupting foreign influences from Muslim lands, the overthrow of apostate regimes, and the extension of true Islamic rule over all current and former Muslim lands (including Israel)—are broadly consistent with its own. While Iran's strategic vision differs in many important respects (e.g., the notion of a Sunni "caliphate" is anathema to Shi'a), al Qaeda provides a useful instrument for realizing the Revolution's ultimate goal of a *sharia*-based Islamic utopia. Supporting al Qaeda in the short run, while unpalatable, is arguably strategically expedient. Second, the "guests" also serve as hostages: if AQI's sectarian attacks get out of control, Tehran can always threaten to hand over its guests to the United States or extradite them to their country of origin. As mentioned already, this point of leverage has been explicitly recognized by al Qaeda "central." Third, the al Qaeda "guests" also provide Tehran with a bargaining chip with the West. If the economic and diplomatic pressure on Iran gets too intense over its defiance of UN Security Council demands to abandon its clandestine nuclear program and come into full compliance with its NPT obligations, for example, Tehran could attempt to ease it by turning them over.

Engaging in Aggressive Political Action

Iran has pursued a two-track policy in Iraq since 2003: officially supporting stabilization and economic development; and unofficially expanding its political influence with Iraqi Shiite political parties and, as will detailed below, by providing covert support to armed Shiite militias and gangs that are responsible for much of the sectarian strife in Iraq. Many leaders of two of Iraq's main Shiite parties, the SCIRI (recently renamed SIIC) and Islamic Da'wa, spent several years in exile in Iran before returning to Iraq in 2003. Iran has also dramatically increased its influence with the "Sadr Organization," a radical, homegrown Shiite political party led by Muqtada al-Sadr. Iran is actively expanding its already considerable influence among these groups by

[253] Stephen Fidler, "Al-Qaeda Linked to Operations for Iran," *Financial Times*, July 7, 2007.
[254] Bill Gertz, "Inside the Ring—Bin Laden Hunt," *Washington Times*, July 20, 2007, p. 6.

funding and providing logistical support for their vast network of social services (e.g., churches, schools, hospitals, and various charities), most especially in southern Iraq; funding the campaigns of scores of Shi'a candidates; and promoting Shi'a candidates on the airwaves with its popular satellite television network, al Aalam. Iran's efforts appear to have paid off. In the December 2005 elections for the National Assembly, the United Iraqi Alliance—which comprised SCIRI, al-Dawa, the Sadr Organization, and several smaller Shiite political parties—won 41 percent of the vote and gained control of 128 out of 275 seats. SCIRI/SIIC and the Badr Organization currently hold a total of 36 parliamentary seats. Members of Shiite political groups also control the majority of Iraqi government ministries. SCIRI/SIIC and its militias, for example, have, in effect, taken over the Interior Ministry, while the Sadr Organization controls the Ministries of Agriculture, Tourism, Health, and Transportation.[255] Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki also serves as the deputy leader of Islamic Da'wa.

As just one of many examples of how close the relationship between Iraqi Shiite parties and Tehran has become, on February 22, 2006, when the Golden Dome mosque (Askariya shrine) in Samarra was attacked by al Qaeda, SCIRI allegedly issued a statement, signed by its head, Abul al-Aziz al-Hakim, that read in part:

> We have accomplished many goals in the past three years including dominating security forces in the country, avenging injustice from the Ba'ath party, and weeding out many Salafis. However, our struggle has just started. I urge you, Shiites, brothers and sisters, to join me in achieving our noble goals: *establishing the Shiite state in Iraq and the neighboring Arab states in order to be faithful to the Grand Ayatollah Khomeini's message: spreading God's word all over the world.*[256]

[255] The four ministries headed by the Sadr Organization had control over 70,000 uniformed, armed men belonging to the Facilities Protection Service in early 2006. According to some reports, the Facilities Protection Service subsequently ballooned in size to 140,000 men, most with links to either the Badr Corps or the Mahdi Army. See Ellen Knickmeyer, "Shiite Giant Extends Its Reach," *Washington Post*, August 24, 2006, p. 1.

[256] Emphasis added. See Hamad Nazzal, "Iraqi Mujahideen Incite Further Sectarian Violence," *Terrorism Focus*, February 28, 2006, Volume III, Issue 8, p. 1.

Providing Non-Lethal and Lethal Aid to Shiite Groups in Iraq

In addition to its aggressive political action campaign in Iraq, Iran is providing training, weapons and equipment, logistical assistance, and financial support to the Shiite militias, most notably, the Badr Corps and Mahdi Army/JAM.[257] This support is being provided quasi-covertly by the IRGC's elite Qods Force and MOIS officers. By providing Shiite militias with arms—including 240-mm rockets and more lethal improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that use explosively formed projectiles (EFPs) to penetrate armored vehicles—since at least as early as 2005, Iran is responsible for an ever-growing number of US and Coalition casualties.[258] While the validity of the link between the Iranian government and the appearance of Iranian-made weapons in Iraq was debated in US Congress and media as late as January-February 2007, it is now firmly established.[259] The National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq released in August 2007 reported that "Iran has been intensifying aspects of its lethal support for select groups of Iraqi Shia militants, particularly the JAM, since at least the beginning of 2006" and judged that over the next year, Tehran "will continue to provide funding, weaponry, and training to Iraqi Shia militants" to counter perceived Sunni resurgence and US efforts to limit Iranian influence.[260]

Although estimates vary, the combined strength of the Badr Corps and Mahdi Army is measured in the tens of thousands of full-time fighters and several times that number of part-time, "reserve"

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[257] The Badr Corps, which began as the Badr Brigade, was organized, trained, and equipped by the IRGC's Qods Force in Iran and possibly in Lebanon prior to 2003. The Mahdi Army is believed to have gained access to unguarded Iraqi ammunition dumps in the immediate fall of the Hussein regime from which they acquired light weapons, submachine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. For an excellent overview of Iran's influence within Iraq, see: Vali Nasr, "When the Shiites Rise," *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2006, pp. 60–66.

[258] Michael Gordon, "U.S. Long Worried Iran Supplied Weapons in Iraq," New York Times, March 27, 2007, p. 11.

[259] Michael Gordon, "Deadliest Bomb in Iraq is Made by Iran, U.S. Says," New York Times, February 10, 2007, p. 1; Joshue Partlow, "Military Ties Iran to Arms in Iraq," *Washington Post*, February 12, 2007, p. 1; James Glanz, "U.S. Says Arms Link Iranians to Iraqi Shiites," *New York Times*, February 12, 2007, p. 1; and Josuhu Partlow, "Iran's Elite Forces is Said to Use Hezbollah as "Proxy" in Iraq," *Washington Post*, July 3, 2007, p. 8.

[260] National Intelligence Council, *NIE—Prospects for Iraq's Stability: Some Security Progress but Political Reconciliation Remains Elusive* (Washington, DC: NIC, 2007), pp. 3–4.

fighters.[261] Splinter groups and "death squads" have spun off from both the Badr Corps and Mahdi Army.[262] These radicalized groups operate largely independently from political control and have taken it upon themselves to assassinate Sunni leaders and carry out myriad terror attacks against Sunni Iraqis in the name of Islam, including mass kidnappings and execution-style killings, forced evictions, and indiscriminate car bombings. Shiite "death squads," mostly those linked to the Mahdi Army, were a major driver of the sectarian strife that raged across the country, especially in Baghdad, in 2006.[263] Exacerbating the problem, there have been numerous reports that the Shiite-controlled Interior Ministry, which has been penetrated by both militias, has been complicit in many of the killings.[264] The Badr Corps, the Mahdi Army, and spin-off Shiite gangs also target Iraqi military and police forces, as well as Coalition military forces. The Mahdi Army, in particular, has fought several pitched battles with US, British, and Iraqi forces, including a series of offensives in 2004 in Karbala, Najaf, and Sadr City. Shiite militias have targeted Iraqi oil infrastructure, corporate facilities and local businesses deemed "un-Islamic," such as liquor stores.

According to some reports, the Qods Force has deployed as many as several hundred operatives to Iraq, who are reportedly organized into

[261] According to IRGC documents recovered by the media, as of August 2004, Iran was paying the salaries of at least 11,740 members of the Badr Corps. The Mahdi Army is believed to comprise at least 10,000 full-time active fighters who can be reinforced by the rapid mobilization of several times that number. See Iason Athanasiadis, "Iran's Presence Shadowy in Iraq," *Washington Times*, April 26, 2006, p. 16; and Michael Ware, "Inside Iran's Secret War for Iraq," Time, August 22, 2005, p. 26.

[262] According to senior US military and intelligence officials, the United States has identified at least 23 militias operating in Iraq, most of them Shiite. Sudarsan Raghavan, "Militias Splintering Into Radicalized Cells," *Washington Post*, October 19, 2006, p. 1.

[263] Iran may be funding some of these death squads. Solomon Moore, "Iraq Impeding Efforts to Go After Shiite Militias, U.S. Military Says," *Los Angeles Times*, September 28, 2006; Solomon Moore, "Killings by Shiite Militias Detailed," *Los Angeles Times*, September 28, 2006; and Sabrina Tavernise, "Cleric is Said to Lose Reins Over Part of Iraqi Militia," *New York Times*, September 28, 2006.

[264] Under pressure from Western officials and some Iraqi political leaders, the Iraqi Minister of the Interior, Jawad al Bolani, reshuffled the ministry's senior leadership and purged some 3,000 employees charged with corruption and rights abuses. As of the writing of this report, however, it is unclear whether these efforts have had any meaningful effect on the ground. David Rising, "3,000 Ministry Staffers Fired Over Corruption," *Washington Times*, October 15, 2006, p. 6; Kirk Semple and Michael Luo, "Iraqi Interior Minister to Purge Agency to Stem Killings," *New York Times*, October 14, 2006, p. 5.

10-20 man teams. These teams, which operate in concert with Hezbollah trainers and fighters, are training, equipping, and advising so-called "special groups" formed from Shiite militias to conduct attacks against US and Coalition forces.[265] Beginning in December 2006, US forces began raiding buildings being used by the Qods Force, seizing reams of documents, computer files, and other physical evidence implicating the government of Iran in supporting the Iraqi insurgency. Several Iranians were also detained, including Brigadier General Mohsen Chirazi, the third most-senior official in the Qods Force.[266] In a March raid, Ali Musa Daqduq, who has worked for Hezbollah since 1983, was captured. He reportedly confessed that Hezbollah leaders ordered him to travel to Iran and in May 2006, based on instructions received from IRGC Qods Force commanders, his secret Department 2800 began training Iraqi Shiite militia men and organizing them into "special groups" modeled after Hezbollah cells in Lebanon. This training effort apparently included at least three camps near Tehran, at which Department 2800 personnel trained 20-60 Iraqis at a time, as well as an unspecified number of camps within Iraq.[267] In August 2007, Major General Rick Lynch, the commander of US operations south of Baghdad, announced that some 50 Qods Force personnel were training Shiite militias south of Baghdad.[268] In light of these revelations, General David Petraeus asserted in his September 2007 report on the status of the situation in Iraq:

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[265] The estimated size of Qods Force presence ranges from about 100, to a very specific "280," to nearly 500. The Lebanese Hezbollah training contingent is referred to as "Department 2800." According to the Iraq Survey Group, in 2003, Iran reportedly placed "a bounty on U.S. forces of U.S. $2,000 for each helicopter shot down, $1,000 for each tank destroyed, and $500 for each U.S. military personnel killed." Mark Hosenball, "Rise of a Secret Unit," *Newsweek*, October 1, 2007; Michael Ware, "Inside Iran's Secret War for Iraq," *Time*, August 22, 2005, p. 26; and Edward Pound, "The Iran Connection," U.S. *News & World Reports*, November 22, 2004. See also: Rowan Scarborough, "Rumsfeld Accuses Iranians of Fomenting Violence in Iraq," *Washington Times*, March 8, 2006, p. 11; Stephan Dinan, "Bush Says Iran Bombs Used in Iraq," *Washington Times*, March 14, 2006, p. 1; and *Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq's WMD*, September 30, 2004.

[266] Robin Wright and Nancy Trejos, "U.S. Troops Raid 2 Iranian Targets in Iraq, Detain 5 People," *Washington Post*, January 12, 2007, p. 16.

[267] With the arrest of Mahmudi Farhadi in September 2007, a total of six senior-level Qods Force personnel were being held in Iraq. Partlow, "Iran's Elite Forces is Said to Use Hezbollah as "Proxy" in Iraq," p. 8; Scott Peterson and Nicholas Blanford, "A Gauge or Iran's Hand in Iraq," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 5, 2007; and Robin Wright, "General Says 5 Iranians Should Stay in Custody," *Washington Post*, October 5, 2007, p. 16.

[268] Megan Greenwell, "Iran Trains Militiamen Inside Iraq, U.S. Says," *Washington Post*, August 20, 2007, p. 11.

> It is increasingly apparent to both Coalition and Iraqi leaders that Iran, through the use of the Qods Force, seeks to turn the Iraqi Special Groups into a Hezbollah-like force to serve its interests and fight a proxy war against the Iraqi state and coalition forces in Iraq.[269]

Iran's MOIS is also active in Iraq. According to a leaked US Army intelligence assessment, written at the end of 2003, "Iranian intelligence agents are conducting operations in every major city with a significant Shia population. The counterintelligence threat from Iran is assessed to be high, as locally employed people, former military officers, politicians, and young men are recruited, hired, and trained by Iranian intelligence to collect on coalition forces."[270]

For the past four years, the US government has been reluctant to charge publicly that the senior Iranian political leadership approved of the activities of the Qods Force and MOIS in Iraq. Whether authorization reached above the head of the Qods Force, Brigadier General Qassem Suleimani, was left ambiguous. The uncertainty was at least partially dispelled in October 2007 by a senior State Department official who asserted that "there is no question in our minds whatsoever" that the IRGC and its subordinate Qods Force "are very much under the direction and command of the most senior levels of the Iranian government. Full stop."[271]

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[269] General David H. Petraeus, "Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq," Multi-National Force-Iraq, September 10–11, 2007, p. 4. See also: See also: Dr. Thomas Fingar, Deputy Director for Analysis, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Global Security Assessment" testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, July 11, 2007, pp. 10–11.

[270] Edward T. Pound, "The Iran Connection," *U.S. News & World Reports,* November 22, 2004.

[271] In late 2007, Iran apparently suspended some of its support to Iraqi Shiite militias. In early January 2008, a spokesman for the US military command in Iraq stated that, "we are ready to confirm the excellence of the senior Iranian leadership in their pledge to stop the funding, training, equipment and resourcing of the militia special groups." There have been several reports, however, that covert Iranian support continues to flow into Iraq. Reflecting that, the US Department of Treasury imposed sanctions on Iranian Brigadier General Adhmed Foruzandeh, the head of Qods Force operations in Iraq, for allegedly directing the assassination of Iraqis and working with MOIS to provoke sectarian violence in Iraq. See Paul Richter, "U.S.: Top Iranians Direct Iraq Missions," *Los Angeles Times*, October 24, 2007; Sara Carter, "Iran No Longer Aids Iraq Militants," *Washington Times*, January 3, 2008, p. 1; and Robin Wright, "Top Iranian General Hit with Sanctions," *Washington Post*, January 10, 2008, p. 15.

In essence, Iran is trying to transplant Hezbollah to Iraqi soil—the parallels between Iranian operations in southern Lebanon in the 1980s and ongoing activities in Iraq are striking. Iran's support to Shiite militias and covert direct action against US and Coalition forces is consistent with an overarching strategy of weakening the "Great Satan" and dampening US enthusiasm for pursuing regime change in Iran.[272] It also adds depth to Iran's growing political influence in Iraq and quite possibly to its stature in the broader Muslim world. Given those strategic benefits, Iran may use its Shiite militia surrogates and direct presence (Qods Force and MOIS) to sustain an environment of "controlled chaos" in Iraq in order to keep as many US forces tied down for as long as possible. That being said, it is not in Iran's interest to foment an all-out civil war in Iraq, which would likely pull in neighboring powers such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia. A full-blown civil war could also spill over into Sunni enclaves within Iran: Kurds in the Azarbayjan e-Gharbi and Kordestan provinces, Arabs along the Persian Gulf Coast, and Baluchs in the Sistan va Baluchistan province adjacent to Pakistan. Finally, Iran also has an interest in protecting Shi'a holy sites throughout Iraq, which would likely come under attack if the sectarian violence spiraled out of control. As former Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Maleki put it, "if your neighbor's house is on fire, it means your home is also in danger."[273] Keeping the current chaos under "control" in Iraq, however, may prove difficult—or to borrow Maleki's metaphor, ongoing Iranian efforts to keep the coals of sectarian violence smoldering in Iraq could inadvertently stoke a raging fire that Tehran is unable to contain.

Pursuing the Clandestine Development of Nuclear Weapons

The final line of operation being pursued by Iran is the clandestine development of a nuclear weapons capability. While the latter may appear at first glance to be an altogether separate issue from Iranian involvement in the war on terrorism, the two are, in fact, very much linked. The acquisition of even a small number of nuclear weapons would be strategically advantageous for exporting the revolution—both through active measures (the "volcano" strategy) and by serving as an inspirational model. A nuclear-armed Iran would almost certainly have a freer hand to ratchet up it promotion of Shi'a activism and "anti-Zionist" activities throughout the region, to include supporting myriad terrorist groups in

[272] Vali Nasr, "When the Shiites Rise," *Foreign Affairs*, July–August 2006, p. 66.
[273] Ibid, p. 69.

the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Iraq. Fear of nuclear retaliation would likely deter the United States, Israel, and predominantly Sunni Arab states from directly attacking the Islamic Republic of Iran. The possession of nuclear weapons would, in short, go a long way toward ensuring the long-term survival of the Islamic "model" created by Khomeini. Perhaps even more importantly, the successful development and testing of an atomic device would dramatically and immediately elevate Iran's stature in the eyes of the Muslim world. As an impressive illustration of technological achievement, a nuclear test would give Iran's "inspirational" model a badly needed shot in the arm. Its impact would be heightened by the fact that Iran accomplished the feat in the face of strong Western opposition.

Iran has repeatedly disavowed that it has any intention to develop a nuclear weapon, claiming to be interested solely in peaceful nuclear energy. The official position of the US intelligence community is that "Iran is intent on developing a nuclear weapon."[274] In response to a series of critical reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and supporting intelligence reports, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1747 in March 2007, imposing mandatory, but modest sanctions on Iran.[275] Frustrated by stalled efforts at the United Nations to impose tougher sanctions, the US government imposed unilateral sanctions against Iran in October 2007, including official designations of the IRGC as a WMD proliferator and the Qods Force as a supporter of international terrorism. Among other punitive steps, the sanctions call for foreign countries and companies to stop doing business with four of Iran's largest financial institutions (i.e., Bank Melli, Bank Mellat, Bank Saderat, and Bank Kargoshaee) or risk US sanctions.[276] As a result of

[274] John Diamond, "U.S. Intelligence Agencies Say Iran is Years Away from Building a Nuke," *USA Today*, April 14, 2006, p. 6.

[275] Resolution 1747 freezes the overseas assets of 15 Iranian citizens and 13 organizations linked to Iran's nuclear program, missile development effort, and the IRGC. It also prohibits the sale or transfer of Iranian weapons to any nation or organization, and calls on nations of the world to "exercise vigilance and restraint" in exporting weapons to Iran. See: http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/281/40/PDF/N0728140.pdf?OpenElement. See also: Thom Shanker, "Security Council Votes to Tighten Iran Sanctions," *New York Times*, March 25, 2007, p. 1.

[276] Neil King, "Iran Action Stalls at U.N.," *Wall Street Journal*, September 29, 2007, p. 5; Robin Wright, "U.S. To Impose New Sanctions Targeting Iran's Military," *Washington Post*, October 25, 2007, p. 1; Michael Abramowitz and Robin Wright, "Iran Sanctions Are Meant to Prevent war, Bush Aides Say," Washington Post, October 26, 2007, p. 17; and Helene Cooper, "U.S. Plays Its 'Unilateral' Card on Iran Sanctions," *New York Times*, October 26, 2007.

Tehran's deliberate shifting of trade from West to East over the past several years (e.g., China is expected to surpass Germany as Iran's largest trading partner this year) and record high oil prices, Iran will likely be able to withstand both US sanctions and those imposed under UN Resolution 1747.[277]

Since its clandestine enrichment program was first revealed in April 2003, Iran has resisted international diplomatic pressure, adeptly managing to stall serious consideration of the issue by the UN Security Council for more than three years with frequently repeated cycles of expressing interest in negotiations followed by bombastic defiance. Given repeated public commitments by President Ahmadinejad to Iran's "right" to develop nuclear energy, which has actually boosted his popularity at home, continued Iranian defiance of the UN Security Council and the broader international community is probable. For Ahmadinejad, who has publicly staked out a very clear position that elevates Iran's development of nuclear technology to an issue of national sovereignty, the domestic political cost of capitulation would be high.

Although Iran has successfully demonstrated the ability to slightly enrich uranium using a 164-centrifuge cascade at the Natanz complex, it has reportedly had difficulty setting up and operating a larger cascade.[278] Estimates vary widely on how long it may take Iran to develop an atomic device. Assuming Iran has not successfully hidden other uranium enrichment facilities or otherwise acquired fissile material, the conventional wisdom appears to be that it will take roughly 5–10 years to develop, build, and test a weapon.[279]

[277] Steven Mufson and Robin Wright, "Iran Adapts to Economic Pressure," *Washington Post*, October 29, 2007, p. 1.

[278] The Natanz facility is designed to accommodate as many as 50,000 gas centrifuges.

[279] In May 2005, the Intelligence Community assessed with "moderate confidence" that Iran is "unlikely" to make a nuclear weapon "before early-to-mid next decade." In a contentious summary of a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran's nuclear intentions and capabilities released in November 2007, the National Intelligence Council (NIC) substantially revised that assessment, stating: "We judge with moderate confidence that the earliest possible date Iran would be technically capable of producing enough highly enriched uranium (HEU) for a weapon is late 2009, but that this is very unlikely. We judge with moderate confidence Iran probably would be technically capable of producing enough HEU for a weapon sometime during the 2010–2015 timeframe." National Intelligence Council, "Iran: Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities," National Intelligence Estimate, November 2007. See also: John Diamond, "U.S. Intelligence Agencies Say Iran is Years Away from Building a Nuke," p. 6; William Broad, Nazila Fathi, and Joel Brinkley, "Analysts Say a Nuclear Iran is Years Away," *New York Times*, April 13, 2006, p. 1.

Between now and when Iran is able to test an atomic device, assuming that is in fact Tehran's intention, the development program is in jeopardy because of increased international scrutiny of nuclear-related exports, mounting economic and diplomatic pressure, and the prospect of military intervention.[280] During this period of vulnerability, Iran will almost certainly use its proxies and direct presence in Lebanon and Iraq as coercive levers against the West, threatening to ratchet up the violence in either or both places if the UN Security Council imposes economic and diplomatic sanctions beyond those imposed in March 2007. Borrowing a page from North Korea's playbook, Iran may try to buy as much time for the program as possible through diplomatic maneuvering, which would likely feature repeated expressions of interest in resolving the situation through peaceful negotiations that are ultimately disavowed after months of drawn out talks. Finally, Iran may also step up its ongoing fielding of "anti-access" capabilities (e.g., intermediate-range ballistic missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, mine-laying capabilities, and diesel-electric attack submarines) to increase the anticipated military and economic costs of attacking Iran's nuclear-related facilities. To deter such attacks, Iran could, for example, threaten to hit civilian and military targets in the attacking state, as well as in any state that allows its territory to be over-flown during the attack, with ballistic missiles. Tehran could also threaten to interdict maritime commerce (i.e., oil exports) travelling through the Strait of Hormuz.

[280] In the November 2007 NIE cited above, the NIC stated that, "we judge with high confidence that in fall 2003, Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program; we also assess with moderate-to-high confidence that Tehran at a minimum is keeping open the option to develop nuclear weapons." That "key finding," however, can be easily misinterpreted in that the NIE narrowly defined Iran's "nuclear weapons program" in a footnote to be its "nuclear weapon design and weaponization work and covert uranium conversion-related and uranium enrichment-related work." Iran's declared "civil" uranium enrichment program at Natanz, which could easily be re-directed toward the development of a nuclear weapon, was excluded. The NIE has been strongly critiqued by Israeli intelligence, as well as several well-respected Iranian experts. Steven Erlanger and Isabel Kershner, "Israel Insists That Iran Still Seeks A Bomb," *New York Times*, December 5, 2007, p. 1; Thom Shanker, "Gates Sees Iran as Still-Serious Threat," *New York Times*, December 9, 2007; and John Bolton, "The Flaws in the Iran Report," *Washington Post*, December 6, 2007, p. 29.

Capabilities

Since Iran and Hezbollah are so closely linked, their capabilities for supporting and conducting terrorism will be addressed together. In addition, since the power base of the Iran-Hezbollah nexus is much different than that of the al Qaeda movement discussed earlier, some of the topics addressed below are arranged differently—some new topics have been added and others dropped. For this assessment, for example, it is not very useful to examine Iran's "fundraising" capabilities; as a nation-state, its financial resources are more than adequate for funding global terrorist operations. While Hezbollah has raised funds from Islamic charities and wealthy patrons around the world, including in Europe and the United States, its dominant source of funding and material support is Iran, and to a lesser extent, Syria. Also, while the al Qaeda movement does not have what would be considered irregular military units or special forces, Iran and Hezbollah employ such units on a regular basis in support of terrorist operations.

Leadership

It is beyond the scope of this assessment to delve into the details of the leadership structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Basic overviews of the Iranian government bureaucracy are widely available.[281] A few points, however, are worth making. Administratively, both the IRGC and MOIS technically fall under the control of President Ahmadinejad, who is an ultra-conservative, anti-Western, second-generation hard-liner. In practice, however, the IRGC and MOIS are controlled by Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Hoseini Khamenei. Although appointed by an elected body, the Assembly of Experts, the Supreme Leader is, in effect, answerable to no one. His enumeration of powers is extensive, including the power to appoint and dismiss the commander of the IRGC, as well as members of the Supreme National Security Council, which oversees the implementation of Khamenei's defense and security policies. Khamenei, who is strongly backed by the IRGC, came to power in June 1989 following the death of Ayatollah Khomeini and is generally considered to be more moderate than President Ahmadinejad.

The Majlis al-Shura, or Consultative Council, is Hezbollah's highest governing body. This seven-member group makes strategic

[281] See, for example: https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ir.html

decisions in all areas of legislative, executive, judicial, political, and military affairs. Decisions are made by a simple majority vote. Since 1992, the Secretary-General of the Majlis al-Shura has been Hasan Nasrallah, who is a charismatic leader with growing popularity not only in Lebanon, but the broader Muslim world.

Military and Intelligence

As has been mentioned already, Iran's primary instruments for supporting and conducting terrorism globally are the IRGC Qods Force and MOIS. They are known to have provided support to Hezbollah, HAMAS, Islamic Jihad, al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and PFLP-GC.

Under the Iranian Constitution, the IRGC is responsible not only for defending Iran's borders, but also for "holy war in the way of God and fighting to expand the rule of God's law in the world." While the IRGC comprises traditional army, air force, and navy branches, as well as special forces, the principal IRGC unit for terrorism-related activity is the Qods Force (Jerusalem Force). It is believed to comprise roughly 15,000 "paramilitary" personnel. While most are based in Iran, there are relatively large units deployed to Lebanon and Iraq, and smaller contingents deployed in Europe and elsewhere. Qods personnel provide a full range of covert support to terrorist groups, including basic and specialized training, tactical-operational planning, intelligence support, target surveillance, logistics (weapons and equipment), communications, and advising in the field. Training activities are generally conducted in Iran or the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon. In addition to supporting terrorist groups, Qods Force personnel conduct direct-action missions (i.e., assassinating "enemies" of the Republic) and propaganda activities globally.

The Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS)—which is frequently referred to using the Farsi acronym "VEVAK," standing for *Vezarat-e Ettela'at va Amniat-e Keshvar*, was created in 1984. While estimates on the size of MOIS vary widely, it probably comprises between 5,000 and 10,000 personnel. According to the act of Parliament creating MOIS, it is charged with "gathering, procurement, analysis, and classification of necessary information inside and outside the country." While it conducts routine intelligence service missions, (e.g., foreign intelligence collection, counter-intelligence, counter-espionage, and internal security), it has two more unusual missions: monitoring

dissidents and regime opposition groups outside of Iran, and supporting terrorist groups. With respect to the latter mission, it primarily provides covert funding, logistical support, specialized training, intelligence support, and planning assistance.

Hezbollah's military wing is believed to number approximately 1,000 experienced, well-trained "fighters" plus an additional 3,000 to 10,000 "reservists" who can be quickly mustered when needed.[282] While Hezbollah operates primarily in the Bekaa Valley, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and southern Lebanon, it is believed to have active cells in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, South America, North America, and Asia—giving it global reach.[283] As the Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte warned in Congressional testimony, Hezbollah "has a worldwide support network and is capable of attacks against US interests if its feels its Iranian patron is threatened."[284] In addition to its own efforts to liberate all Palestinian land from unjust Jewish occupation, Hezbollah supports several Palestinian terrorist organizations. According to the US Department of State, "This support includes the covert provision of weapons, explosives, training, funding, and guidance, as well as overt political support."[285]

In addition to a demonstrated ability to carry out lethal car and truck bombings (e.g., October 1983 Beirut bombings and the Khobar Towers bombing in June 1996), aircraft hijacking, and abducting and executing Westerners, Hezbollah has developed an impressive array of more traditional, "irregular" warfare capabilities.[286] It can conduct coordinated, simultaneous small-unit (company-size and below) "light infantry" type operations, including extended raids and ambushes against mechanized, armored forces. As was vividly demonstrated during the July–August 2006 clash with Israeli Defense Forces, Hezbollah has been well armed by Iran and Syria. Its arsenal includes:

[282] The official US Department of State estimate is "a few hundred terrorist operatives" and "several thousand members." *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005*, p. 199.
[283] Hezbollah has a large presence in Gaza, the West Bank, and southern Iraq. Operatives have also been found in Argentina, France, Spain, Cyprus, Singapore, the tri-border region of South America, and the Philippines. Byman, "Should Hezbollah Be Next?," p. 58.
[284] John D. Negroponte, Director of National Intelligence, "Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligences," Statement before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 2, 2006, p. 13.
[285] *Country Reports on Terrorism—April 2006*, p. 197.
[286] "Hezbollah's Improved Arsenal," Special Report, Military Periscope.com, July 21, 2006.

- Thousands of unguided artillery rockets with calibers ranging from less than 100 mm up to 122 mm;[287]

- 100s of larger caliber rockets with heavier warheads and longer striking ranges, such as the Fajr-3 and Fajr-5 with a 45-km range and 75-km range, respectively;[288]

- Dozens of ballistic missiles, including the Iranian-built Zelzal-2 (or "Earthquake") that has a range of over 200 km, can carry a 600-kg warhead, and has rudimentary inertial guidance;[289]

- Large numbers of Russian-made, man-portable, surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), including the SA-7 and SA-14, probably the SA-16, and possibly the SA-18;

- As many as eight Iranian-supplied UAVs (e.g., Mirsad-1 and Ababil-3) that can carry 30-40 kg of payload to a maximum, one-way distance of 300-km;[290]

- An unspecified number of anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs), including an Iranian version of the Chinese C-802 radar-guided,

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[287] Prior to the summer 2006 clash with Israel, Hezbollah was estimated to have between 10,000 and 15,000 short-range rockets, primarily Katyusha rockets with a 12–18 mile range. Approximately 3,500 were expended and Israel claims to have destroyed an additional 1,600; in which case, Hezbollah's current inventory would in range of 5,000–10,000 rockets. Its stocks, however, will almost certainly be quickly replenished by Iran and Syria.

[288] Prior to the summer 2006 clash with Israel, Hezbollah was believed to have a total of 24–30 Fajr-3 launchers, each capable of carrying up to 14 rockets; and approximately 24–30 Fajr-5 launchers, each armed with 4 rockets. Its rough inventory in this class, therefore, was 432–540 missiles plus an unspecified number of re-loads. According to Israeli sources, most of the Fajr-3/-5 launchers were destroyed in the opening week of the conflict. Peter Spiegel and Laura King, "Israel Says Syria, Not Just Iran, Supplied Missiles to Hezbollah," *Los Angeles Times*, August 31, 2006, p. 1; Ken Ellingwood, "Hezbollah Wields Improved Arsenal," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 2006.

[289] The Zelzal-2 missile is a road-mobile, solid-fueled rocket that is closely related to the Russian FROG-7. The Zelzal-1 has a range of 125 km with a 600-kg warhead. Fulghum and Barrie, "The Iranian Connection," p. 22; Alon Ben-David, "Iran 'Supplied Zelzal-2 Rockets to Hizbullah'," *Janes Defence Weekly*, August 16, 2006, p. 5; and Military Periscope.com database entry for "Zelzal-2 SRBM."

[290] Alon Ben-David, "Israel Shoots Down Hizbullah UAV," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, August 16, 2006, p. 6.

solid-fueled rocket/turbojet system with a range of up to 120 km and 155-kg blast-fragmentation warhead;[291]

- Advanced Russian-made RPGs, including 105-mm RPG-29 or "Vampire" with an aimed range of 500 meters and a 6-kg projectile that can be fired by a single fighter and can be used effectively against armored vehicles and buildings; and

- Wire- and laser-guided anti-tank missiles, including Russian Kornet-E and Metis-M missile from Syria, and Russian AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot, and AT-5 Spandrel missiles from Iran.

Recruitment, Indoctrination, and Training

Scant open-source information is available on Iranian recruitment for the Qods Force and MOIS. It is almost certain, however, that commitment to the ideals of the Revolution and loyalty to the regime (or more specifically, to Supreme Leader Khamenei) are critical factors. In a sense, Iranians are indoctrinated throughout their life as a result of their exposure to a cleric-controlled educational system, state-supervised prayer at mosques, state-run media, and constant, pervasive propaganda extolling the ideals of the revolution and demonizing the West, and the United States and Israel, in particular. Iran has extensive military and paramilitary training facilities within its borders, and can also sub-contract training to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Iran recruits and indoctrinates foreign jihadis through an extensive media campaign, including radio broadcasts; an endless flow of publications on Islamic thought, both in hardcopy and on the Internet; and distribution of tapes, compact disks, and DVDs with multimedia content. The Iranian government also regularly organizes and hosts conferences, bringing in Islamic scholars and activists from around the world. During these events, attendees are not only exposed to Iranian interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence, but contacts are made between them and various organs of the government (e.g., MOIS). MOIS and Qods Force personnel also operate overseas, establishing and cultivating contacts with Islamic "liberation" movements. As evidenced

[291] Fulghum and Barrie, "The Iranian Connection," p. 21.

in Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank, and now Iraq, the Iranian government increases its influence over these groups by providing them with financial, military, and other support.

With Iranian assistance, Hezbollah has built up an impressive propaganda capability over the past two decades. It publishes its own newspaper and magazine, and operates its own radio and satellite televisions stations. These are key instruments for recruiting and indoctrinating future jihadis. Hezbollah's televisions station, al-Manar (The Lighthouse), broadcasts to the Muslim world in multiple languages and is estimated to have more than 10 million viewers daily. When asked to compare Al Manar's programming to *Al Jazeera*, its news director remarked that "Neutrality like that of Al Jazeera is out of the question for us…we cover only the victim, not the aggressor. CNN is the Zionist news network, Al Jazeera is neutral, and Al Manar takes the side of the Palestinians."[292]

Hezbollah's other mechanism for recruitment and indoctrination is the social service network it runs in southern Lebanon and southern Beirut. Its schools, medical-care centers, food shelters, and other facilities provide an ideal opportunity to identify potential recruits and expose them to Hezbollah's well-crafted propaganda materials.

Hezbollah operates several floating "day camps" for terrorist training throughout the Bekaa Valley. They are staffed primarily by Hezbollah trainers with supporting IRGC and MOIS personnel. While these camps are used primarily by Hezbollah and groups it has found common-cause with in its war against Israel, other terrorist groups have trained in the Bekaa Valley in the past, including Basque ETA, the Red Brigades, Kurdistan Workers' Party, and the Irish Republican Army.[293]

Current Operations

For the Shi'a branch of jihadism, current operations are focused on two areas: Iraq and Lebanon. As detailed above, since 2003 Iran has conducted an aggressive political action campaign in Iraq, provided extensive support to Shiite militia and gangs, and expanded the number of Qods Force and MOIS personnel in country. All of those activities

[292] Jeffrey Goldbert, "In the Party of God," *New Yorker*, October 14/21, 2002, p. 180.
[293] Ibid.

are still underway. As US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad remarked in March 2006, "our judgment is that training and supplying, direct and indirect, takes place, and that there is also provision of financial resources to people, to militias, and that there is [a] presence of people associated with Revolutionary Guard and with MOIS."[294] Three months later, in June 2006, the US Commander in Iraq, General Casey asserted that, "we are quite confident that the Iranians, through their covert special operations forces [Qods Force], are providing weapons, IED technology and training to Shia extremist groups in Iraq, the training being conducted in Iran and in some cases probably in Lebanon through their surrogates [Hezbollah]."[295]

As mentioned briefly above, on July 12, 2006, Hezbollah members crossed into Israel, kidnapping two soldiers and killing three others, triggering an extended precision air campaign by the IDF followed by a limited ground incursion into southern Lebanon. After 34 days of hostilities, a cease-fire agreement was eventually hammered out that called for the IDF's phased withdrawal as the Lebanese Army and an expanded UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) replaced them. Despite the fact that only 5,426 UNIFIL personnel out of the authorized 15,000 were deployed as of October 2006, the fragile peace held.[296] UNIFIL, which has slowly grown to 13,264 military personnel as of September 2007, is charged with monitoring the cessation of hostilities, accompanying and supporting the Lebanese Army as it deploys throughout the south of Lebanon, and facilitating humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.[297] To Israel's chagrin, neither the Lebanese Army nor UNIFIL plan to root out and dismantle Hezbollah's military infrastructure in southern Lebanon; only Hezbollah fighters carrying their weapons openly will be disarmed.[298] In addition, while diplomatic pressure has been put on Syria not to permit weapons and equipment to be shipped through its territory to Lebanon,

[294] Jonathan Finer and Ellen Knickmeyer, "Envoy Accuses Iran of Duplicity in Iraq," *Washington Post*, March 24, 2006, p. 12. See also: Steven Simon and Ray Takeyh, "Iran's Iraq Strategy," *Washington Post*, May 21, 2006, p. B2.
[295] Thomas E. Ricks, "General Reports Spike in Iranian Activity in Iraq," *Washington Post*, June 23, 2006, p. 19; and Michael Gordon, "Iran Aiding Shiite Attacks Inside Iraq, General Says," *New York Times*, June 23, 2006.
[296] See: United Nations, "Lebanon-UNIFIL-Facts and Figures," available online at http://www.un.org/depts/dpko/missions/unifil/facts.html.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Susan Page, "Rice: Not U.N.'s Job to Disarm Hezbollah," *USA Today*, August 16, 2006, p. 16.

it is very likely that Iran and Syria will resupply Hezbollah in the coming months. Indeed, there are signs this is already occurring.

What is especially remarkable about the July-August conflict is the fact that Hezbollah was able to hold its own against the IDF. Hezbollah fighters were disciplined, well-trained, and superbly equipped and organized for a defensive battle against the IDF on pre-determined, restricted terrain.[299] Hezbollah had established an impressive network of deep, well-constructed underground bunkers that were stocked with sufficient water, food, and ammunition to withstand a sustained siege.[300] To make their communications robust, Hezbollah took advantage of radios, cell phones, hard-wire landlines, and messengers. Its forces were organized into an inter-linked web of squad-sized (typically 7-10 men) cells, each with significant autonomy.[301] If cut off from higher command and support for whatever reason, individual cells would fall in on pre-positioned weapon and equipment stockpiles and carry out pre-established mission orders. While the IDF repeatedly claimed to have broken through Hezbollah's defenses, the cellular web just reconfigured itself and re-engaged from new directions. Hezbollah fighters also displayed considerable tactical skill: [302]

- Launching barrages of rocket and missile strikes into Israel;
- Ambushing IDF armored vehicles with anti-tank missile teams firing from multiple directions simultaneously;
- Using anti-tank missiles (e.g., AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot, AT-5 Spandrel, AT-13 Metis, and AT-14 Kornet) to engage armored vehicles, as well as concentrations of dismounted infantry in buildings, as well as in the open;
- Conducting operations at night with night-vision goggles and infrared sensors;

[299] Ralph Peters, "Lessons from Lebanon—The New Model Terrorist Army," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2006, p. 38.
[300] In some cases, the bunkers were constructed with reinforced concrete and equipped with hard-wired electric power. Andrew Exum, "Hizballah at War—A Military Assessment," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus No. 63, December 2006, pp. 3–4.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Edward Cody and Molly Moore, "The Best Guerrilla Force in the World," *Washington Post*, August 14, 2006, p. 1.

- Firing at least two anti-ship cruise missiles (i.e., C-701 and C-802), damaging the *Hanit*, an Israeli Saar 5 missile corvette, and severely damaging a Cambodian-flagged merchant ship;[303] and

- Flying three UAVs (e.g., Mirsad-1 and Ababil-3) into Israeli airspace (though all three were detected and shot-down by Israeli air defenses).

Over the course of 34 days, an estimated force of 2,000–4,000 Hezbollah fighters[304] launched more than 4,000 rockets into Israel, killing 43 Israeli civilians and causing considerable damage; held their ground against the much larger and better equipped IDF; and killed 117 Israeli soldiers—albeit at an estimated cost of 500–800 Hezbollah fighters.[305] When the dust and smoke cleared after the UN-brokered cease fire, Hezbollah fighters emerged from shattered buildings and underground bunkers exultant, while beleaguered Israeli soldiers watched in disbelief. Nasrallah could credibly claim—at least to his Muslim audience—to be the leader of the first Arab "army" to have defeated the IDF in battle.

[303] Hezbollah almost certainly had significant IRGC assistance for its C-802 attacks. It is likely that IRGC personnel actually operated the C-802 system.
[304] Includes approximately 1,000 "regular" fighters with the remainder being less trained "village" fighters.
[305] Peters, "Lessons from Lebanon—The New Model Terrorist Army," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2006, p. 38; and Andrew Exum, "Hizballah at War—A Military Assessment," pp. 1–14.

IV. Regional Assessments

> Although we cannot measure the extent of the spread with precision, a large body of all-source reporting indicates that activists identifying themselves as jihadists, although a small percentage of Muslims, are increasing in both number and geographic dispersion.
>
> NIE on Trends in Global Terrorism.[306]

While the United States and its partners in the war on terrorism have made important strides in combating terrorist groups worldwide since 9/11, they have not weakened the jihadis' will or their ability to inspire and regenerate. To date, the high-water mark for the United States in the war on terrorism was arguably reached by 2002–2003. By that time, the Taliban government had been overthrown and al Qaeda stripped of its sanctuary in Afghanistan; ten of al Qaeda's senior leaders had been captured or killed, including Abu Zubaydah, Ramzi bin al Shibh, and Khalid Sheik Mohammad; dozens of terrorist cells had been rolled up worldwide; actions had been taken to seize the majority of the finances frozen to date; and several partner countries had taken steps to enhance their CT capabilities. Since then, the overall US position in the GWOT has slipped. To be sure, the United States has made considerable progress capturing or killing terrorist leaders and operatives, disrupting terrorist operations, seizing assets, and building partner CT capabilities. Those gains, however, have been offset by the metastasis of the al Qaeda organization into a global movement, the spread and intensification of Salafi-Jihadi ideology, the resurgence of Iranian regional influence, and the growth in number and political influence of Islamist fundamentalist political parties throughout the world.[307] In short, both the Sunni-based

[306] "Declassified Key Judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate 'Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States' Dated April 2006, p. 1.
[307] Raphael Perl, "Trends in Terrorism: 2006," *CRS Report to Congress*, RL33555, July 21, 2006

Salafi-Jihadi and Shia-based Khomeinist branches of Islamic radicalism have spread rather than receded over the past four years.

It is very difficult to assess country, regional, and global balances in the war on terrorism accurately owing both to their extreme volatility and, in many cases, the lack of credible intelligence. That being said, it appears that the jihadist threat has, on balance, remained constant or declined slightly in four regions: Africa, with the notable exception of Somalia; Russia and Central Asia; Southeast Asia; and the Americas. In contrast, it has intensified, in some cases sharply, in Southwest Asia, South Asia, and Europe.

Over the past six years, steps taken by African states to improve border security, extend control over remote areas, and enhance their domestic CT capabilities have generally outpaced jihadi gains. Algeria waged a very effective CT campaign against the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and its offshoot, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC). Partner CT capacity has expanded significantly in the Maghreb and Pan-Sahel owing in large part to a dramatic increase in American military-to-military training and aid. Nevertheless, large "un-governed" areas remain in Africa that could be exploited by terrorist groups. So far, the only major inroad in Africa made by Islamist groups has been in Somalia—and that was forcefully checked by Ethiopia in December 2006.

In Russia and Central Asia there have been several positive developments in the GWOT such as the deaths of key Chechen terrorist leaders, the collapse of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), and the implementation of more effective financial controls, border security, and CT operations by several states in the region. These gains, however, have been offset by the rise of the Islamic Jihad Group of Uzbekistan (a splinter group of the IMU) and Uzbekistan's decision in 2005 to terminate its close working relationship with the United States.

While jihadi groups have tried to make inroads into Australia, Burma, Cambodia, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand over the past six years, they appear to have had little success.[308] While much work remains to be done to enhance the CT capabilities of Burma, Cambodia, and Thailand, they are better able to handle terrorist threats than they were in 2001. The principal terrorist threat in the region is centered on the Indonesian archipelago and the Philippines. In both countries, after reaching a

[308] *Country Reports on Terrorism (2005)*, pp. 59–83.

high-water mark in 2002, the terrorist threat has receded. These gains, however, have been partially offset by the growing popularity of more fundamentalist interpretations of Islam in the region.

The radical Islamist threat from the Americas has declined considerably since 2001. In the wake of 9/11, the United States took a number of steps to improve its domestic CT capabilities including tearing down statutory and bureaucratic walls that kept law enforcement and intelligence officials from sharing information; restructuring the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); creating the Department of Homeland Security; tightening security at US airports, seaports, and borders; and creating new programs to monitor bank records and phone calls for terrorism-related activity. Canada has also revamped its domestic CT capabilities and rolled up a major al Qaeda-linked cell operating within its borders. In addition, several countries in Central and South America have taken modest steps to strengthen financial laws to make money laundering and other illicit transactions more difficult, tighten border security, and improve domestic policing and CT capabilities.

In Southwest Asia, the Levant, and the broader Middle East the Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist branches of Islamic radicalism have both gained more ground than they have lost. While the Sunni-based jihadi threat in Saudi Arabia has been neutralized, AQI has made strategic gains in Iraq that have greatly benefited the broader jihadi movement. Iran has made substantial progress in its effort to transplant the Hezbollah model to Iraq. While al Qaeda linked groups remain active in Egypt, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jordan, and Yemen, the threat from these areas has not materially changed in the past six years. In Egypt, Yemen, and the Gulf States, the jihadi threat has arguably fallen owing to the enhanced government CT capabilities. In Lebanon, Hezbollah's clash with the IDF in July-August 2006 dramatically raised its profile, as well as that of its chief benefactor, Iran, in the Muslim world. It also destabilized the democratically elected government in Beirut that came to power in the "Cedar Revolution" and stripped away the IDF's mystique of invincibility, which will complicate Israel's effort to restore the credibility of its deterrent vis-à-vis hostile surrounding states and their terrorist proxies.

Since September 11, 2001, the Islamic terrorist threat to the United States emanating from South Asia has arguably declined owing to the elimination of al Qaeda's extensive infrastructure in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and President Musharraf's decision to join the United States

as an active partner in the GWOT. There have been significant setbacks in both of these front-line countries in the GWOT, however, over the past 3-4 years. In Afghanistan, the Taliban, which has found sanctuary along the Pakistani frontier, is resurgent. The central government has yet to extend its authority over rural areas, especially in the south and east. Poppy cultivation, which provides a critical source of revenue for the Taliban, hit record levels in 2006. In Pakistan, despite Musharraf's efforts, the terrorist threat has intensified. In comparison to 2001, the Pakistani population is more radicalized and the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), especially North and South Waziristan, has become more "Talibanized."

The situation in Europe has deteriorated. Jihadists continue to take advantage of the "civil-liberties sanctuary" and unrestricted travel within the European Union to recruit and indoctrinate, export their violent ideology, raise funds, and plan and organize terrorist operations. Over the past six years, Europe's growing Muslim population has become more rather than less radicalized. Tens of thousands of "active" supporters of al Qaeda and "Islamic extremists" are now believed to be entrenched in Western Europe. Bosnia and Herzegovina remain weak and potentially vulnerable to jihadi exploitation. Spurred to action by two bombings in November 2003 in Istanbul, Turkish authorities have dealt repeated blows to AQAN's embryonic network in Turkey over the past four years.

The remainder of this chapter explores these regional assessments in more detail. It will first examine regions where the terrorist threat has receded, focusing in turn on Africa, Russia and Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Americas. It will then turn to regions in which the jihadi movement appears to be on the march: Southwest Asia, South Asia, and Europe.

Africa

The threat posed by violent Islamic extremism in Africa has decreased slightly since 2001. On balance, steps taken by African states to improve border security, extend control over remote areas, and enhance their domestic CT capabilities have outpaced jihadi gains. As will be detailed below, three major positive developments in the region were:

- Algeria's very effective CT campaign against the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and its offshoot, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC);

- Ethiopia's routing of Somalia's Islamic Courts Union, which was on the verge of consolidating control over the country; and

- The dramatic increase in American military-to-military training and aid, especially in the Maghreb and Pan-Sahel, under the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership program.

Another favorable development was the Libyan decision in 2003 to end its international isolation by terminating its WMD programs and abandoning its sponsorship of terrorism.

On the negative side of the ledger, however, large "un-governed" areas remain in which terrorist groups could find safe haven. Algerians are currently estimated to constitute the third-largest pool of al Qaeda recruits, behind citizens or residents of Saudi Arabia and Yemen.[309] According to European Command, roughly 25 percent of the suicide bombers in Iraq are Saharan Africans.[310] Small numbers of al Qaeda operatives are believed to be active in parts of Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia.[311] Moreover, the GSPC, while weakened, continues to have a small presence not only in the Maghreb and pan-Sahel, but increasingly in Europe.[312] The Islamic Courts Union's rout by Ethiopian forces in December 2006 has weakened, but not eliminated the Islamist threat in Somalia. Islamic militias have reformed and clan-based "warlordism" is resurgent. In addition, a small, extremely violent terrorist cell led by Aden Hashi Ayro has become more active in Somalia, conducting numerous attacks against Westerners. The Ayro cell, which is

[309] Bryan Bender, "US Search for Al Qaeda Turns to Algeria," *Boston Globe*, March 11, 2004, p. 1.
[310] Jason Motlagh, "U.S. Seeks to Secure Sahara Desert," *Washington Times*, November 17, 2005, p. 16; Jason Motlagh, "US Antiterror Ally Ousted, But Democracy Promised," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 9, 2005.
[311] John Donnelly, "Islamists Claim Rout of US-Tied Forces in Somalia," *Boston Globe*, June 6, 2006, p. 1.
[312] GSPC operatives have been arrested in Spain, France, Italy, and Belgium. Ed Blanche, "US Woos North Africa as Al Qaeda Infiltrates," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, March 1, 2006, p. 23.

believed to have links to al Qaeda, is described as sophisticated, tightly organized, and highly secretive.[313]

The sections below describe in more detail the situation in the Maghreb, pan-Sahel, and the Horn of Africa. Sudan is a teetering on the precipice of becoming a failed state. This could provide a fertile ground for jihadi cells to germinate and take root. As yet, however, their presence is limited. Similarly, while Egypt is a critical front-line state in the GWOT, the threat situation there has remained more or less constant. While terrorist groups have conducted sporadic attacks, the Egyptian government has been very effective in penetrating and rolling up terrorist cells. It is, however, necessary to take note of three "high profile" attacks on the Sinai Peninsula over the past three years. The attacks in Taba in October 2004, Sharm el Sheik in July 2005, and Dahab in April 2006, killed 34, 60, and 30 people, respectively, and caused hundreds of injuries.[314] Finally, while Nigeria has played a leading CT role in West Africa, several jihadi organizations (e.g., al Qaeda and GSPC) are believed to be active there.[315]

The Maghreb and Pan-Sahel

While jihadi groups made some modest inroads into the Maghreb and pan-Sahel over the past six years, they suffered several major setbacks—most notably, the crippling of GSPC. While it impossible to disaggregate stepped up local CT efforts and the impact of American assistance, it is likely that latter has had a substantial effect.

Several groups are responsible for terrorist activity in the Maghreb and pan-Sahel. The Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group played a central role, for example, in the Casablanca bombing in 2003 and facilitated the Madrid bombings in 2004. Al-Sunna wa al-Jamma attacked provincial police posts in northern Nigeria, killing 28 people, in September 2004. The prime mover, however, of terrorism in the Maghreb and pan-Sahel has been the GSPC. Since 2001, it has conducted scores of attacks,

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[313] Thomas Dempsey, *Counterterrorism in African Failed States: Challenges and Potential Solutions* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, April 2006), pp. 12–13.

[314] Michael Slackman, "30 Are Killed in Sinai as Bombs Rock Egyptian Resort City," *New York Times*, April 25, 2006, p. 1

[315] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 54.

mostly in Algeria. Its modus operandi includes bombings, IED attacks, fake road blocks used for extortion and kidnapping, ambushes, and occasional fire fights.

GSPC was founded in 1998 by Hassan Hattab, a former regional commander of GIA, who broke away in protest over the group's indiscriminate slaughter of civilians. Between 1992 and 1999, when the Algerian government launched an amnesty program, somewhere in the vicinity of 150,000 people died over the course of the GIA's bloody insurgency. GSPC pledged to protect civilians in its struggle to overthrow the secular Algerian government and install an Islamic regime in Algeria. As it turns out, although GSPC attacks were directed principally against government targets (e.g., police and military forces and government installations), civilians still accounted for nearly half of the resulting casualties. According to some reports, in September 2003, Hattab was replaced as the "emir" of GSPC by Nabil Sahraoui, who subsequently offered a *bayat*, or oath of allegiance, to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. During the same year, a GSPC regional commander, Amari Saifi, formed a splinter group, the Free Salafist Group (GSL), which took 32 European tourists hostage. While Algerian commandos freed 14 of the captives and killed nine terrorists in May 2003, Saifi and many others escaped to Mali with 17 hostages, who were subsequently released when the German government paid a ransom of $5.6 million.[316]

By working closely with neighboring countries, Algeria has managed to reduce dramatically the threat posed by GIA, GSPC, and GSL. In January 2004, Algerian and Mali forces hunted down Saifi's GSL in northern Mali, from there they were pursued eastward across northern Niger until they were cornered by Chadian forces. During a key battle just inside northwestern Chad in March 2004, 43 Salafist fighters were killed, which was the final chapter for GSL.[317] Although Saifi managed to escape, he was subsequently captured by a Chadian rebel group, the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad, and turned over to the Libyan government, which extradited him to Algeria where he was imprisoned for life in June 2005. In June 2004, Sahraoui was killed along with several senior GSPC leaders in a fire fight with the

[316] AP, "Rumsfeld Meets Senior Govt Officials in Algeria," *Wall Street Journal*, February 12, 2006.

[317] International Crisis Group, "Islamist Terrorism in the Sahel: Fact or Fiction?," Report, March 31, 2005; and Craig Whitlock, "Taking Terror Fight to N. Africa Leads U.S. to Unlikely Alliances," *Washington Post*, October 28, 2006, p. 1.

Algerian Army. (Abdelmalek Droukdel, who is even more radical than his predecessors and believed to be responsible for some of GIA's most gruesome massacres in the 1990s, assumed leadership of the group). In January 2006, Ahmed Zarabib, one of GSPC's founders, was killed. Perhaps shaken by this string of GSPC losses, in March 2006, Hassan Hattab called on all of its members to accept the government's amnesty, requiring them to lay down their arms in exchange for immunity from prosecution. The combination of waning domestic support for Islamic violence in Algeria, the appeal of the government's amnesty and reconciliation program, and the effectiveness of the Algerian government's CT campaign has exacted a heavy toll on GSPC.

While GSPC has long been affiliated with al Qaeda, Droukdel announced a formal alliance with al Qaeda in September 2006 in an apparent bid to revitalize flagging recruitment and fundraising. According to Zawahiri, the new organization, renamed Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), will "be a thorn in the necks of the American and French crusaders and their allies, and a dagger in the hearts of the French traitors and apostates."[318] Calling into question the accuracy of that prognostication, Algerian security forces killed or captured some 500 fighters in 2006 and roughly 250 AQIM members heeded Hassan Hattab's advice and accepted the government's offer of amnesty during the same period. The ranks of Islamic extremists in Algeria have fallen precipitously from a high of 40,000 or more during the 1990s to between 500 and 1,200 today. Under intense government pressure, several AQIM cells have been rolled up in Algeria and others have been forced underground. That being said, it still retains the ability to conduct operations, as evidenced by the February 2007 attacks on seven targets, mainly police stations, in east Algiers, killing six people and wounding thirteen; and the April 2007 suicide vehicle-bomb attacks in Algiers against the Government Palace and a police barracks, killing a total of 33 people and injuring over 200.[319] (The mastermind behind the Algiers attack, Sid Ali Rachid, was subsequently killed by Algerian security services on July 30, 2007.)

While AQIM is clearly under pressure in Algeria, it appears to be expanding operations elsewhere in northwest Africa, with an emphasis

[318] Craig Whitlock, "Al Qaeda's Far Reaching New Partner," *Washington Post*, October 5, 2006, p. 1.
[319] Craig Whitlock, "Al-Qaeda Branch Claims Algeria Blasts," *Washington Post*, April 12, 2007, p. 1.

on Morocco, Tunisia, Mali, and Mauritania.[320] GSPC/AQIM has funneled hundreds of African jihadis to Iraq and Afghanistan, many of whom will return to their home countries with considerable training and experience. It has also established small training camps in remote, ungoverned areas of the pan-Sahel.[321] The possibility of a merger with AQIM and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), which would expand AQIM's regional presence and influence, although unlikely, is not inconceivable. In addition, AQIM/GSPC has active cells in Europe—in Spain, France, and Italy, in particular—and has established connections with European criminal enterprises.[322]

The US military can legitimately take some credit for helping local forces beat back terrorists in the Maghreb and pan-Sahel. Beginning in 2002, US Special Forces (SF) began conducting military-to-military training exercises in the region. In 2003-2004, American SF assisted Algerian security forces in hunting down GSPC operatives along the southern border with Mali.[323] With the Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI), launched in 2004, US forces began training rapid-reaction forces in Chad, Mali, Niger, and Mauritania. PSI was expanded in 2005 into the Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI) to include Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia. The level of effort also skyrocketed from roughly $7 million annually under PSI to an anticipated $500 million annually between 2007 and 2011 to fund more extensive training, as well as to provide badly needed military equipment, under TSCTI.[324] Under the PSI-TSCTI umbrella, 700 Special Operations Forces (SOF) and supporting personnel deployed to the region for "Exercise Flintlock" in June 2005, training about 3,000 troops from Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Tunisia. The

[320] Craig Smith, "North Africa Feared as Staging Ground for Terror," *New York Times*, February 20, 2007, p. 1.
[321] Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *County Reports on Terrorism 2006* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2007), Chapter II.
[322] For a very good overview of the GSPC in general, and its expanding presence in northwest Africa and Europe, see Emily Hunt, *Islamist Terrorism in Northwestern Africa* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2007).
[323] Bryan Bender, "US Search for Al Qaeda Turns to Algeria," *Boston Globe*, March 11. 2004, p. 1.
[324] TSCTI was subsequently renamed the Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Andrew Koch, "US and African Partners Pledge Terrorism Purge," *Janes's Defence Weekly*, June 29, 2005, p. 16; Gordon Lubold, "African Allies," *Armed Forces Journal*, September 2005, p. 22; and Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *County Reports on Terrorism 2006* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2007), Chapter II (Africa Overview).

exercises, conducted over three weeks, were designed to help the African troops to extend and maintain more effective control over the region's porous borders and expansive ungoverned areas.

Unfortunately, US progress in building partner capacity in the region took a temporary step backward in 2006. Several African countries (e.g., Mali, Tanzania, Niger, and Kenya) had their funding cut off because they declined to sign so-called "Article 98" agreements with the United States exempting American troops from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court in The Hague.325 As Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice aptly put it, blocking assistance to nations actively trying to combat terrorism and requesting US support is "sort of the same as shooting ourselves in the foot."326 Accordingly, in late 2006, President Bush waived the prohibition, determining that it was "important to the national interest of the United States" to do so. Training activities resumed in 2007.

Somalia and the Horn of Africa

An outgrowth of neighborhood Islamic courts that were established across Mogadishu over the past decade in an attempt to restore some modicum of order to Somalia's largest city, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU)[327] is both an Islamic political movement and a collection of disparate Islamic militias. Over the past several years it gradually took control of much of southern Somalia. On June 5, 2006, after months of fighting a coalition of US-backed secular warlords, called the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism, the ICU declared that it had established control over all of Mogadishu with its population of roughly 1.2 million people.[328] Sharif Ahmed, then chairman of this

[325] In accordance with the American Servicemembers' Protection Act, enacted in 2002, the US government is prohibited from providing foreign military assistance, including any expenditure of International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds, to countries that have not signed "Article 98" agreements.

[326] Mark Mazzetti, "U.S. Cuts in Africa Aid Said to Hurt War on Terror," *New York Times*, July 23, 2006.

[327] The ICU is also frequently referred to as the Islamic Courts Council.

[328] The secular warlords were reportedly funded covertly by the CIA in exchange for intelligence information on terrorists. Bradley Graham and Karen DeYoung, "Official Critical of Somalia Policy is Transferred," *Washington Post*, May 31, 2006, p. 13; and Howard LaFranchi, "US Trading Hostilities for Talk in Somalia?" *Christian Science Monitor*, June 14, 2006.

loosely confederated organization, repeatedly declared that the ICU had no intention of imposing strict Islamic rule or harboring terrorists, but rather sought to rebuild Somalia and improve the quality of life of his people. He promised to stand-up a civilian police force and demobilize Islamic militias, focusing former fighters on public works projects.[329] In a three-page letter sent to the United States and other foreign governments in June 2006, the ICU declared that it sought "a friendly relationship with the international community" and had a "steadfast" commitment against "the tyranny of terrorists and organized criminals."[330]

During the last half of 2006, however, the ICU failed to live up to those commitments. The ICU proceeded to enforce a Taliban-style form of *sharia* justice in Mogadishu and other population centers. In October 2006, Sharif Ahmed called for jihad against Ethiopia and reiterated the ICU's irredentist goal of creating a "Greater Somalia" incorporating Somali Muslims in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti. Four jihadist groups played a prominent role within the ICU:

- Al-Ittihad al-Islamiya (AIAI), which seeks to turn Somalia into an Islamic state and is aligned with al Qaeda;[331]

- Al-Takfir wal-Hijra (Excommunication and Exodus), which declares *takfir* against Muslims who do not support their very extreme views;

- Al-Islah, which that supports the creation of an Islamic state in Somalia; and

- Al-Tabligh, an Islamic "missionary" groups with link to radical madrassas in Pakistan and elsewhere.

AIAI is strongly suspected of harboring al Qaeda fugitives, including three individuals indicted for the 1998 US Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. During Congressional testimony in 2006, Henry Crumpton, the former State Department coordinator for counterterrorism, stated that, despite its public overtures, "We're not sure what

[329] Craig Timberg, "Somali Militias Decry Terrorists," *Washington Post*, June 16, 2006, p. 14.
[330] Ibid.
[331] Since 1996, AIAI is not believed to have participated directly in any terrorist attacks. It is, however, linked to al Qaeda. For instance, AIAI's radical leader, Hassan Dahir Aweys, who also holds a leadership role within ICU, has direct ties with senior al Qaeda leaders, including Osama bin Laden.

Islamic Courts really want in terms of their strategies and in terms of their relationship with al Qaeda." He also re-affirmed that the US government believes that "a half-dozen or less" senior al Qaeda leaders are currently or were recently in Somalia, along with a fluctuating number of "operatives."[332] In addition to the US embassy bombings in 1998, al Qaeda terrorists located in and operating from Somalia participated in the car bombing of an Israeli-owned hotel and attempted downing of an Israeli airliner with SA-7 SAMs in Mombassa, Kenya, in 2002 and a thwarted plot to fly an explosive-laden light aircraft into the US embassy in Nairobi in 2003. Although al Qaeda operatives performed slightly different roles in each case, support typically included helping to secure financing, tactical planning and preparation for the attacks, and logistical activities (e.g., acquiring weapons and explosives).[333] At least 17 terrorist training camps are reported to be active in Somalia.[334]

As of early December 2006, the ICU was on the march, both figuratively and literally, and it was widely believed that the UN-recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG) based in Baidoa, over 150 miles north of Mogadishu, would fall in early 2007. The volatile situation threatened to boil over into a broader regional war. Regional rivals, Ethiopia and Eritrea, had backed opposing sides: the former deployed several thousand troops to defend the TFG; whereas the latter provided training, supplies, and weapons to ICU militias.[335] Combined TFG and Ethiopian forces clashed several times with Islamist militias for control over the approaches to Baidoa.[336]

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[332] Craig Timberg, "Somalia's Islamic Militias Reaching Out to the West," *Washington Post*, June 14, 2006, p. 17; and Bill Gertz, "Group Linked to Al Qaeda Tightening Grip on Somalia," June 15, 2006, p. 4.

[333] Dempsey, *Counterterrorism in African Failed States: Challenges and Potential Solutions*, pp. 14–15

[334] As of 2006, US military forces serving in Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) were barred by their rules of engagement from taking direct action against these camps. J. Peter Pham, "The New Taliban," *Wall Street Journal*, June 19, 2006, p. 14.

[335] Jeffrey Gettleman, "U.S. Official Offers Bleak Assessment of Somalia," *New York Times*, November 11, 2006, p. 6; and Dr. Andrew McGregor, "Somalia Hostilities Threaten Outbreak of Regional War," *Terrorism Focus*, October 31, 2006, pp. 3–5.

[336] Ethiopia and Eritrea also deployed 1,000s of troops to the UN-monitored buffer zone separating them. Ibid.

The stand-off between the rising ICU and beleaguered TFG took a sudden, unanticipated turn during the last two weeks of December. Ethiopian military forces—including several thousand troops supported by tanks, helicopter gunships, and strike aircraft—poured over the border, routed Islamic Courts militias threatening the TFG in Baidoa and forced them southward.[337] By the end of December, Ethiopian forces had pushed ICU-linked militias out of Mogadishu and pursued retreating remnants toward the Kenyan border and into the hilly region of Buur Gaabo. During the first week of 2007, the Islamists were forced to flee their final stronghold in the southern port city of Kismayu.[338] (On January 8, 2007, with approval from the Somali government, an American AC-130 gunship killed 8-10 individuals, mostly Somali ICU members with links to al Qaeda, fleeing in armed pickup trucks near the Kenyan border.[339]) Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Somali President

[337] The US military provided intelligence, arms, and training to the Ethiopian army. According to the Department of Defense, approximately 100 US military personnel were deployed to Ethiopia, most of them trainers and advisers. Barbara Slavin, "U.S. Support Key to Ethiopia's Invasion," USA Today, January 8, 2007, p. 10.

[338] Sahra Abdi, "Somalia's Islamists Flee Final Bastion," *Reuters*, January 1, 2007.

[339] The intended target of the attack was apparently either Aden Hashi Ayro (a senior leader of the ICU and core member of AIAI) or Abu Talha al-Sudani (an explosives expert, an associate of Osama bin Laden, and a senior figure in the East African al Qaeda cell based in Somalia). The Somali government initially claimed that Fazul Abdullah Mohammad, who is the head of al Qaeda's East African cell and linked to the 1998 US embassy bombings, was killed in the attack. While US officials have disavowed Fazul's death, they have stated that Ayro may have been killed (a bloodied passport and other items believed to belong to Ayro were recovered at the site). Although US ground forces were reportedly deployed to the engagement site to determine who was killed, identities have not been publicly released. A second AC-130 strike against suspected al Qaeda operatives—including Sheik Ahmed Madobe, a senior ICU leader—took place on January 22, 2007. David Cloud, "U.S. Airstrike Aims at Qaeda Cell in Somalia," *New York Times*, January 9, 2007, p. 3; Karen DeYoung, "U.S. Strike in Somalia Targets Al-Qaeda Figure," *Washington Post*, January 9, 2007, p. 1; Karen DeYoung and Stephanie McCrummen, "U.S. Is Not Saying Who, Or What, Was Hit in Somalia Raid," *Washington Post*, January 10, 2007, p. 7; Josh Meyer and Edmund Sanders, "Manhunt in Somalia to Continue," *Los Angeles Times*, January 10, 2007; Stephanie McCrummen, "U.S. Troops Went Into Somalia After Raid—No Top Targets Confirmed Dead," *Washington Post*, January 12, 2007, p. 12; AP, "Raid Killed Somali Allies of Al Qaeda, U.S. Says," *New York Times*, January 12, 2007; Karen DeYoung and Stephanie McCrummen, "U.S. Stages 2nd Air Strike in Somalia; Ethiopians Leaving Capital," *Washington Post*, January 24, 2007, p. 9; and Michael Gordon and Mark Mazzetti, "U.S. Used Bases in Ethiopia to Hunt Al Qaeda in Africa," *New York Times*, February 23, 2007, p. 1.

Abdullahi Yusuf, and Somali Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi were quick to declare that major combat operations were almost over and that Somalia would be pacified in "weeks and months, not more."[340] Their hopeful estimates, however, proved to be wildly off the mark.

During the Ethiopian offensive, thousands of Islamist fighters simply took off their uniforms and melted into the population. They have since re-emerged to wage a guerrilla war against what they consider to be an illegitimate government. The clan-based warlordism that has plagued Somalia for decades is now resurgent.[341] International efforts to replace Ethiopian forces with an all-African peacekeeping force, which began in December 2006, moved slowly and proved disappointing. To date, 1,600 African Union troops, mostly Ugandans, have been deployed—but, overwhelmed by the level of violence, they have been mostly confined to barracks.[342] According to the UN, over 300,000 Somalis fled the capital in 2007 as clan violence escalated.[343] In short, while the Islamists were clearly handed a major setback in Somalia at the end of 2006, the security situation is highly volatile. Militias formerly linked to the ICU—and still receiving support from Eritrea—will likely put mounting pressure on the already weak TFG.

In contrast to Somalia, the security situation across the rest of the Horn of Africa (i.e., Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Yemen) has, on balance, improved—in some cases, considerably. Since it was established in 2002, the US Combined Joint Force—Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) has conducted several military-to-military training exercises with upwards of 3,000 Ethiopian, Djiboutian, Kenyan, and Yemeni

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[340] Mohamed Sheikh Nor, "Somalia's PM: Major Fighting Likely Over," Associated Press, January 2, 2007; and C. Bryson Hull and Sahal Abdulle, "Ethiopian Army to Stay in Somalia in Coming Weeks," *Reuters*, January 2, 2007.

[341] Andrew McGregor, "The Leading Factions Behind the Somali Insurgency," *Terrorism Monitor*, April 26, 2007, pp. 1–4.

[342] David Sands, "African Peacekeeping Force Seen As Inadequate," *Washington Times*, February 10, 2007, p. 6; and Dr. Thomas Fingar, Deputy Director for Analysis, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Global Security Assessment" testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, July 11, 2007, p. 14.

[343] "Clashes Leave 400 Dead, Group Says," *Los Angeles Times*, April 3, 2007; "War in the Horn—Islamist Insurgents Are Not Yet Crushed," *Economist*, April 26, 2007.

soldiers; and completed hundreds of public works projects.[344] Training has focused mainly on small-unit skills such as marksmanship, orienteering, and basic security tasks (e.g., setting up and manning roadblocks). The coast guards in Djibouti, Kenya, and Yemen have been trained and equipped to monitor their littoral waters more effectively, including carrying out counter-piracy and counter-smuggling tasks.[345] The construction of schools, medical and veterinary clinics, and freshwater wells has not only bolstered the reputation of the US military in the region, but has also provided valuable opportunities to cultivate local contacts, develop familiarity with the terrain and infrastructure, collect "street level" intelligence, and maintain a non-intrusive presence along routes into and out of Somalia.

Russia and Central Asia

Since 2001, the terrorist threat in Russia and Central Asia has, on balance, remained more or less constant. There have been several positive developments such as the deaths of Chechen terrorist leaders Aslan Maskhadov and Shamil Basayev; the collapse of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) owing to the death of its leader, Juma Namangani, in an American air strike during Operation Enduring Freedom and a vigorous counter-terrorism campaign by the Government of Uzbekistan; and the implementation of more effective financial controls, border security, and counter-terrorism operations by several states in the region. These gains, however, were offset by the rise of the Islamic Jihad Group of Uzbekistan and deterioration of the close counter-terrorism relationship between the United States and Uzbekistan that had formed between 2001 and 2005.

Russia

At least ten different Chechen terrorist groups are active in Russia, primarily in the north Caucasus region (Ossetia, Chechnya, Ingushetia, and Dagestan). There have, however, been incidents outside of the region, including in Moscow (e.g., Moscow Theater in 2002 and the Moscow

[344] Joshua Kucera, "Djibouti: African Foothold," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, pp. 24–29.
[345] Ibid. See also, Mike Pflanz, "US Troops Keep Watch Along Kenya's Coast," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 9, 2005.

subway blast in August 2004). While most of these groups are indigenous and closely associated with the Chechen separatist movement, there is evidence of a foreign terrorist presence in Chechnya, as well as financial and ideological links to the broader Salafi-Jihadi movement.

Scores of attacks have occurred in the Caucasus region since 2001, but in most cases the attackers did not take credit and were not subsequently identified. Among the most capable and organized terrorists groups are Riyad us-Saliheyn Martyrs' Brigade (which is strongly suspected of having links to al Qaeda), Dagestani Shariah Jamaat, and the Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB). Except for two aircraft bombings, most of the attacks conducted by these home-grown groups have been bombings against soft targets, generally with IEDs, and small-scale raids against police, military, and government targets.[346] Riyad us-Saliheyn Martyrs' Brigade, however, was responsible for two high-profile incidents: the Dubrovka Theater seizure in October 2002, in which 129 hostages died during the botched rescue attempt by Spetsnaz units; and the Beslan school seizure and massacre in September 2004 in which 344 civilians were killed, including 186 children.

Over the past six years the Russian government has taken serious steps to detect and cut off terrorist financing; significantly expanded its CT capabilities, both with respect to intelligence and operations; and cooperated actively with the United States, including participating in a US-Russia Counterterrorism working group and forging a joint, operational CT capability between the FBI and the Russia Federal Security Service (FSB).[347] The most significant development in Russia's CT effort since 2001 was the deaths of two key figures in the Chechen-based terrorist network: Aslan Maskhadov, a key Chechen "separatist" leader, who was killed in March 2005; and Shamil Basayev, founder of the IIPB and head of the Riyad us-Saliheyn Martyrs' Brigade, who was killed in a truck bomb explosion on July 10, 2006 in Ingushetia.[348] Owing to these

[346] Members of the Riyad us-Saliheyn Martyrs' Brigade are believed to be linked to the Black Widows, IIPB, the Movsar Baryayev Gang, and the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment. The Martyr's Brigade is also allied with Ingush Jama'at Shariat.

[347] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 114.

[348] Basayev was reportedly in a car escorting a truck filled with explosives in preparation for a bombing when it detonated. There is a controversy, however, over what caused the explosives to detonate. Chechen seperatists allege that they accidentally detonated when the truck hit a pothole, whereas the Russian Federal Security Service claims that its agents detonated the explosives remotely. Other sources sources claim a rival insurgent group, Shariat, assassinated him with an improved explosive device.

and other successes, it is reasonable to conclude that the terror threat in Russia has diminished slightly since 2001.

Central Asia

Central Asia has been targeted by al Qaeda as a promising expansion opportunity since the late 1990s. Writing before September 2001 in a letter to Mullah Mohammed Omar, Osama bin Laden stressed the value of extending operations in the Central Asian Republics, specifically Tajikistan, because "it will keep the enemies busy and divert them away from the Afghani issues." He also noted that "the Islamic Republics region is rich with scientific experiences in conventional *and non-conventional* military industries, which will have a great role in future Jihad against the enemies of Islam."[349] The key battlefield in the war on terror in Central Asia over the past six years has been in Uzbekistan—including the Fergana Valley that extends into neighboring Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU); the Islamic Jihad Group (IJG), which splintered off from IMU; Hizb-ut Tahir (HuT); and the East Turkistan Islamic Movement are all currently active in this area. Prior to 2004, IJG did not exist and IMU had been essentially eradicated by the Government of Uzbekistan. Over the past three years, however, IJG has risen dramatically in strength and IMU has reconstituted itself, in part by finding sanctuary in under-governed areas of Tajikistan.

IMU was founded in 1998 by two veteran Salafi-Jihadi operatives, Juma Namangani and Tahir Yuldash, who avowed to overthrow the oppressive, "apostate" regime of President Islam Karimov and create an Islamist state in Uzbekistan, presumably modeled after Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. In 1999, IMU carried out five coordinated car bombings, killing 16 people, in Tashkent. Over the next few years, IMU expanded its original goal and declared its intention to create an Islamic caliphate encompassing Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and China's Xinxiang Province. In May 2001, Osama bin Laden reportedly named Namangani to be the leader of a brigade of foreign fighters, called Livo, comprising radicalized Uzbeks, Turks, Uighurs, and Pakistanis. Five months later, Livo and IMU fought alongside Taliban and al Qaeda fighters against US military forces during OEF.

[349] Emphasis added. Osama bin Laden, Letter to Mullah Mohammed Omar, undated. Harmony database, AFGP-2002-600321, p. 2.

Already at war with the IMU, Uzbekistan was among the first states to support American efforts in the global war in terror in 2001, agreeing to host US military forces within its borders.[350] During OEF, Juma Namangani was killed in a US air strike and Tahir Yuldash fled to Pakistan. Back in Uzbekistan, President Karimov authorized a brutal but effective crackdown on Islamic terrorism, arresting and jailing thousands of individuals with suspected terrorist ties. By the end of 2002, the leadership of IMU had been decapitated and most of its cells had been rolled up within Uzbekistan. As one former IMU member put it, in the wake of OEF, "The IMU's back has been broken."[351]

Between 2002 and 2004, however, the IMU was able to reconstitute itself by taking advantage of sanctuaries outside the reach of Karimov's security services in Tajikistan and elsewhere. By 2004, IMU had rebuilt to an estimated 800 active members.[352] It also spun off a more radical group, the IJG, which was responsible for a string of bombings in Tashkent in late March and early April 2004, killing 14 and injuring 56, as well as the near simultaneous attacks on the US and Israeli Embassies and the Uzbekistani Prosecutor General's office in Tashkent on July 30, 2004.[353] The attacks marked the first use of suicide bombers in Central Asia.[354] The ideological inspiration of al Qaeda is clearly evident in the statement released by IJG following the attacks:

> A group of young Muslims executed martyrdom operations that put fear in the apostate government and its infidel allies, the Americans and Jews. The mujahidin belonging to Islamic Jihad Group attacked both the American and Israeli embassies as well as the court building where the trials of a large number of the brothers from the Group had begun. These martyrdom operations that the group is executing will not stop, God willing. It is for the purpose of repelling the injustice

[350] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 125
[351] Peter Baker, "Renewed Militancy Seen in Uzbekistan," *Washington Post*, September 27, 2003, p. 19.
[352] Peter Baker, "Group Linked to Al Qaeda Suspected in Uzbek Unrest," *Washington Post*, April 2, 2004, p. 17.
[353] 33 terrorists were also killed during the March–April bombings. NCTC Worldwide Incidents Tracking System.
[354] "Uzbekistan President Points to Islamic Extremists in Attacks," Los Angeles Times, August 1, 2004; and *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 199.

> of the apostate government and supporting the jihad of our Muslim brothers in Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, the Hijaz, and in other Muslim countries ruled by infidels and apostates.[355]

Following the 2004 IJG attacks, the Karimov government cracked down again on terrorist groups, triggering an international outcry over alleged human rights abuses. In one incident in Andijan province in May 2005, for instance, several hundred civilians were reportedly killed.[356] In response to diplomatic pressure and public criticism of Uzbekistan's human rights record by US and EU officials, Karimov slowly ratcheted back Uzbekistan's cooperation on counter-terrorism and, in July 2005, opted to terminate an agreement allowing the US military access to the Karshi-Khanabad airbase.[357]

Following the revelation in 2004 that Kazakh jihadis participated in the bombings in Tashkent, Kazakhstan stepped up CT activities and began to cooperate more closely with the United States. The Islamic Jihad Union, IJG, and HuT, however, all remain active, to varying degrees, in Kazakhstan. Kyrgyzstan has taken a number of steps to increase its CT capabilities, including bolstering CT-focused intelligence and law enforcement, and creating a special agency to target terrorism financing and money laundering. The impetus for these initiatives was the potential threat posed by HuT, which has a growing presence in southern Kyrgyzstgan where there is a large ethnic Uzbek population.[358] Finally, although Tajikistan is strongly supportive of US efforts in the war on terrorism, including allowing the US government to use its territory and airspace for CT actions, it does not currently have the resources to secure its border and prevent its territory from being used by terrorists groups. As a small positive note, however, Tajik authorities did manage to arrest several IMU operatives in 2005.[359]

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[355] MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, "Islamic Jihad Group" entry. See: http://www.tkb.org/Home.jsp.
[356] Robin Wright, "Uzbeks Stop Working With U.S. Against Terrorism," *Washington Post*, September 30, 2005, p. 14.
[357] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 85.
[358] Ibid., p. 108.
[359] Ibid., p. 200.

Southeast Asia

Overall, the terrorist threat in Southeast Asia has diminished since 2001. While jihadi groups have tried to make in-roads into Australia, Burma, Cambodia, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand, they appear to have had little success.[360] Several new CT-focused institutions have been established at both the country and regional levels.[361] Jihadi efforts have been checked repeatedly across the region. The governments in Australia, Malaysia, and Singapore have, in particular, been very effective in combating terrorism domestically. In November 2005, for instance, Australian police arrested 18 suspected terrorists planning a "large scale terrorist attack" in Sydney and Melbourne.[362] Malaysian authorities have successfully tracked down and detained more than 110 suspected terrorists since 2001.[363] While much work remains to be done to enhance the CT capabilities of Burma, Cambodia, and Thailand, they are better able to handle terrorist threats than they were six years ago. That being said, Thailand still faces a serious home-grown insurgency in the far south of the country, near the border with Malaysia, which spiked in intensity in 2004 and has not significantly abated. It does not appear, however, that transnational terrorist groups are directly involved in the violence, and links between southern Thai separatist groups and regional terror networks (e.g., Jemaah Islamiyah) appear to be limited to minor financial and training assistance.[364] The principal terrorist threat in the region is centered on the Indonesian archipelago and the Philippines.[365] In both countries, after reaching a high-water mark in 2001-2002, the terrorist threat has receded. The possibility of a jihadi resurgence, however, should not be discounted. Key positive developments in the war on terror in Southeast Asia include:

- A significant improvement in the CT capabilities and capacities of several countries in the region, especially Indonesia and the Philippines;

[360] Ibid., pp. 59–83.
[361] Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Country Reports on Terrorism—2006 (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2007), Chapter 2—East Asia and Pacific Overview.
[362] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 61.
[363] Ibid., p. 75.
[364] Richard Halloran, "Uneven Success Against Islamists," *Washington Times*, May 4, 2007, p. 17.
[365] About two thirds of the roughly 300 terrorist incidents, most of them minor, in Southeast Asia since September 11, 2001, occurred in Indonesia and the Philippines.

- The rolling up in 2001-2002 of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) cells in Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines that were plotting—with the assistance of al Qaeda—bombing attacks against American, Australian, British, and Israeli installations and citizens in Singapore;[366]

- The arrest of Omar al-Farouq, al Qaeda's senior representative in Southeast Asia, by Indonesian police in June 2002 and the thwarting of planned joint al Qaeda-JI attacks against US interests in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Cambodia to mark the one-year anniversary of September 11th;[367]

- The arrest of Nurjaman Riduan bin Isomoddin (Hambali), who served as al Qaeda's liaison to radical Islamic groups in the region and acted as the operational leader of JI, by Thai security forces in August 2003;

- The bolstering of domestic Indonesian CT capabilities, including the standing up of "Special Attachment 88," which resulted in the capture or death of over 200 members of JI; and

- The Armed Forces of the Philippines' successful operations against Abu Sayyaf, JI, and the Rajah Sulaiman Movement.

These gains, however, have been partially offset by the growing popularity of more fundamentalist interpretations of Islam in Indonesia and the Philippines; the lenient treatment of JI spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Bashir, by the Indonesian government; and the continued ability of jihadi groups to carry out major terrorist attacks throughout the region.

Indonesia

In the year following the attack on September 11, 2001, the Indonesian government's effort to combat Islamic terrorism domestically was half-hearted and ineffectual. This foot-dragging was, in part, a reflection

[366] Bruce Vaughn et al, "Terrorism in Southeast Asia," *CRS Report for Congress*, February 7, 2005, RL31672, pp. 10-11.
[367] Romesh Ratnesar, "Confessions of an Al Qaeda Terrorist," *Time*, September 23, 2002.

of the central government's relative weakness and the negative domestic political ramifications of appearing to be too accommodating to the United States or too "secular" in a country of 200 million Muslims. The bombing on October 12, 2002 of two nightclubs in the Kuta beach area on the resort island of Bali, killing 202 people and injuring more than 300, caused a dramatic shift in Indonesian policy. The government immediately began working with US and Australian government officials to track down the terrorists responsible for the attack.

Since then, Indonesian cooperation with the United States and Australia has deepened considerably. The US State Department funded the establishment of a national police CT unit, "Special Attachment 88," at a cost of about $35 million, under its Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program. Personnel in the new unit have been trained by the FBI, CIA, and Secret Service.[368] The US government also provided basic CT training to Indonesian police, assistance in formulating effective CT legislation and conducting terrorist prosecutions, financial intelligence training focused on strengthening Indonesian enforcement of new anti-money laundering laws, and border security training.[369] In September 2005, Indonesia's attorney general established a terrorism and transnational crime task force to manage CT prosecutions nationwide. Most significantly, US military training and aid programs with the Indonesian military, referred to as the "TNI" for *Tentara Nasional Indonesia*, which had been terminated in 1999 in response to TNI's human rights abuses in East Timor, were resumed in 2005.

The principal jihadi threat in Indonesia is Jemaah Islamiya, which literally stands for "Islamic Community." Formed in 1993 in Malaysia by the radical clerics, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Bashir, JI's goal is to create an Islamic caliphate across Southeast Asia, encompassing Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, southern Thailand, and the southern Philippines. While it is estimated to have as many as 25,000-30,000 sympathizers in Indonesia alone, the number of core JI operatives is believed to be between 300 and 500. Through its intimate involvement in Indonesia's network of *pesantren*—boarding schools

[368] James Solomon and James Hookway, "In Indonesia, War on Terror Shows Both Gains and Worrisome Trends," *Wall Street Journal*, September 8, 2006, p. 1.
[369] Vaughn et al, "Terrorism in Southeast Asia," p. 16; and Simon Montlake, "Indonesia, US Ties Strained by Past," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 29, 2005.

that teach Wahhibist Islam—JI has put down deep societal roots.[370] JI is linked to several regional jihadi groups—including the Abu Sayyaf Group, Komando Jihad, Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia, and Nusantara Islamic Jihad Forces—that provide each other with limited training, logistical, and financial support. There is also considerable evidence that JI has engaged in joint training and terrorist operations with separatist groups in the Philippines, most notably, the Moro Islamic Salvation Front (MILF). JI has reportedly established a network of bases and training camps, for example, in MILF-controlled territory in Mindanao.[371] In addition to the Philippines, JI is believed to have cells in Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Thailand, and Pakistan. It also has long-established links with al Qaeda: JI and al Qaeda members have shared training camps in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Mindanao; loaned each other trainers and technical experts; and collaborated on operational plans, including the attack on the USS *Cole*, the attacks on September 11th, and the 2002 Bali bombing.[372] Prior to 2001–2002, al Qaeda also provided significant financial support to JI.

The Indonesian government's more vigorous CT efforts since the 2002 Bali attacks have yielded a number of important victories. In June 2002, Omar al-Farouq, al Qaeda's senior representative in Southeast Asia, was tracked down and arrested by Indonesian police. In November 2005, after an intense, three-year manhunt, the Malaysian bomb-maker, Azahari Husin—who, along with JI recruiter, Noordin Mohammed Top, is believed to have played an instrumental role in nearly every major terrorist attack in Indonesia since 2001—was tracked to a terrorist safe house in Malang, East Java, where he committed suicide rather than be arrested.[373] In June 2007, Zarkasih, who became the acting leader of JI following the arrests of Abu Bakar Bashir and Abu Rusdan in 2003, and Abu Dujana, the head of JI's military wing, were arrested by Detachment

[370] Greg Sheridan, "Jihad Archipelago," *The National Interest*, Winter 2004/2005, p. 79.
[371] Ellen Nakashima, "Indonesian Militants 'Keep Regenerating'," Washington Post, March 25, 2004; and Vaughn et al, "Terrorism in Southeast Asia," pp. 5–6.
[372] Al Qaeda and JI members attended a meeting in January 2000 in Kuala Lumpur during which plans for the attack on the *USS Cole* and the September 11th plot were discussed. At a meeting in Bangkok in 2002, an al Qaeda representative contributed to planning for the 2002 Bali bombing. See Sidney Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous," *International Crisis Group Report*, August 26, 2003; *The 9/11 Commission Report*, pp. 150–152; and Vaughn et al, "Terrorism in Southeast Asia," pp. 7–8.
[373] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 70.

88 personnel.[374] Thirty terrorists have been convicted for complicity in the 2002 Bali attack. The trials, moreover, were public and transparent, which not only debunked popular conspiracy theories (e.g., the US government was responsible for the bombing) but also highlighted the serious nature of the domestic terrorist threat.[375] In all, since 2001, over 200 suspected and acknowledged JI members, including several senior leaders, have been arrested or killed in Indonesia.[376] While JI has not been eradicated completely, it has been seriously weakened.

This achievement, however, has not been easy. While on the ropes, JI and al Qaeda have managed to land some staggering blows, including:

- The detonation of a car bomb in front of the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Jakarta on August 5, 2003, which killed 13 people and injured approximately 149 others;

- A suicide car bombing outside the gates of the Australian embassy in Jakarta, killing nine people and wounding nearly 200, on September 9, 2004; and

- The coordinated bombing of restaurants on Bali on October 1, 2005 that included two near simultaneous bombings of beachfront restaurants in Jimbaran and a third blast in a steakhouse and bar in Kuta, killing 20 people and wounding more than 120.[377]

Given the Indonesian government's effective CT campaign against JI since 2002 and growing CT cooperation with both the United States and Australia, there is ample reason for optimism that the jihadi threat

[374] Abu Dujana is believed to have played a role in the 2003 bombing of the JW Marriott Hotel in Jakarta and the Australian Embassy bombing in 2004. Paul Watson, "Terrorism Suspect Held in Indonesia," *Los Angeles Times*, June 13, 2007; Tom Wright, "Arrests in Indonesia Weaken Militant Network," *Wall Street Journal*, June 14, 2007, p. 8; and Peter Gelling, "Indonesia Reprots the Arrest of a 2nd Top Terrorism Suspect," *New York Times*, June 16, 2007, p. 6.
[375] Sheridan, "Jihad Archipelago," pp. 78–79.
[376] James Solomon and James Hookway, "In Indonesia, War on Terror Shows Both Gains and Worrisome Trends," *Wall Street Journal*, September 8, 2006, p. 1.
[377] Ellen Nakashima and Alan Sipress, "25 Killed in Three Blasts in Bali," *Washington Post*, October 2, 2005, p. 1; and Christian Le Miere, "Bali Bombs Confirms Indonesia's Extremist Problem," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, November 2005, p. 1.

in Indonesia will continue to ebb.[378] While it is true that the number of parliamentary seats held by fundamentalists has crept up slightly over the past several years, Indonesian politics are still very much dominated by secular nationalists.[379] The current president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who is former general and a staunch secular nationalist, is committed to combating Islamic terrorism.

Historically, Indonesian Muslims have practiced a very tolerant, pluralist, moderate form of Islam syncretized with local customs and mystic influences. More conservative, fundamentalist Islam is, however, starting to take root in Indonesia. Several local districts and municipalities have unilaterally enacted elements of the *sharia* such as banning alcohol, curtailing women's rights, restricting dancing and music, and imposing strict moral codes regulating public conduct (e.g., banning short skirts and kissing in public). Militias such as Islamic Defenders Front and Indonesian Mujahedeen Council openly recruited fighters to go to Lebanon to fight Israel in July–August 2006.

Domestic political considerations (e.g., not appearing to be anti-Muslim or a puppet of the United States) have clearly constrained the government's options for stemming this under-current of radicalism. Amazingly, even though JI is designated by the United Nations as a terrorist organization, the Indonesia government has declined to ban JI outright. Similarly, despite the fact *pesantren* boarding schools radicalize Indonesian youth and are used by JI to identify and recruit new members, the government has not yet closed them down.[380] Finally, even though Abu Bakar Bashir is widely recognized as the spiritual leader of JI, the government has been extremely lenient in prosecuting him because of his popularity and Islamic credentials. When Bashir was put on trial in spring of 2003, the government opted not to charge him with offenses related to the Bali bombing, even though he was clearly complicit in the attack. The government also performed legal acrobatics to find him innocent of being a JI leader, which was quite a feat given his widely acknowledged role in the organization. Nevertheless, while the prosecutor had sought a 15-year prison term, Bashir was sentenced to four years in jail for plotting to overthrow the Indonesian

[378] In April 2007, the US military conducted the first brigade-lvel, army-to-army exercise with Indonesia, called "Garuda Shield," since military ties were cut in 1999. William Cole, "Indonesia, U.S. Join Forces in Exercise," *Honolulu Advertiser*, April 18, 2007.

[379] In the 2004 presidential election, the top four candidates were all secular nationalists.

[380] Sheridan, "Jihad Archipelago," p. 78.

government. In March 2004, however, the Indonesian Supreme Court reduced Bashir's sentence and scheduled his release for April 2004. The government filed new terrorism-related charges in April 2004, which led to Bashir's sentencing in March 2005 to 30 months in prison for his involvement in the "sinister conspiracy" to carry out the 2002 Bali bombing. Five months later, his sentence was reduced by four and a half months for "good behavior."

In time, the growing popularity of fundamentalist Islam could create patches of fertile soil for jihadi groups like JI to take root and prosper in Indonesia. Fortunately, it appears that Indonesia's two largest Islamic organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, are willing to combat radicalism by speaking out against Salafi and Wahhabi preachers, discrediting radical ideology, and putting pressure on the *pesantren* to moderate their instruction.

The Philippines

The CT efforts of the Philippine government, bolstered by major support from the United States, have unquestionably reduced the jihadi threat since 2001. The single most important accomplishment has been the systematic destruction of the al Qaeda linked group, Abu Sayyaf, which has shrunk from an estimated strength of 5,000 in 2000 to only a few hundred committed fighters today.[381]

Most of the terrorist attacks in the Philippines over the past six years were conducted by domestic groups with separatist agendas (e.g., Indigenous People's Federal Army, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and the New People's Army). While it has grown steadily weaker over time, Abu Sayyaf conducted some two dozen attacks—bombings, armed attacks, assassinations, and beheadings.[382] A disturbing trend is the growing cooperation among Abu Sayyaf, JI, and the fledgling Rajah Sulaiman Movement (RSM), which is comprised mainly of Christian converts to Islam.[383] The three near simultaneous bombings in three different cities–Manila, Davao, and General Santos City—on Valentine's Day in 2005, which resulted in eight deaths and 150 injuries, involved

[381] Reuters, "Philippine Troops Say Kill Senior Abu Sayyaf Man," *New York Times* (on the web), April 8, 2004.
[382] All statistics from MIPT Terrorist Knowledge Base.
[383] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 77.

operatives from all three groups. In addition, MILF-controlled territory continues to be used by JI as a sanctuary where it can regroup, train, and plan new attacks.[384]

Even in its weakened state, Abu Sayyaf, which literally means "bearer of the sword" in Arabic, is still the most powerful jihadi group in the Philippines. Its strength is magnified by its cooperation with JI and RSM. Abu Sayyaf was founded in 1991 by radicalized members of the separatist group, the Moro National Liberation Front, which had entered into negotiations with the Philippine government. Abu Sayyaf's declared goal is the creation of an independent Islamic state that encompasses parts of southern Thailand, Borneo, the Sulu Archipelago, and Mindanao. Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law, Muhammad Jamal Khalifa is believed to have provided most of the seed money for the start up of Abu Sayyaf, using funds laundered through his charity, the International Islamic Relief Organization. Abu Sayyaf's founder and leader, until he was killed by Philippine security forces in 1998, was Abdurajak Janjalani, who trained in al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. He was replaced by his younger brother, Khadaffy Janjalani, who was a less charismatic leader and had weaker Islamic credentials. During his tenure, the group fractionalized and gained a well-deserved reputation for criminality, resorting to robbery, extortion rackets, and kidnapping-for-ransom schemes to generate funds.[385] During Operation Ultimatum, a US-assisted CT operation that began in August 2006, Phillipine security forces killed several ASG leaders including Khadaffy Janjalani; Abu Solaiman, a senior planner and spokesman; and Ismin Shairon. Abu Sayyaf operates mainly in western Mindanao and the Sulu islands.

Immediately following the attacks on September 11, 2001, the US government ramped up CT assistance to the Philippines dramatically. On November 20, 2001, the US government agreed to provide $92 million in US military assistance and $55 million in economic aid for predominantly Muslim regions of the Philippines.[386] In January 2002, more than 1,300 US personnel, including 160 SF advisors, initiated a six-month, company-level training program with the Armed Forces of the

[384] Greg Sheridan, "Jihad Archipelago," *The National Interest*, Winter 2004–2005, p. 75; Carlos Conde, "U.S. To Aid Antiterror Plan in Philippines," *New York Times*, June 29, 2004.
[385] Sulu-based Abu Sayyaf terrorists, for example, are led by Jumdail Gumbahali. See "Infighting Splits Sayyaf," *Philippine Star*, March 8, 2004. See entry for "Abu Sayyaf Group" in the MIPT Terrorist Knowledge Base.
[386] Steven Mufson, "U.S. to Aid Philippines' Terrorism War," *Washington Post*, November 21, 2001.

Philippines (AFP) that focused on counter-terrorism and "civic action" projects, including setting up and running medical clinics, building schools, and digging wells.[387] Between 2001 and 2002, the United States equipped AFP units with about $100 million worth of military equipment, including night-vision goggles, two high-speed cutter ships, a C-130 transport aircraft, eight UH-1H Huey helicopters, and various types of small arms.[388] As part of this training program, US forces participated in an extended live-combat exercise called "Balikatan," which translates to "shoulder-to-shoulder," focused mainly on rooting out terrorists from Basilan Island. While this "exercise" significantly reduced Abu Sayyaf's presence on Basilan, many of the terrorist group's leaders and fighters fled to nearby Sulu province, particularly to the island of Jolo.[389]

In May 2003, the United States launched a new training program and designated the Philippines a "Major Non-NATO Ally," giving it greater access to US defense equipment and supplies. During 2003, several hundred US military personnel put two Philippine "light reaction" companies, eight Army and Marine light infantry battalions, and an unspecified number of helicopter pilots through an intensive training program focusing on intelligence fusion, command and control, night operations, and relevant light infantry tactics (i.e., close quarter battle, hostage rescue, and sniping).[390] In addition to classroom instruction and field training in Luzon, Mindanao, and Visayas, the training program featured more than a dozen small-scale exercises.[391]

Although plans to conduct a second Balikatan-scale exercise in 2003 to eliminate several hundred hard-core Abu Sayyaf terrorists believed to be on Jolo Island were derailed because of diplomatic and

[387] Some 25 field companies from the Armed Forces of the Philippines participated in the program. See U.S. Department of Defense, *2002 Year in Review*, December 31, 2002, p. 6. See also: James Hookway, "U.S. Official Warn Southeast Asia is Potential Meeting Site for Al Qaeda," *Wall Street Journal*, April 29, 2002; and Rowan Scarborough, "Philippine Army Closing In On Abu Sayyaf Rebels," *Washington Times*, March 29, 2002, p. 6.

[388] James Brooke, "Unease Grows in Philippines on U.S. Forces," *New York Times*, January 19, 2002, p. 1.

[389] Ellen Nakashima, "Island in the Philippines Poses Counterterrorism Challenge," *Washington Post*, December 21, 2002, p. 16.

[390] Julie Alipala, "U.S. Troops Arriving This Month for Exercises," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, January 6, 2003; and Martin Marfil, "Secret RP-US Plan to Deploy Rapid Force," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, December 4, 2002.

[391] Ding Cervantes, "Balance Piston 03-05 Blasts Off in Central Luzon," *Philippine Star*, January 28, 2003; and Eric Schmitt with Charles Conde, "U.S. and Philippines May Start New Training Mission, *New York Times*, December 1, 2002.

political issues, US-AFP cooperation continued unabated at the small unit level.[392] Those difficulties, however, were soon overcome with the formation of the Security Engagement Board to oversee an expanded exercise and training program. US and AFP military forces have conducted scores of small- and large-scale training exercises since 2004. Roughly every year, the US military and AFP conduct several small-scale joint training exercises (e.g., Kapit Bisig and Balance Piston) under the Joint Command Exercise for Training (JCET) program, a maritime-focused Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise, and a large-scale Balikatan exercise. Roughly 5,500 American troops and similar number of AFP personnel participated in Balikatan 2006, which was organized into three segments: humanitarian and civic assistance on the island of Jolo in the remote Sulu Archipelago, a combined task forces staff exercise in Cebu, and cross training and field training exercises in Luzon.[393] One of the most notable of the 37 joint US-AFP military exercises conducted under the Balikatan framework was Operation Ultimatum, launched in August 2006, which resulted in the capture or death of roughly 200 of the estimated 400 Abu Sayyaf fighters on Jolo over the course of six months.[394] The steady-state US military presence in the Philippines is about 500 troops, more than half of whom are SOF.

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[392] Major elements of the 2003 Balikatan exercise were dropped owing to Filipino political concerns and legal wrangling about whether an active combat role for US forces in support of PAF units, as opposed to a strictly "advisory" one, is permissible under the constitution of the Philippines. Jim Garamone, "U.S., Philippines to Operate Againt Abu Sayyaf Terrorists," *American Forces Information Service*, February 21, 2003; Bradley Graham, "U.S. Bolsters Philippine Force," *Washington Post*, February 21, 2003, p. 1; John Hendren, "Americans Could Face Another Swamp in the Philippines," *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 2003, p. 1; Eric Schmitt, "U.S. Combat Force of 1,700 is Headed to the Philippines," *New York Times*, February 21, 2003, p. 1; Ellen Nakashima and Bradley Graham, "Missed Signals Forced Suspension of U.S.-Philippine Mission," *Washington Post*, March 3, 2003, p. 12; Norman Bordadora, "Exact Role of U.S. Forces in Philippines Sought," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, February 26, 2003; Seth Mydans, "Combat Role for G.I.'s in Philippines Left Unclear," *New York Times*, February 25, 2003; and Ellen Nakashima, "Talks May Clarify U.S. Role in Philippines," *Washington Post*, February 24, 2003, p. 17.

[393] Some of the US troops deployed for the exercise were subsequently committed to humanitarian relief operations following a major landslide in southern Leyte.

[394] Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *County Reports on Terrorism 2006* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2007), Chapter II; Paul Wiseman, "In Philippines, U.S. Making Progress in the War on Terror," *USA Today*, February 14, 2007, p. 10; James Hookway, "U.S. War on Terror Shows Promise in the Philippines," *Wall Street Journal*, June 18, 2007, p. 1; and Ding Cervantes, "5,500 US Military Personnel Coming for Balikatan 2006," *Philippine Star*, February 17, 2006.

US efforts to bolster the CT capabilities of the AFP have been reinforced by scores of US-AFP community development projects (i.e., road paving, school renovation and construction, water well and distribution projects, and other infrastructure development projects) and US-led missions that have provided free medical care to tens of thousands of Filippinos.[395] These civil-military operations have turned the population against ASG in most areas, isolating them and cutting off their access to supplies.

Significant CT victories in the Philippines since 2001 include the death of Aldam Tilao (Abu Sabaya), a chief spokesman for Abu Sayyaf, who was killed in clash with navy commandoes in June 2002; the elimination of Indonesian terrorist, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, in October 2003; the capture of senior Abu Sayyaf commander, Ghalib Andang, in late 2003; the death of six members of Abu Sayyaf, including one its commanders, Hamsiraji Sali, in gun battle with AFP troops on Basilan island in April 2004; the successful thwarting in March 2004 of an Abu Sayyaf plot to carry out a series of bombing in Manila, which led to the arrest of six terrorists and the seizure 80 pounds of explosives; the arrest of several members of RSM, including its leader, Ahmad Santos, in October 2005; the death of Jainal Usman, a senior Abu Sayyaf commander, who was killed along with two of his subordinates by Philippine security forces in November 2005; and the death of Khadaffy Janjalani and Abu Solaiman in 2007.[396]

As with JI in Indonesia, while the pressure has been on, Abu Sayyaf and its affiliates have still managed to lash out. Major attacks have included the October 2002 bombing of department stores and a Catholic shrine in Zamboanga; the bombing of a ferry on February 27, 2004, which killed 116 people;[397] and the August 2005 bombing of a passenger ferry in Basilan, killing four people and injuring 30. By any measure, however, Abu Sayyaf has been substantially weakened since 2001. Despite this progress, the Philippine government still must overcome a number of shortfalls in its battle against terrorism, including weak CT

[395] William Cole, "U.S. Support Boosts Philippines," *Honolulu Advertiser*, April 23, 2007; and Hookway, "U.S. War on Terror Shows Promise in the Philippines," p. 1.

[396] These arrests were followed by the apprehension of RSM's second in command and operations chief, Pio de Vera, in December 2005. *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005*, p. 78.

[397] Jim Gomez, "Abu Sayyaf Reinvents Itself to Attract Recruits, Funding," *Manila Times*, April 21, 2004; and James Hookway, "Sinking of Ferry in Philippines Tied to Terrorism," *Wall Street Journal*, May 4, 2004, p. 17.

laws and spotty enforcement, rampant government corruption, recruitment and retention difficulties in key agencies, inadequate information technology, and porous borders and weak immigration controls.

The Americas

Owing to stepped up CT efforts throughout the Americas, the jihadi threat—which was never very high relative to other regions of the world—has ebbed considerably. In the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks, the US government took a number of important steps, including the following:

- Tripling spending on security at airlines, ports, borders, and other critical sites;
- Eliminating the legal and bureaucratic walls that previously kept US law enforcement and intelligence agencies from sharing information on terrorist threats;
- Restructuring the FBI, including creating a National Security Branch to coordinate terrorism investigations and intelligence operations, and expanding the number of Joint Terrorist Task Forces;
- Revising Immigration and Naturalization procedures, including adding new layers of screening (e.g., fact-to-face interviews, fingerprints, and routine database check for visa applications);
- Consolidating and improving the accessibility of terrorist watchlists available to Federal, State, and local government officials;
- Expanding the investigative powers of law enforcement agencies (i.e., the Patriot Act);
- Launching NSA-run terrorist surveillance programs, monitoring communications between individuals in the United States and known or suspected terrorists operatives overseas, and searching financial transactions for suspicious activity; and

- Creating the Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), and the Terrorist Screening Center.

Those initiatives have undoubtedly improved the security of the US homeland by, among other things, making it much more difficult for terrorists to enter into and operate within the United States. Since September 11th, US law enforcement personnel have arrested and convicted dozens of individuals, including Zacarias Moussaoui for his role in facilitating the 9/11 attacks, the "shoe bomber" Richard Reid, and more than a score of others—most of whom were found guilty of providing "material support" to al Qaeda. Convictions were made across the United States, ranging from New York, Washington DC, and New Jersey on the East Coast to Portland, Oregon on the West Coast.[398] At least four "serious" AQAM-linked plots to attack targets within the United States have been foiled to date and five attempts to either case American targets or infiltrate operatives into the United States have been disrupted.[399] Most recently, in May 2007, the government disrupted a plot by six Muslim men to attack Fort Dix with automatic weapons and possibly rocket-propelled grenades.[400] In addition to disrupting plots to attack the US homeland hatched overseas, as well as those developed by American citizens, residents, and illegal immigrants inspired by Salafi-Jihadi propaganda, the US government must also contend with the very real possibility that al Qaeda "sleeper cells" may already be in place and at work within the United States.[401] Fortunately, since 2001, jihadists have not managed to conduct a single follow-on attack within the US homeland.

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[398] White House, *9/11 Five Years Later: Successes and Challenges* (Washington, DC: White House, 2006), p. 8.

[399] White House, Fact Sheet—Plots, Casings, and Infiltrations Referenced in President Bush's Remarks on the War on Terror, October 6, 2005.

[400] The plotters included three ethnic Albanians who immigrated illegally into the United States; a Jordanian-born American citizen; and two legal residents, one from Albania and the other from Turkey. All six men were employed and were 22–28 years old. The group was clearly inspired by al Qaeda's call to jihad against the West. David Kocieniewski, "6 Men Arrested in Terror Plot Against Fort Dix," *New York Times*, May 9, 2007, p. 1; Alan Feuer, "Practice in the Poconos: U.S. Details How Men Prepared," *New York Times*, May 9, 2007; and Dale Russakoff and Dan Eggen, "Six Charged in Plot to Attack Fort Dix," *Washington Post*, May 9, 2007, p. 1.

[401] AP, "Al Qaeda Cells Forming in U.S., NorthCom Chief Says," *Colorado Springs Gazette*, July 25, 2007, p. 3; and Susan Schmidt, "Trail of an 'Enemy Combatant,' From Desert to U.S. Heartland—Details Emerge About Marri's Alleged Role in 'Second Wave' of Al-Qaeda Attacks," *Washington Post*, July 20, 2007, p. 1.

For decades, terrorists have exploited Canada's liberal immigration and asylum policies to find safehaven, raise funds, arrange logistical support, and plan terrorist attacks.[402] Hezbollah, for example, has used Canada as a major fund-raising and logistics base for years.[403] According to the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS), al Qaeda established cells in Canada in the late 1990s whose members have the "capability and conviction" to support terrorist activities all across North America.[404] In the wake of September 11th, however, the Canadian government enacted tougher CT legislation, increased oversight of Islamic charities and non-governmental organizations, enhanced its financial intelligence capabilities, and stepped up intelligence sharing with the US government. In December 2002, the Canadian government finally banned all Hezbollah activities within its borders and arrested Mohammed Harket, an Algerian with extensive links to al Qaeda reaching back to the 1990s.[405] In June 2006, as the result of a sting operation, Canadian authorities arrested 17 Muslim citizens or residents of Canada who had conspired to attack targets in downtown Toronto using three tons of ammonium nitrate.[406] While Canada has made some important strides in improving its CT capabilities since 2001, the US government remains concerned that several al Qaeda operatives and "sleeper cells" remain at large in Canada.[407]

Several countries in Central and South America have taken modest steps to strengthen financial laws to make money laundering and other illicit transactions more difficult, tighten border security, and improve domestic policing and CT capabilities. Nevertheless, longstanding weaknesses that could be exploited by terrorist groups remain, including corruption, relatively weak financial laws, poor border security, and lax enforcement of existing CT laws. As one example of the

[402] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, pp. 160–161; and Paul Martin, "Canada Bans All Hezbollah Activities," *Washington Times*, December 12, 2002, p. 1.
[403] Martin, "Canada Bans All Hezbollah Activities," p. 1.
[404] Robert Frank, "Ottawa, Justifying Algerian's Arrest, Says Al Qaeda Is Operating in Canada," *New York Times*, December 17, 2002; and Jerry Seper, "Al Qaeda Said to be Operating in Canada," Washington Times, December 19, 2002, p. 1.
[405] Dana Priest and DeNeen L. Brown, "Sleeper Cell Contacts Are Revealed in Canada," *Washington Post*, December 25, 2002, p. 1.
[406] AP, "Sting Led to Canada Terrorism Arrests," June 5, 2006.
[407] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 161.

problem, the Government of Brazil has chosen not to establish a terrorist-designation system that would make support for and membership in terrorist groups a crime, and officially considers Hezbollah to be a legitimate political party.[408]

Hezbollah, HAMAS, and other Islamic terrorist groups continue to find sanctuary in the loosely regulated territory in the "tri-border" area shared by Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil. They take advantage of this area primarily for fundraising and recruitment, but may also be engaged in planning, training, and logistical support activity. They are especially active in the Muslim communities in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, and Foz do Iguacu, Brazil.[409]

There have been sporadic reports of al Qaeda activity in Honduras and elsewhere in Central America. Al Qaeda may be interested in establishing secure land routes to the US homeland by cultivating relationships with Central American gangs, Maras, and other criminal groups. For a variety of reasons, however, strategic cooperation between them and al Qaeda is unlikely.[410]

While Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist cells have not made major inroads in the Americas to date, they continue to plot new attacks. The 2007 NIE on *The Terrorist Threat to the US Homeland* assessed that al Qaida's intent to attack the US homeland was "undiminished" and that its plotting "is likely to continue to focus on prominent political, economic, and infrastructure targets with the goal of producing mass casualties, visually dramatic destruction, significant economic aftershocks, and/or fear among the US population."[411] It later concludes that "the spread of radical—especially Salafi—Internet sites, increasingly aggressive anti-US rhetoric and actions, and the growing number of radical, self-generating cells in Western countries indicate that the radical and violent segment of the West's Muslim population is expanding, including in the United States."

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[408] Ibid., pp. 157–170.
[409] Ibid., pp. 22–23.
[410] Carlos Mauricio Pineda Cruz, "Al Qaeda's Unlikely Allies in Central America," in Christopher Heffelfinger, ed., *Unmasking Terror—A Global Review of Terrorist Activities* (Washington, DC: The Jamestown Foundation, 2005), pp. 458–461.
[411] NIC, *NIE—The Terrorist Threat to the US Homeland* (Washington, DC: NIC, July 2007), p. 1.

Southwest Asia and the Levant

The jihadi movement has strengthened and extended its geographic reach in Southwest Asia, the Levant, and the broader Middle East over the past six years. The key battlegrounds for the Salafi-Jihadi branch of Islamic radicalism in this region are currently Saudi Arabia and Iraq. For the Khomeinists, the key battlegrounds are Lebanon and Iraq.

As will be elaborated upon below, the situation in Lebanon is extremely fluid. While the government appears to have contained the threat posed by Fatah al-Islam in the north, southern Lebanon remains under the *de facto* control of Hezbollah. In Beirut, for over a year, the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora has weathered repeated marches, "sit ins," and other protests organized and supported by Hezbollah; the Shiite political party, Amal; and various Christian opposition groups. As a result of the ongoing constitutional crisis, the office of the president has remained vacant in Lebanon since November 2007. Although the Saudi government has essentially eradicated Al Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula, the government continues to promote Wahhabism overseas, Saudi clerics provide critical ideological support to the jihadi movement, and Saudi nationals are taking part in the insurgency in Iraq. AQI has chalked up a number of important victories for the jihadi movement: weakening the US military, imposing high costs on the United States at limited cost to the movement, creating wedges between America and its allies, and winning over the hearts and minds of the *ummah* through the skillful exploitation of graphic images of American "atrocities" in Iraq and successful guerrilla operations—most notably, IED attacks—against the new "Crusaders." Simultaneously, as has been discussed earlier, Iran has made major strides in exporting the ideals of the Khomeini revolution to Iraq.

Other important fronts for the jihadi movement in the region include the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Yemen. While al Qaeda-linked groups continue to operate in all of these areas, the level of activity is, on balance, comparable to that in 2001. Indeed, since the CT capabilities of the governments of Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen, in particular, have improved over the intervening years, one could argue that the terrorist threat has abated. Improvements in the CT capabilities of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE also appear to be outpacing the relatively slow growth of the threat in those areas as well.

Saudi Arabia

The Salafi-Jihadi threat within and emanating from Saudi Arabia has diminished dramatically since 2001. This is critically important because overthrowing the "apostate" royal family is one of the original and most deeply held goals of al Qaeda and its founder, Osama bin Laden. As a Saudi exile and vocal critic of the "corrupt" ruling regime since at least the First Gulf War in 1990–1991, Osama bin Laden is personally committed to deposing the House of Saud.

It is imperative to prevent Saudi Arabia from falling into the hands of al Qaeda or any other similarly inspired radical group. The propaganda value, and fundraising and recruitment potential, of controlling Mecca and Medina for the jihadi movement would be incalculable. The Kingdom's oil could not only be used to fund jihadi operations of unprecedented scope and intensity, but also as an instrument of strategic economic warfare against the West. Fortunately, in the wake of al Qaeda's attacks against Saudi targets in 2003, the government launched a very effective internal counter-terrorism campaign, and reined in extremist madrassas and mosques within the Kingdom. Reflecting the effectiveness of the government's counter-terrorism efforts, in 2005, only two terrorist attacks occurred in the Kingdom, as compared to 15 significant attacks in 2004. While there have been a few thwarted attacks, including an attempted suicide truck bombing of Saudi Arabia's largest oil processing facility in Abqaiq, there were no successful attacks in 2006 or 2007.

As discussed earlier, as a result of Wahhab's pact with the rising Najd chieftain, Muhammed Ibn Saud, in the mid-18th century, his extremist view of Islam became the state religion of Saudi Arabia. Beginning with the discovery of oil in the Kingdom in the 1930s, the state has provided Wahhabi *muftis* and imams funding, both for running madrassas and proselytizing abroad. Over the past half century, Saudi Arabia has spent tens of billions of petro-dollars building and operating schools, charities, and mosques around the world—nearly all of which espouse Wahhabism, and many of which were recently discovered to have links to terrorist groups.[412] It is by no means a coincidence that 15 of the 19 hijackers on September 11th were Saudi citizens. Financial laws in Saudi Arabia were inadequate for detecting money

[412] Zeyno Baran, Nixon Center, "Combating al Qaeda and the Militant Islamic Threat," Prepared Statement for House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, February 16, 2005, p. 4.

laundering and illicit transfers to terrorist organizations. Islamic charities and extremist madrassas were essentially unregulated.

All of that began to change, however, in the wake of al Qaeda-directed synchronized car bombings of three residential housing compounds (Vinnell Arabia, Al Hamra, and Gedawal) on May 12, 2003, killing 35 people and injuring more than 200 others—mostly foreign workers. As the US ambassador to Saudi Arabia put it at the time, "If this was not the Saudis' September 11th, it was certainly the Saudis' Pearl Harbor."[413] Immediately after the bombing, Crown Prince Abdullah publicly swore to "confront and destroy" the attackers and over the past four years he has made good on that promise.[414] Yousif Salih Fahad al Ayeeri, the commander of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, was killed in a shoot out with Saudi security forces only a few weeks later. In the following months, Saudi security forces arrested 600 people with suspected terrorist ties, interrogated over 2,000 individuals, rolled up dozens of terrorist cells, and seized several caches of weapons and explosives.[415] Those measures, while impressive, were not sufficient to prevent a follow-on assault and car bombing of the Al-Muhaya residential housing complex in Riyadh, killing 17 people and injuring more than 120 others, roughly six months later on November 8, 2003. Unlike the May attack, however, nearly all of the casualties were Muslim Arabs, including several women and at least five children. That fact outraged the Saudi population, which turned sharply against al Qaeda and gave the government even more popular latitude in conducting aggressive counter-terrorism operations. Many Saudis who were sympathetic toward al Qaeda's call to defensive jihad ended their support.

Although al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula managed to conduct 15 significant terrorist attacks in 2004, including a shooting rampage in Khobar at the end of May that left 22 civilians dead, the organization was largely wiped out—or at least driven underground—by year's end. Saudi security forces not only rolled up several cells, capturing or killing all but seven of its 26 most-wanted terrorists, but also decapitated the senior leadership of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. In the span of just four months, Saudi security forces hunted down and

[413] Neil MacFarquhar, "Saudis Are Shaken as Jihad Erupts at Their Front Door," *New York Times*, May 16, 2003, p. 1.
[414] Steven R. Weisman, "Bush Condemns Saudi Blasts; 7 Americans Are Dead," *New York Times*, May 14, 2003, p. 1.
[415] Reuters, "Terror Threat in Saudi Arabia," *New York Times*, October 26, 2003; and John Bradley, "Saudis Outraged at Muslim Casualties," *Washington Times*, November 10, 2003.

killed two successive commanders of the organization: Khalid al-Hajj, killed in March 2004; and Abd al-Aziz al-Muqrin, killed in a shoot-out with Saudi police in June 2004. The fourth commander, Saleh Aoofi, was seriously injured in July 2004 and killed in a police raid in August 2005; and his successor, Fahd Faraaj al-Juwair was killed in Riyadh following the failed attack on the Abiqaiq oil-processing facility in late February 2006.[416] The average term of the first five commanders of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula turned out to be less than seven months. The third most-wanted terrorist in Saudi Arabia, Zaid Saad al-Samari, was killed in a bloody three-day siege in Dammam in September 2005.[417] Since then, although several plots have been disrupted, there has not been a single significant attack in Saudi Arabia attributed to al Qaeda or any of its affiliates.

In total, since May 2003, Saudi authorities have foiled more than 25 major attacks, captured or killed 264 al Qaeda operatives (including all but one of the individuals on its "most wanted" list), and arrested more than 800 people with links to al Qaeda.[418] Of the 36 "second tier" operatives identified by Saudi intelligence, as of the end of 2006, 20 had fled the Kingdom, 12 had been captured or killed, and only four remained at large.[419] In April 2007, the Saudi government announced that over the previous seven months they had broken up seven terrorist cells scattered across the country, arrested 172 suspected terrorists

[416] Muqrin was arguably al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's most effective and charismatic leader. He trained in al Qaeda's training camps in Afghanistan in late 1990s, fought with the Taliban in 2001, and participated in jihad operations in Somalia, Bosnia, and Algeria. See Craig Whitlock, "Saudi Builds Reputation as a Leader of Terror Cell," *Washington Post*, June 18, 2004, p. 19; Craig Whitlock, "Al Qaeda Shifts Its Strategy in Saudi Arabia," *Washington Post*, December 19, 2004, p. 28; AP, "'Al Qaeda Leader' In Saudi Arabia Killed," *Washington Post*, August 19, 2005; and AP, "Saudi Arabia: Ministry Says Police Killed Qaeda Leader," *New York Times*, March 1, 2006.

[417] Hassan Fattah, "Saudis Kill Top Militant, Ending Skirmish with Al Qaeda Cell," *New York Times*, September 7, 2005.

[418] Between September and December 2006, Saudi authorities carried out a series of sweeps across the country, rolling up a large terrorist cell in Riyadh and arresting 136 suspected terrorists with links to al Qaeda. David Ignatius, "Lessons from the Saudis," *Washington Post*, November 22, 2006, p. 21; and Suleiman Nimr, "Three-month Roundup Nets 136 Terror Suspects," *Washington Times*, December 3, 2006, p. 6.

[419] Claude Salhani, "Death and The Rumors of Death," *Washington Times*, November 10, 2006.

(mostly Saudi nationals), and seized a large cache of weapons and more than $5 million in cash.[420]

In parallel with this vigorous manhunting effort, the Saudi government began a concerted effort to rein in radicalism—firing 44 Friday preachers, 160 imams, and 149 prayer callers for "incompetence" and suspending nearly 1,400 religious officials from their duties until they complete "retraining" programs.[421] In 2004, the Ministry of Interior also initiated a "re-education and rehabilitation program" that seeks to de-radicalize incarcerated extremists by engaging them in intensive religious debates and psychological counseling. Of the roughly 2,000 prisoners who have agreed to participate, 700 have renounced their former takfiri beliefs and jihadi ideology.[422] Saudi Arabia also expanded intelligence sharing with several partner states in the GWOT.

While there is no question that the violent jihadi strain of Sunni Islam has been weakened in Saudi Arabia since 2001, there are still several concerns looking forward:

- Less-than-vigorous enforcement of banking and financial laws, as well as continued lack of oversight over Islamic charity and relief organizations based in Saudi Arabia that are engaged in suspicious activities overseas;

- State funding of Wahhabi enterprises (e.g., schools, madrassas, mosques, and cultural centers) and clerics around the world with links to Islamic radicalism and terrorist activity;

- The intellectual contribution of Saudi clerics to the jihadi movement; and

- The involvement of Saudi nationals in the insurgency in Iraq and the potential domestic ramifications of their return home.

[420] The cells were apparently plotting to conduct suicide attacks against oil installations, military bases, and public officials. Michael Slackman, "Saudis Round Up 172, Citing a Plot Against Oil Rigs," *New York Times*, April 28, 2007, p. 1.
[421] Christine Spolar, "Saudis Reach Out in War on Terror," *Chicago Tribune*, February 12, 2005.
[422] Christopher Boucek, "Extremist Reeducation and Rehabilitation in Saudi Arabia," *Terrorism Monitor*, August 16, 2007, pp. 1–4.

Although Saudi authorities promised to enact new banking laws and financial procedures in 2003 to detect money-laundering activity and stem the flow of money from Saudi charities and wealthy businessmen to terrorist groups overseas, it has been slow to do so. While it did set up a financial intelligence unit to track terrorist financing in September 2005, it is focused almost exclusively on domestic activity. This is problematic because five of the Muslim world's largest charity and relief organizations—including the Muslim World League, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, and the International Islamic Relief Organization—are headquartered in Saudi Arabia and reportedly continue to engage in highly suspicious activity overseas. Saudi officials committed in 2004 to establish a government commission to provide badly needed oversight of Saudi-based charity and relief organizations, but implementation has languished in many areas (e.g., the creation of a High Commission for Charities). The Saudi government has also been reluctant to crack down on the private donations of wealthy Saudi businessmen to terrorist-linked organizations. As a result, according to the US government, millions of dollars continue to flow from Saudi bank accounts into the coffers of terrorist groups operating outside the Kingdom.[423]

The Saudi government continues to provide billions of dollars in funding to Wahhabi schools and madrassas, mosques, cultural centers, and other proselytizing efforts overseas. While the Saudi government is striving to promote a more moderate form of Wahhabism domestically, that effort is pursued much less aggressively, if at all, overseas.[424] In short, Saudi Arabia still provides funding to extremist schools and madrassas—as well as to the radical clerics, imams, and educators that run them—around the world, which contributes to the radicalization of Muslim youth.

Saudi establishment clerics are among the most influential contributors to modern Salafi thought, of which violent jihadism is a subset.[425] While Saudi clerics and religious scholars are generally politically mute, supportive of the ruling Saud family, and openly critical of some jihadi doctrines (e.g., who has the right to call for a jihad, who can

[423] Josh Meyer, "U.S. Faults Saudi Efforts on Terrorism," *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 2006, p. 1; and John Mintz, "Saudi Anti-Terror Efforts Criticized," *Washington Post*, June 15, 2004.
[424] David Ottaway, "Saudi Effort Draws on Radical Clerics to Combat Lure of Al Qaeda," *Washington Post*, May 7, 2006, p. 23; and Meyer, "U.S. Faults Saudi Efforts on Terrorism," p. 1.
[425] William McCants, Jarret Brachman, et al, *Military Ideology Atlas*, pp. 6–8.

excommunicate Muslims, and whether armed revolt against a Muslim ruler is legitimate) and tactics (e.g., suicide bombing, killing other Muslims, and killing women, children and the elderly), they add tremendous legitimacy to the broader Salafi movement and the call to a defensive jihad to liberate Muslim lands from Western "occupation."

It is well established that many of the foreign fighters contributing to the insurgency in Iraq are Saudi nationals. According to the US military, roughly 45 percent of all foreign militants in Iraq are from Saudi Arabia.[426] Of an estimated 60–80 foreign fighters who enter Iraq each month, the US government claims that about half are coming from Saudi Arabia.[427] These statistics are troubling for at least two reasons: first, the fact that so many Saudi youth are willing to martyr themselves in a defensive jihad in Iraq provides a strong indication of the level of radicalization of Saudi society; and second, when these jihadis eventually return home after gaining considerable operational experience and being exposed to further radical indoctrination in Iraq, they may pose a serious domestic security threat. While the Saudi government has repeatedly claimed that the number of Saudi nationals fighting is Iraq is vastly overestimated, it is apparently sufficiently concerned about their prospective return, along with their foreign associates, to invest millions of dollars into the construction of a 560-mile security fence along its northern border with Iraq.[428]

[426] The US military claims that militants from Saudi Arabia are responsible for about half of the suicide bombings in Iraq. Other studies, however, claim that the proportion of Saudis in Iraq is inflated. A study by the Center for Strategic International Studies (CSIS) in 2005, for example, found that Saudis comprised the sixth largest group of foreign fighters at 12 percent, following behind: Algerians at 20 percent, Syrians at 18 percent, Yemenis at 17 percent, Sudanese at 15 percent, and Egyptians at 13 percent. Ned Parker, "Saudis' Role in Iraq Insrugency Outlined," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 2007, p. 1; Meyer, "U.S. Faults Saudi Efforts on Terrorism," p. 1; and Susan Glasser, "'Martyrs' in Iraq Mostly Saudis," *Washington Post*, May 15, 2005, p. 1.

[427] Helene Cooper, "U.S. Officials Voice Frustrations with Saudis, Citing Role in Iraq," *New York Times*, July 27, 2007, p. 1.

[428] The "fence" actually comprises two parallel fences enclosing a 100-meter "no-man's land" containing concertina wire obstacles, ultraviolet sensors and night vision camera, and buried motion detection sensors. Command posts, helipads, and observations towers will be spaced along the frontier. The fence barrier will also be preceded by massive sand berms immediately adjacent to the border.

Lebanon

Lebanon is an interesting case in that, like Iraq, both the Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist branches of Islamic radicalism are present. While growth of the Salafi-Jihadi branch has been slowed by Lebanese Army operations against Fatah al-Islam, the Khomeinist branch appears to be stronger than ever as Hezbollah grows in stature and influence.

As discussed in detail in Chapter III, Hezbollah's clash with the IDF in southern Lebanon in July-August 2006 was an important strategic victory for the organization and bolstered the standing of its two key patrons, Iran and Syria, in the Muslim world. By surviving the Israeli onslaught, Hassan Nasrallah has emerged as a rising anti-Israel icon in the Arab world. Hezbollah's popularity has soared not only among Lebanese Shiites, but also among Sunni Arabs and Palestinians, in particular. Hezbollah-controlled southern Lebanon is now, in effect, a state within a state. Meanwhile, the democratically elected government in Beirut has been severely weakened owing both to its inability to rein in Hezbollah and its failure to defend the territory and people of Lebanon from Israel's attack. Taking advantage of this frailty, at the beginning of December 2006, Nasrallah called for "civilized and peaceful" demonstrations to pressure the government into accepting its demands for greater representation in the cabinet, which would, in effect, allow Hezbollah to exercise a veto over all government actions. Embattled Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, who equated Nasrallah's threats to an attempted coup, cautioned that "Lebanon's independence is threatened and its democratic system is in danger."[429]

In short, while the IDF may well have won the summer battle in 2006 in a narrow tactical sense (e.g., inflicting many more casualties than it suffered and temporarily eliminating a large fraction of Hezbollah's military infrastructure in the south), it lost strategically. Falling on the heels of Israel's unilateral withdrawals from Lebanon in 2000 and the Gaza Strip in 2005, Hezbollah's victory has simultaneously bolstered Hezbollah's political influence and reinforced popular perceptions of Israeli weakness, eroding the credibility of Israeli deterrence.

[429] In response to Nasrallah's call to protest, large numbers of Lebanese Shiites took to the streets in Beirut along with supporters of Christian groups allied with Hezbollah. Estimates on the number of protestors vary from "tens of thousands," according to media sources linked to the government, to over one million, according to Hezbollah's al-Manar television channel. Anthony Shadid, "Crisis Intensifies in Lebanon as Hezbollah Takes to the Streets," Washington Post, December 2, 2006, p. 1; and Anthony Shadid, "Hezbollah Sets Anti-Government Protest, Sit-In," *Washington Post*, December 1, 2006, p. 23.

Exacerbating the tense stand-off in Beirut with Hezbollah, in May 2007, the Lebanese government had to contend with an unexpected threat in the northern part of the country, Fatah al-Islam, a terrorist group based out of the Nahr al-Bared refugee camp with possible links to al Qaeda and Syria.[430] After months of periodically intense fighting, which necessitated the shipment of US military aid (e.g., munitions, body armor, and helmets) to the Lebanese Army, surviving Fatah al-Islam fighters holed up in the refugee camp eventually surrendered, went underground, or committed suicide.[431] With over 30 Lebanese soldiers killed in action and scores of civilian deaths—making it the bloodiest internal strife since the end of the civil war in 1990—the clash with Fatah al-Islam was costly.[432]

As of the writing of this report, the security situation in Lebanon remained volatile with Hezbollah politically ascendant and in the process of being re-armed by Iran and Syria.[433]

Iraq

Operation Iraqi Freedom has had a deleterious effect on the overall US position in the GWOT. US-led operations in Iraq over the past four years have added credibility to the jihadi message that Muslim lands are being occupied by foreign infidels, and thus, it is the individual duty of every Muslim to join in a defensive jihad to expel the new "crusaders." US operations—especially major missteps like the Abu Ghraib debacle and the al-Haditha incident—have provided daily grist for the jihadi movement's propaganda mill and Islamist media outlets, facilitating the

[430] Fatah al-Islam is an offshoot of Fatah al-Intifada. While Lebanese and Palestinian militants are believed to hold leadership positions, the rank and file is reportedly comprised mainly of foreign fighters from Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Yemen, Algeria, and Bangladesh. Christopher Allbritton, "Jihadists Moving into Lebanon from Syria," *Washington Times*, May 28, 2007, p. 1.

[431] Ellen Knickmeyer, "Lebanon Confronts A Fierce Adversary," *Washington Post*, May 22, 2007, p. 1; and Alia Ibrahim, "U.S. Military Aid Begins to Reach Lebanon," *Washington Post*, May 26, 2007, p. 16.

[432] A total of 200 people had been killed as of July 2007. Nahr Al-Bared, "The Cauldron May Bubble Over Again," *The Economist*, May 26, 2007, pp. 47–48; and Souad Mekhennet, Michael Moss, and Michael Slackman, "Chaotic Lebanon Risks Becoming Militant Haven," *New York Times*, July 7, 2007, p. 1.

[433] Agence France-Presse, "Lebanon: Israel Says Hezbollah is Rearming," *New York Times*, January 10, 2007, p. 4; and "Arms Still Crossing Lebanon-Syria Border," *Baltimore Sun*, April 1, 2007.

radicalization of mainstream Muslims. While hard data is unavailable, the Iraqi jihad has almost certainly been a boon to terrorist recruitment throughout the region and has definitely served as a terrorist training ground. As jihadis return to their native countries or move to other fronts in the global jihad, they do so with more skills and operational experience, an expanded list of terrorist contacts, a deeper commitment to their cause, and increased personal stature that can be useful for recruiting and setting up new terrorist cells. As declassified portions of the April 2006 National Intelligence Estimate on "Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States," aptly summarized: "The Iraq conflict has become the 'cause celebre' for jihadists, breading a deep resentment of the US involvement in the Muslim world and cultivating supporters for the global jihadist movement."[434]

That being said, at this point the United States (and the West more broadly) has much more to lose in Iraq than al Qaeda and the wider jihadi movement. As will be summarized below, al Qaeda has made substantial progress along several of its major lines of operation discussed in Chapter II of this report. Even if the badly weakened AQI franchise is forced to close up shop (or go underground) in Iraq in 2008, the broader movement could credibly claim a number of strategic victories: weakening the US military, imposing a high economic burden on the US Treasury, dividing America from its allies, establishing a *de facto* operational sanctuary within Iraq (albeit a rapidly shrinking one), and winning over Muslim hearts and minds in the global media war, especially with respect to the legitimacy of its call to defensive jihad (although its tactics in Iraq have likely alienated many mainstream Muslims as well). Similarly, while not irreversible, Iran's gains in political and religious influence in Iraq, as well as its establishment of a significant MOIS and Qods Force presence in key areas, are likely to endure, especially if Iraq's Shiite majority maintains its grip on the reins of power. In short, a strong case can be made that the Sunni jihadis and "Khomeinists" have already won in Iraq. Their victories can be elevated or diminished to varying degrees, but not easily taken away, at least not in the short run.

Conversely, the stakes for the United States are much higher: if it is perceived as having been defeated in Iraq, regardless of whether the cause was the sectarian-driven insurgency or operations by foreign

[434] Declassified Key Judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate, "Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States," dated April 2006, as released by the White House, p. 2.

jihadis, there would be serious negative ramifications for the US position in the broader GWOT. At a minimum, a perceived American defeat in Iraq would:

- Reinforce al Qaeda's narrative of American weakness as evidenced in Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia, emboldening jihadis to launch new attacks against the United States to bring about its final collapse, just as Osama bin Laden claims the mujahideen brought down the Soviet Union;

- Raise the stature of al Qaida and its affiliates throughout the Muslim world, especially among Salafis, who now constitute a significant portion of the Muslim population in the Middle East and North Africa;

- Be a tremendous boon to jihadi recruitment and fundraising globally; and

- Depending on the security situation within Iraq, provide an operational sanctuary from which jihadi fighters could conduct operations against neighboring "apostate" regimes (i.e., Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia), as well as plan, organize, and train for attacks against Europe and the United States.

As Zawahiri put it back in September 2004, "the Americans are trapped between two conflagrations. If they stay, they will bleed to death, and if they retreat, they will lose everything."[435] Put another way, the United States faces the extraordinarily difficult challenge of stabilizing Iraq while simultaneously preventing al Qaeda from advancing farther along its major lines of operation, and eventually withdrawing American forces while minimizing the perception of defeat. A rapid withdrawal of US forces from Iraq would be counter-productive in both respects. On this point, General David Petraeus paraphrased the findings of a classified DIA assessment in his September 2007 report to Congress:

> A rapid withdrawal would result in the future release of the strong centrifugal forces in Iraq and produce a number of dangerous results, including a high risk of

[435] Ayman al-Zawahiri, statement on audio tape released to al-Jazeera, September 9, 2004 as translated in MEMRI, Special Dispatch Sereies No. 950, August 4, 2005.

> disintegration of the Iraqi Security Forces; rapid deterioration of local security initiatives; *Al Qaeda-Iraq regaining lost ground and freedom of maneuver*; a marked increase in violence and further ethno-sectarian displacement and refugee flows; alliances of convenience by Iraqi groups with internal and external forces to gain advantages over their rivals; and exacerbation of already challenging regional dynamics, especially with respect to Iran.[436]

While that assessment might well be valid, indefinitely allowing al Qaeda to inflict high costs on the US military in Iraq at a relatively low cost to itself and exploit US military operations there to gain "ground" in the global media war is no more tenable strategically. A phased withdrawal plan that balances the risks associated with a rapid pullback and the manifold costs of continued US military presence is needed.

It is well beyond the scope of this report, however, to provide a detailed assessment of how the security situation in Iraq has evolved since 2003 and of competing strategic options for moving ahead. With respect to the GWOT, Iraq presents a complex case in that both strains of Islamic extremism—Salafi jihadists and Khomeinists—are at play. While these Sunni and Shiite extremists have a shared strategic interest in attacking Coalition forces, a sanguinary sectarian struggle over who will wield power in Iraq now predominates.

The role of Iran in promoting "Khomeinism" in Iraq was already discussed in Chapter III and will not be elaborated upon here. In short, Iran appears to be attempting to transplant the Hezbollah model to Iraqi soil—the parallels between Iranian operations in southern Lebanon in the 1980s and ongoing activities in Iraq are unmistakable. As part of this effort, Iran has already accomplished a great deal: expanding its already extensive political influence with Iraqi Shiite political parties, providing covert support to armed Shiite militias and gangs, establishing a physical presence with MOIS and Qods Force personnel, and funding and providing logistical support for a vast network of Shiite-controlled social services (e.g., churches, schools, hospitals, and

[436] Emphasis added. General David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, "Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq," September 10–11, 2007, p. 8.

various charities). What follows is a macro-level summary of the role played by Salafi- Jihadi groups (principally AQI) in Iraq over the past six years and US efforts to defeat them.

From Tawhid and Jihad to Al Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers, 2002–2004

The alliance between the late Abu Musab Zarqawi's terrorist organization in Iraq and al Qaeda was one of convenience: al Qaeda needed the publicity of operations in Iraq to maintain its profile in the Muslim world, while Zarqawi needed the al Qaeda "branding" to improve anemic recruitment and fundraising. Although Zarqawi and al Qaeda shared many of the same strategic goals, they differed on fundamental issues, including whether the jihad should prioritize attacks against the "far enemy" or the "near enemy." Zarqawi adamantly believed that the focus should remain on the latter and that direct operations against the United States were a strategic distraction.[437] The US invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and the subsequent establishment of what was perceived as an apostate, Shiite-controlled interim government, conflated the far and near enemy, making cooperation between Zarqawi and al Qaeda possible.[438] Reflecting the underlying ideological tension, however, Zarqawi did not agree to join al Qaeda until 18 months after the initiation of Operation Iraqi Freedom, changing the name of his organization from "Tawhid and Jihad" to "The Al Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers."[439] Having adopted an inflexible, extremist, violent ideology may have alienated more Muslims than it attracted, Zarqawi was pushed into this alliance to enhance the group's appeal among Iraqi Sunnis, as well as to facilitate cooperation with other terrorist groups operating in Iraq (e.g. Ansar al-Sunna).[440]

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[437] In a book released on-line in May 2005, Abu Hamzah al-Baghdadi, the chief of Zarqawi's sharia committee explained the reasoning behind Zarqawi's focus on the near enemy, writing: "Apostasy is a greater transgression than original disbelief, and the apostate in the greater enemy....[T]he enemy who is close to the Muslims is more dangerous. When you fight him, you avert his evil and the evil of those who stand behind him. If the Muslims occupy themselves with fighting the far enemy, the near enemy will seize the chance to hurt the Muslims." Abu Hamzah al-Baghdadi, "Why Do We Fight, and Whom Do We Fight?" June 2005, http://www.tajdeed.org.uk/forums.

[438] Brian Fishman, "After Zarqawi: The Dilemmas and Future of Al Qaeda in Iraq," *Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 2006, pp. 20–21.

[439] Walter Pincus, "Zarqawi is Said to Swear Allegiance to Bin Laden," *Washington Post*, October 19, 2004, p. 16.

[440] Fishman, "After Zarqawi," pp. 21–22.

With the combination of successful, high-profile attacks against Coalition forces in Iraq and the legitimacy conferred by the al Qaeda branding, the Al Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers was generally ascendant between 2003 and the first half of 2004. As early as February 2004, however, Zarqawi recognized that he had a looming problem: Sunni tribal leaders had started turning against his group, primarily because of its excessive, graphic violence (e.g., kidnappings and videotaped beheadings) and slaughter of Arab Muslims, including women and children, in indiscriminate suicide bombings. Second, while attacks against Coalition forces were popular, it would be difficult to justify attacks against the expanding Iraqi military and police force composed mainly of Arab Muslims. As Zarqawi put it at the time:

> There is no doubt that the space in which we can move has begun to shrink and that the grip around the throat of the mujahidin has begun to tighten. With the deployment of [Iraqi] soldiers and police, the future has become frightening.[441]

Zarqawi concluded that, with time working against him, he had three options: attack the tribal chiefs directly, which would undermine his already tenuous support base within the Sunni community; "pack our bags and search for another land;" or instigate Shia-Sunni sectarian warfare to create a common cause with the Sunnis and "drag the [Islamic] nation into the battle."[442] Zarqawi chose to pursue the first and third options, with an emphasis on the latter. That outcome is not surprising given that Zarqawi had a visceral hatred of Shiites and considered them to be heretics deserving death.[443] As will be elaborated upon below, this shift in strategy enraged Zawahiri and other senior al Qaeda leaders who argued that targeting fellow Muslims (even Shiites), as opposed to coalition forces, would alienate the *ummah* and jeopardize the lives of al Qaeda "guests" of the Shia government in Iran.

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[441] Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, letter released by the Coalition Provisional Authority, February 12, 2004, http://www.cpa-iraq.org/transcripts/20040212_zarqawi_full.html.

[442] Ibid.

[443] Zarqawi viewed Shiites as even more dire threat to the *ummah* than the United States and the West. He has stated, for example, that "The Muslims will have no victory or superiority over the aggressive infidels such as the Jews and Christians until there is total annihilation of those under them such as the apostate agents headed by the rafidha [Twelver Shiites]." For an extended discussion of Zarqawi's anti-shia views, see Nibras Kazimi, "Zarqawi's Anti-Shia Legacy: Original or Borrowed?" *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, September 2006.

AQI's bombings of Shiite shrines in Najaf, Baghdad, and Karbala; bloody attacks on Shiite civilians; and assassinations of Sunni tribal leaders had precisely the effect that al Qaeda central feared: alienating Iraqi Sunnis and mainstream Muslims. Zarqawi's actions prompted a scathing letter to him in December 2005 from a senior official within al Qaeda central, who claimed to be writing from Waziristan, which commanded him not to "kill any religious leader or tribal leader who is obeyed, and of good repute in Iraq from among the Sunnis, no matter what."[444] It also rebuked him for a series of other poor strategic decisions, including the slaughter of "turncoat" Shiites, which alienated the people instead of "bringing them in and gaining their hearts."[445] As will be elaborated upon below, while Zarqawi ignored this warning, the tribal backlash in Al Anbar and Diyala provinces in 2006-2007 would seem to vindicate the strategic judgment of al Qaeda central.

AQI as a Catalyst for Sectarian Strife in Iraq

In a letter to al Qaeda central, Zarqawi offered the following justification for his 2004 decision to instigate sectarian strife in Iraq:

> Targeting [Shia] in religious, political, and military depth will provoke them to show the Sunnis their rabies…and bare the teeth of the hidden rancor working in their breasts. If we succeed in dragging them into the arena of sectarian war, it will become possible to awaken the inattentive Sunnis as they feel imminent danger and annihilating death at the hands of the Sabeans [Shiites].[446]

While sectarian warfare might well have broken out in Iraq on its own accord, Zarqawi's escalation of attacks on Shiites certainly had a catalytic effect. In September 2005 Zarqawi's organization—which was, by then, composed mainly of Iraqi Sunnis—publicly declared "all-out war on the Rafidha [a disparaging term for Shiites] wherever they are

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[444] Karen DeYound, "Letter Gives Glimpse of Al-Qaeda's Leadership," *Washington Post*, October 2, 2006, p. 1.

[445] Letter from "Atiyah" to Abu Musab al Zarqawi, December 11, 2005. Letter found June 7, 2006 during search of Zarqawi's safehouse and released by Iraqi government on September 18, 2006.

[446] Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, letter released by the Coalition Provisional Authority, February 12, 2004, http://www.cpa-iraq.org/transcripts/20040212_zarqawi_full.html.

in Iraq."[447] As of January 2006, his group was referred to both as "Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia" and "Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)." AQI's attack in February 2006 against the Askari Mosque in Samarra, which is deeply revered by Shia around the world, triggered a bloody spiral of escalating violence between Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq. On June 2, 2006, Zarqawi again publicly prodded Sunnis to rise up in mass against the Shiites. In a four-hour, televised sermon he exhorted:

> Sunnis, wake up, pay attention and prepare to confront the poisons of the Shiite snakes, who are afflicting you with all agonies since the invasion of Iraq until our day. Forget about those advocating the end of sectarianism and calling for national unity.[448]

In the six months that followed the Askari Mosque bombing, more than 8,000 Iraqi civilians died, the vast majority of them as the result of ethno-sectarian violence, especially in and around Baghdad. Similarly, during that same period, the number of weekly attacks increased by roughly 50 percent.[449] By November 2006, with the level of violence at unprecedented level of 1,400-1,600 attacks per week, the Central Intelligence Agency assessed sectarian violence to be "the greatest threat to Iraq's stability and future."[450] Roughly a year later, General Petraeus echoed that finding, asserting that "the fundamental source of conflict in Iraq is competition among ethnic and sectarian communities for power and resources."[451]

If Zarqawi's strategy was to ignite a protracted sectarian conflict in Iraq to inflict high costs on the US military, facilitate jihadi recruitment and training, and generate valuable grist for al Qaeda's propaganda mill, one would have to conclude that he was wildly successful, at least thus far. One has to wonder, however, what the cost of the Iraqi

[447] Al-Jazeera, "Al-Zarqawi Declares War on Iraqi Shia," September 17, 2005. Available online: http://english.aljazeera.net/news/archive/archive?ArchiveId=14984.
[448] Nelson Hernandez and Omar Fekeiki, "Iraq Insurgent Urges Sectarian War," *Washington Post*, June 3, 2006, p. 9.
[449] General David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, charts to accompany his testimony on situation in Iraq, September 10–11, 2007, pp. 2–4.
[450] General Michael V. Hayden, Director, Central Intelligence Agency, "The Current Situation in Iraq and Afghanistan," Statement for the Record, Senate Armed Services Committee, November 15, 2006.
[451] General David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, "Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq," September 10–11, 2007, p. 2.

"jihad" has been with respect to the broader movement. As Zawahiri and others have argued, AQIs brutal tactics and indiscriminate slaughter of Muslim innocents has likely alienated important segments of the *ummah* globally. Second, his strategy has largely failed to "drag" the global *ummah* into the battle as he had hoped. While hundreds of Sunni militants in the region have found their way to Iraq, surrounding Sunni states have more or less stayed out of the conflict, at least thus far. Finally, the sectarian conflict he ignited is one that the vastly outnumbered Sunni minority is unlikely to ever win. If the ultimate outcome of the sectarian conflict he catalyzed is a Shiite-controlled Iraq that is heavily influenced by Iran, Zarqawi strategy will have elevated the very group he so abhorred, the apostate *rafidha*.

The Sunni Backlash

Falling only three months after the coordinated suicide bombings in November 2005 of three hotels in Amman, Jordan, including one in which a wedding celebration was underway, the February 2006 attack on the Askari Mosque prompted a moderate-Sunni backlash against AQI.[452] The backlash was driven by three factors: the almost daily bombings of schools, mosques, markets, hotels, and cafes killing hundreds of Iraqi civilians; the targeted assassination of several Sunni tribal leaders who failed to support AQI's boycott of the December 2005 elections; and suicide bombings of Iraqi army recruiting stations in predominantly Sunni neighborhoods. Beginning in the first quarter of 2006, Sunni tribal leaders in Al Anbar, Kirkuk and elsewhere formed their own militias (e.g., the Anbar Revolutionaries and Anbar Salvation Council) to rout out foreign fighters. In a meeting held in Hawijah at the end of February 2006, some 300 tribal chiefs, politicians, clerics, security officials, and other leaders "declared war" on AQI and vowed to kill anyone involved in "sabotage, killings, kidnappings, targeting police and army, attacking the oil and gas pipelines and their transporters, assassination the religious and tribal figures, technicians, and doctors." [453]

[452] Craig Whitlock, "Amman Bombings Reflect Zarqawi's Growing Reach," *Washington Post*, November 13, 2005, p. 1.

[453] Edward Wong and Khalid al-Ansary, "Iraqi Sheiks Assail Cleric for Backing Qaeda," *New York Times*, November 19, 2006, p. 22; John Ward Anderson, "Iraqi Tribes Strike Back at Insurgents," *Washington Post*, March 7, 2006, p. 12; Charles Levinson, "Sunni Tribes Turn Against Jihadis," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 6, 2006, p. 1; Sabrina Tavernise and Dexter Filkins, "Local Insurgent Tell of Clashes with Al Qaeda's Forces in Iraq," *New York Times*, January 12, 2006, p. 1; and "Insurgents Claim Al Qaeda Backers Purged from Anbar," *Washington Times*, March 14, 2006, p. 14.

An AQI commander in Al-Anbar province described the deteriorating situation to the then recently formed Mujahidin Shura Council (MSC)[454] as follows: "this conspiracy is lead by two sides, the first is the heads of the tribes, the second is the leaders of the Islamic party and mosque speakers [who] announced their war on the Mujahidin… their danger was so great, that hundreds of people volunteered in the police and the army, and thousands of people participated in the elections, renouncing their religion, and listening to the erratics." To solve the growing problem, he proposed an assassination campaign against tribal leaders, calling for jihadis to "cut the heads of the Sheiks of infidelity and erratic."[455]

AQI's initial efforts to wrest control of al Anbar province from tribal sheiks in 2006 was largely successful. AQI attacks and targeted assassinations, combined with rising levels of communal warfare, plunged the region into chaos. As a leaked Marine Corps intelligence assessment in August put it, "nearly all government institutions from the village to provincial levels have disintegrated or have been thoroughly corrupted and infiltrated by Al Qaeda in Iraq."[456] As the "manager of barbarism" in al Anbar, AQI benefited from the mayhem and criminality. As of the end of 2006, it had co-opted, subsumed, marginalized, or eliminated most rival Sunni insurgent groups in Anbar Province and was well on the way toward consolidating control over Diyala Province.

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[454] In an attempt to regroup and create some unity of effort among disparate jihadist groups operating in Iraq, Zarqawi set upon an umbrella organization called the Mujahideen Shura Council in January 2006 that comprised al Qaeda in Iraq, Jaysh al-Taifa al Mansure, Ansar al-Tawhid, al-Ghuraba, al-Jihad al-Islami, al-Ahwal, and Jaish Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah. The MSC subsequently evolved into the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). Lydia Khali, "Mujahideen Shura Council in Iraq Expands Ranks, Continues Attacks," *Terrorism Focus*, February 28, 2006, Volume III, Issue 8, pp. 2–3.

[455] Letter from unknown commander of Al Qaeda in Iraq to the Mujahideen Shura Council, document captured February 2006, Harmony Document: IZ-061306-01. Also reflecting this alienation of Sunni tribes, in a letter to Abu-Usamah in Ramadi, an unnamed al Qaeda leader warns him to "stop the killing of people unless they are spying, military, or police officers. We have to find a secure [secret] method because i*f we continue using the same method, people will start fighting us in the streets*." Emphasis added. "Instructions to Abu-Usamah," document captured February 2006, Harmony Document 1Z-0603-16-02.

[456] Dafna Linzer and Thomas E. Ricks, "Anbar Picture Grows Clearer and Bleaker," *Washington Post*, November 28, 2006, p. 1.

As a result of AQI's brutal attacks against Sunni tribes and other abhorrent behavior (e.g., beheading school children, intentionally leaving bodies where they were unlikely to be found and buried within 24 hours as prescribed by Muslim tradition, and unspeakably gruesome torture), however, tribe after tribe put aside long-held rivalries and joined the Anbar Salvation Council against AQI. The founder and leader of the Anbar Salvation Council, the late Abdul Sattar Buzaigh al-Rishawi (also known as Abdul Sattar Abu Risha), was personally committed to the cause—his father and brothers were killed by al Qaeda fighters while attending a funeral.[457] By May 2007, 17 tribes had joined the Anbar Salvation Council and ironically, Ramadi, the provincial seat of Al Anbar and the self-declared capital of AQI's so-called "Islamic State of Iraq" was firmly under the Council's control.[458]

AQI responded to the backlash by kidnapping, torturing, and killing scores of tribal fighters and carrying out indiscriminate bomb attacks in an effort to terrorize and intimidate the population. Its extreme measures, however, only galvanized the resolve of the Sunni tribes. During the first six months of 2007, the police force in Ramadi expanded by more than 20 fold and the number of police in Al Anbar Province soared to over 10,000, up from only a few thousand in 2006. The number of violent acts per day dropped dramatically from 25 per day in the summer of 2006 to four per day.[459] By September 2007, the police force had doubled again to over 21,000 and the number of violent acts had dropped even lower. In short, with the active support of Coalition forces—including funding, logistical support, equipment and weapons (in selected cases), training, and economic/infrastructure development, the Anbar Salvation Council managed to root out previously entrenched AQI operatives, restore order, and restart the province's moribund economy. Although Sheikh Rishawi was assassinated by an AQI bomb on September 13, 2007, the "Awakening Movement" that he started did not lose momentum.[460] His assassination, however, is a reminder that although AQI has been severely weakened in Anbar Province, it remains dangerous.

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[457] Edward Wong, "An Iraqi Tribal Chief Opposes The Jihadists, And Prays," *New York Times*, March 3, 2007, p. 8.

[458] Sam Dagher, "Sunni Muslim Sheikhs Join US in Fighting Al Qaeda," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 3, 2007, p. 1; and Sam Dagher, "Can US Sustain Anbar Success," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 4, 2007, p. 1.

[459] Kirk Semple, "Uneasy Alliance is Taming One Insurgent Bastion," *New York Times*, April 29, 2007, p. 1.

[460] Joshua Partlow, "Bomb Kills A Key Sunni Ally of U.S.," *Washington Post*, September 14, 2007, p. 1.

Encouraged by the improving quality of life in Al Anbar Province and spurred to action by continued AQI violence and repression, the tribal backlash spread to Diyala Province and several Sunni-dominated neighborhoods in Baghdad during the summer of 2007.[461] With Baghdad already awash in light weapons, the US military generally eschewed arming Sunni groups, focusing instead on providing financial incentives for cooperation (e.g., intelligence), salaries for vetted recruits for recognized security units, and training.[462] In Diyala, as of September 2007, 20 of the province's 25 major tribes had agreed to join forces with the government against AQI and the number of violent acts per day had plummeted relative to 2006.[463] In Baghdad neighborhoods, which are less homogenous from a sectarian perspective and less "isolatable" geographically, the security situation has improved more slowly and less consistently. The overall intensity of ethno-sectarian violence in Baghdad, however, diminished markedly in 2007.[464]

Coalition support to tribal-backed police and security forces, which include many former insurgents and AQI supporters within their ranks, is a source of much apprehension for many Iraqi Shiites and Kurds, who understandably fear that one day these better armed and trained Sunnis may opt to fight them rather than AQI.[465] Reflecting that trepidation, in September 2007 the largest Shiite political coalition in Iraq, the United Iraqi Alliance, demanded that the Coalition stop recruiting Sunni tribesmen to serve in neighborhood security groups and stated, "we condemn and reject embracing those terrorist elements which committed the most hideous crimes against our people."[466] Shiite

[461] Sam Dagher, "Risk US Alliances in Iraq," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 17, 2007, p. 1; John Ward Anderson, "Sunni Insurgents Battle in Baghdad," *Washington Post*, June 1, 2007, p. 11; and Jim Michaels, "Tribes Help U.S. Against Al-Qaeda," *USA Today*, June 20, 2007, p. 1.

[462] Individuals who are recruited to serve in security forces are generally vetted and selected biometric data is collected. Ann Scott Tyson, "U.S. Widens Push to Use Armed Iraqi Residents," *Washington Post*, July 28, 2007, p. 1; James Glanz and Stephen Farrell, "A U.S.-Backed Plan for Sunni Neighborhood Guards is Tested," *New York Times*, August 19, 2007, p. 8.

[463] Jim Michaels, "Iraqi Alliances Spread, U.S. Says," *USA Today*, September 21, 2007, p. 1.

[464] General David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, charts to accompany his report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq, September 10–11, 2007, p. 4.

[465] Joshua Partlow, "U.S. Strategy on Sunnis Questioned," *Washington Post*, June 18, 2007, p. 11; and Alexandra Zavis, "In Iraq, Role of Tribes is Divisive," *Los Angeles Times*, June 23, 2007, p. 1.

[466] Johsua Partlow, "Shiite Blocs Condemns U.S. Policy of Recruiting Sunni Tribesmen," *Washington Post*, October 3, 2007, p. 18.

politicians have argued that the Coalition's support to Sunni tribes is "a seed for civil war."[467] Whether that seed germinates hinges in large measure on political reconciliation among Iraq's Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds, which thus far has proven elusive. Others argue that the policy undermines the authority of the central government by creating quasi-independent security forces. While the US decision to provide support to selected Sunni tribes clearly has inherent risks and potential strategic downsides, it has been demonstrably effective in improving security, restricting AQI's freedom of maneuver, and reducing the overall AQI threat. As General Petraeus testified to Congress in September 2007:

> The change in the security situation in Anbar Province has, of course been particularly dramatic....monthly attack levels in Anbar have declined from some 1,350 in October 2006 to a bit over 200 in August of this year. This dramatic decrease reflects the significance of the local rejection of al Qaeda and newfound willingness of local Anbaris to volunteer to serve in the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police Service. [468]

As of October 2007, AQI's position in Anbar Province had deteriorated so far that Osama bin Laden apparently felt compelled to weigh in, releasing an audiotape that apologized for mistakes made by "jihad fighters" and enjoining all Muslims in Iraq to join forces against the "Crusaders." In his speech, he repeatedly stressed the need for unity, especially within the Sunni community:

> My brothers the jihad fighters in Iraq...you have performed, in an exemplary manner, one of the duties that few perform, namely the expulsion of an invading enemy. However, some of you have tarried in performing another glorious duty, namely uniting your ranks.... The Muslims expect you to unite under one banner in order to make the truth become a reality...Faithful men of knowledge and honor must make every effort to unite the ranks of the jihad fighters, and must never tire of the path towards [unity]....The religious scholars, the jihad commanders and the tribal sheikhs must

[467] Alexandra Zavis, "U.S.-Tribal Alliances Draw Iraqi Ire," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 2007.
[468] General David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, "Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq," September 10–11, 2007, p. 4.

> make efforts to [arbitrate] between any two groups that are in dispute, and to judge their case according to the laws of Allah.[469]

While his message might have resonated more strongly with the tribal sheikhs before AQI's atrocities in 2006, it now appears to have fallen mostly on deaf ears within the Sunni community in Iraq.

Al Qaeda in Iraq Post-Zarqawi

After three years of near misses and numerous false leads, on June 7, 2006, US forces finally tracked down and killed Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in the village of Hibhib, north of Baghdad.[470] Using intelligence gleaned from the rubble of Zarqawi's safehouse and other sources, Iraqi security and Coalition forces conducted more than 200 raids nationwide in the weeks that followed, killing more than 33 jihadi fighters, capturing more than 200 suspected terrorists, and seizing explosives, weapons and equipment, identification documents, and Iraqi army uniforms.[471]

While the organization quickly selected a new leader, Abu Ayyub al-Masri, and even ramped up jihad operations following Zarqawi's death, it faces several serious problems. First and foremost, al-Masri, who is an Egyptian with close ties to Zawahiri, must contend with mounting fears that the organization has been penetrated, which has likely created an atmosphere of distrust within and among the various Sunni groups comprising the so-called Islamic State of Iraq (ISI).[472]

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[469] Osama bin Laden, Video released on Islamic website Al-Hesbah on October 23, 2007, as translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), No. 1751, October 26, 2007.

[470] After the attack, there were unconfirmed reports that AQI had been successfully penetrated by foreign intelligence services (e.g., Jordanian, Iraqi, and/or American) and the resulting intelligence stream was the source of information on Zarqawi's location. See, for example, Brian Fishman, "After Zarqawi: The Dilemmas and Future of Al Qaeda in Iraq," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 2006, pp. 19–31.

[471] John Burns, "A Jihadist Web Site Says Zarqawi's Group in Iraq has New Leader in Place," *New York Times*, June 13, 2006.

[472] For additional details on and implications of the apparent penetration of al Qaeda in Iraq by Jordian intelligence and Iraqi tribes, see: Brian Fishman, "After Zarqawi: The Dilemmas and Future of Al Qaeda in Iraq," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 2006, pp. 19, 27–28; and Borzou Daragahi and Josh Meyer, "We Knew Him: Jordanian Spies Infiltrated Iraq to Find Zarqawi," *Los Angeles Times*, June 13, 2006, p. A1.

Second, he faces internal discord over strategy, operations, and tactics. Given his relationship with Zawahiri, it is reasonable to speculate the al-Masri is inclined to adopt al Qaeda's emphasis on the "far enemy" and agree to curtail attacks on Shiites, at least in the short run, in the interest of the larger jihadi movement. In contrast, rivals within ISI will almost certainly try to persevere with Zarqawi's approach. It will be difficult for al-Masri to assert authority over the disparate elements of ISI. The likelihood of the ISI fragmenting—much like its predecessor, the MSC—is very high, owing both to unresolved ideological differences and anxiety over which of its constituent groups have been penetrated. Third, as detailed above, AQI has alienated a growing number of Sunni tribes, many of which have taken up arms against it, in some cases with the support of Coalition and Iraqi forces.

On June 19, 2006, Hamed Jumaa Faris Juri al-Saeidi, who is believed to be responsible for orchestrating numerous, high-profile suicide-bombing attacks on civilians, as well as the bombing of the Askari Mosque, was captured by Iraqi and US forces. In the wake of his arrest, a score of senior AQI leaders and fighters were captured or killed.[473] In August 2007, Coalition forces killed Abu Yaqub al-Masri (Zakkariya), who was a senior AQI military advisor and is believed to be responsible for the November 2006 car bombings in Sadr City that killed 181 Iraqi civilians and injured another 247.[474] Between January and August 2007, Coalition and Iraqi forces captured or killed nearly 100 "key leaders" of AQI and some 2,500 rank-and-file fighters.[475] Not coincidentally, during this same period, the number of Sunni tribes actively fighting AQI increased dramatically. Finally, beginning in June 2007, the US military launched Operation Phantom Thunder, a large-scale, coordinated offensive focusing on "clear, control, retain" operations not only within Baghdad proper, but also in the rural "belts" surrounding the capital, including AQI strongholds such as Falluja and Baqouba, Mahmudiya, Salman Pak, Arab Jabour, the southern shores of Lake Tharthar, Karma,

[473] Amit Paley, "Iraq Cites Arrest of a Top Local Insurgent," Washington Post, September 4, 2006, p. 1; and "Arrest of Iraqi Insurgent Came in June, U.S. Says," *Washington Post*, September 7, 2006, p. 24.
[474] Centeral Command, "Al Qaeda in Iraq Leader Killed," September 19, 2007, press release 07-01-03P.
[475] General David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, "Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq," September 10–11, 2007, p. 4.

and Tarmiya.[476] As part of this operation, AQI's physical and human infrastructure was targeted in multiple areas simultaneously. To keep pressure on AQI, after the operation ended on 14 August, a follow-on, intelligence-driven operation, dubbed Operation Phantom Strike, began immediately.[477]

Compared to the summer of 2006, AQI has far less freedom of maneuver in Sunni-dominated areas of Iraq. As of Septeber 2007, the situation had deteriorated so far that ISI felt compelled to declare war openly on the Sunni tribal sheikhs and ratchet up its self-defeating intimidation campaign. In a web posting, ISI claimed that it had formed "special security committees" to track down and "assassinate the tribal figures, the traitors, who stained the reputations of the real tribes by submitting to the soldiers of the Crusade" and the Shiite-led government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Malaki.[478]

The handwriting was very much on the wall with respect to the dilemmas currently facing AQI and ISI even before Zarqawi's death. In a document retrieved from a computer hard drive found at a "safe location" during the summer of 2006 and presumably written by Zarqawi, he assessed the situation as "bleak," citing the increasing capability of Iraqi security forces, shortages of weapons and fighters, lack of funds, and internal divisions. The document states that "time is now beginning to be of service to the American forces and harmful to the resistance," owing to the following Iraqi and Coalition initiatives:

> Undertaking massive arrest operations, invading regions that have an impact on the resistance, and hence causing the resistance to lose many of its elements.

[476] Operation Phantom Thunder was a corps-level operation, including Operation Arrowhead Ripper in Diyala Province, Operation Marne Torch and Operation Commando Eagle in Babil Province, Operation Fardh al-Qanoon in Baghdad, and Operation Alljah in Anbar Province. It was one of the largest and most complex military operations in Iraq since the US invasion in 2003. For a summary of Operation Phantom Thunder, see: Frederick Kagan and Kimberly Kagan, "The New Strategy in Iraq," *Weekly Standard*, July 9, 2007, p. 26. See also CENTCOM press release: http://www.centcom.mil/sites/uscentcom2/Lists/Current%20Press%20Releases/DispForm.aspx?ID=5154.

[477] For a summary, see: Mario Loyola, "Operation Phantom Strike," Weekly Standard, September 3, 2007, p. 26. See also: http://www.mnf-iraq.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13328&Itemid=128.

[478] Robert Reid, AP, "Al Qaeda Threatens to Kill Sunni Leaders as Political Crisis Deepens," *Tampa Tribune*, Septmber 16, 2007.

> Undertaking a media campaign against the resistance resulting in a weakening of its influence inside the country and presenting its work as harmful to the population rather than being beneficial to the population.
>
> By tightening the resistance's financial outlets, restricting its moral options and by confiscating its ammunition and weapons.
>
> By taking advantage of the resistance's mistakes and magnifying them in order to misinform. [479]

In summary, over the past year, AQI has been weakened by its apparent penetration by Coalition intelligence assets; dwindling financial resources; the Sunni tribal backlash, especially in Al Anbar and Diyala Provinces, as well as in the Baghdad-area neighborhoods of Ameriyah, Abu Ghraib, Adhamiya, and Arab Jabour; the death of Zarqawi, al-Saeidi, and more than a score of other senior leaders, as well as the capture or death of thousands of fighters; intensifying internal discord within ISI; and the elimination of key physical infrastructure (e.g., weapons stores, IED manufacturing facilities, and media centers). As General Petraeus put it, "Al Qaeda is certainly not defeated; however, it is off balance and we are pursuing its leaders and operators aggressively."[480] Just over one month later, US Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, asserted that "In Fallujah, Ramadi, and other parts of Anbar…Al Qaeda in simply gone."[481]

AQI cells pushed out of one area, however, most likely have moved into other provinces, over the border into neighboring countries, or underground.[482] While weakened, AQI continues to function, attacking

[479] The document also states that the best plan for improving the "current bleak situation" is "to entangle the American forces into another war against another country" or to create friction between the United States and its Shiite allies in Iraq. To that end, it recommends "First to exaggerate the Iranian danger and to convince America, and the West in general, of the real danger coming from Iran." Rowan Scarborough, "Papers Reveal Weakening Terror Group," *Washington Times*, June 16, 2006, p. 1; and Cesar Soriano, "Iraqi Leaders: Memo Details Al Qaeda Plans," USA Today, June 16, 2006, p. 10.

[480] General David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq, "Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq," September 10–11, 2007, p. 4.

[481] Dan Murphy, "Al Qaeda Reveals Signs of Weakness," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 26, 2007, p. 1.

[482] Michael Scheuer, "Al Qaeda and Iraq: Too Soon to Declare Victory," *Terrorism Focus*, October 24, 2007, pp. 5–7.

Iraqi government, military, and police targets, as well as Coalition forces, on a near daily basis; and conducting vicious, high-profile attacks against Shiite civilians, adding fuel to a still-smoldering sectarian war.[483] The September 2007 *Benchmark Assessment Report* concluded that "sporadic high-profile attacks by al-Qaeda continue to cause high civilian casualties, demonstrating al-Qaeda's intent to use civilian casualties to provoke additional sectarian violence, shape public opinion, and destabilize the government of Iraq."[484]

While AQI has been eclipsed by burgeoning Sunni and Shiite militias, "special groups," and gangs in terms of the overall level of violence in Iraq, they have already accomplished much for the global jihadi movement: killing scores of US soldiers, exacting a financial cost on the United States that is already measured in hundreds of billions of dollars and will likely exceed a trillion dollars in time, promoting the call to a defensive jihad, indoctrinating and training young jihadi recruits from around the world, and creating an enclave of "barbarism" in the heart of the Arab world that could provide a future sanctuary for organizing and conducting jihadi operations throughout the region.

South Asia

While the Islamic terrorist threat to the United States emanating from South Asia has declined significantly since 2001 owing to the elimination of al Qaeda's extensive infrastructure in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and President Musharraf's decision to extend Pakistan's support to the United States in the GWOT, there have been significant setbacks in both countries over the past three years. In Afghanistan, the Taliban was resurgent through 2006 and, while NATO and US forces weakened it considerably in 2007, it remains operational and may launch a new offensive in the spring of 2008. The central government has yet to extend its authority over rural areas, especially in the south and east. Poppy cultivation, which provides a critical source of revenue for the Taliban, hit record levels in 2006. In Pakistan, despite Musharraf's seemingly heroic efforts, the terrorist threat has intensified significantly. As compared to 2001, the Pakistani population is more radicalized and the

[483] National Intelligence Council, *National Intelligence Estimate—Prospects for Iraq's Stability: Some Security Progress but Political Reconciliation Elusive* (Washington, DC: NIC, August 2007), p. 1.
[484] *Benchmark Assessment Report* as submitted to US Congress, September 14, 2007 pursuant to Public Law 110-28, p. 5.

Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), especially North and South Waziristan, has become more "Talibanized." Al Qaeda has consolidated its sanctuary in the tribal area. As will be elaborated upon in Chapter V, in cooperation with the recently formed Taliban Movement in Pakistan, it has ramped up efforts to destabilize Pakistan. Popular discontent has risen sharply in the wake of Musharraf's declaration of emergency in November 2007 and the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in December 2007. This growing unrest could potentially be exploited by jihadi groups in 2008.

Since developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan are clearly the drivers of the overall terrorist threat in South Asia, they are described in detail below. It is worth noting, however, that despite several attacks perpetrated by al Qaeda-linked LT and JeM in India, the five-year trend of declining civilian fatalities from terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir has continued.[485] In Bangladesh, a new terrorist group, Jamaat ul Mujahedin, has emerged and has demonstrated the ability to conduct coordinated nationwide attacks on "un-Islamic" persons and facilities.[486] The situation in Nepal and Sri Lanka has remained stable.

Afghanistan

The jihadist threat in Afghanistan is much reduced today relative to 2001 because of the elimination of al Qaeda's state-sponsored sanctuary as a result of Operation Enduring Freedom. In addition to marking a major turning point in US counter-terrorism strategy, the elimination of that sanctuary dramatically reduced al Qaeda's ability to recruit and indoctrinate new fighters, train them, and organize and plan new attacks. The importance of eliminating al Qaeda's infrastructure in Afghanistan, built up between 1996 and 2001, cannot be over-stated. However, as will be detailed below, the situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated substantially since 2003 for at least four reasons:

- The failure of the central government to extend its authority over rural areas, especially in the south and east, by maintaining security and improving the lives of average Afghans through reconstruction, economic development, and humanitarian relief projects;

[485] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 150.
[486] Ibid, pp. 149–150.

- The slow pace of standing up a professional national police force, establishing a credible judiciary system, and cleaning up rampant government corruption;

- The ability of the Taliban, followers of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, al Qaeda, and other foreign jihadists to regroup and establish new bases of operation in neighboring Pakistan; and

- Burgeoning poppy cultivation and opium trafficking, which provides a critical source of revenue for the Taliban and creates incentives for increased cooperation among drug traffickers, corrupt government officials, and tribal warlords against the Karzai government.

Fortunately, it appears the Taliban's resurgence in Afghanistan may have hit a high-water mark in July-August of 2006. Currently, the strategy of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) of retaking control of Taliban operating areas, moving in reconstruction teams, and maintaining a robust security presence appears to be working, although there have been occasional setbacks.[487] The Taliban and associated groups suffered extremely heavy losses between the summers of 2006 and 2007 in Afghanistan's southern and eastern provinces where they had gathered and built supporting infrastructure over the course of the previous three years. As will be detailed below, in the span of just six months from December 2006 to May 2007, four of the top leaders of the Taliban-led insurgency were captured or killed, and the Taliban's much anticipated 2007 "spring offensive" never materialized. The overall security situation appears to be improving. As the outgoing American ambassador to Afghanistan, Ronald Neumann, observed in March 2007, "It's [the Taliban] tough. It's resilient. It's dangerous. I just don't see it as being that strong. It is still a race, but inch by inch the government is getting a little better."[488]

It is critical to the GWOT that the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their respective allies fail in their stated aim to overthrow the democratically elected government in Kabul. If that were to occur, not only would terrorists re-gain access to a state-protected sanctuary, but the Taliban could legitimately claim credit for defeating the United States and the West more broadly, which would be a propaganda victory of immense

[487] Rowan Scarborough, "British General Faults US for Taliban Resurgence," *Washington Times*, October 18, 2006, p. 3.
[488] Carlotta Gall, "U.S. Diplomat 'Optimistic' About Afghanistan," *New York Times*, March 13, 2007.

proportions for the global jihadi movement. The three keys to eradicating the Taliban threat are to neutralize its support bases in Pakistan, break the link it has forged with opium traffickers, and secure and economically revitalize Afghanistan's southern and eastern provinces.

The Fall and Resurgence of the Taliban, 2001–2006

Swept from power in little more than two months in the fall of 2001, the Taliban paid a heavy price for harboring al Qaeda. By the end of 2002, Al Qaeda cells operating in Afghanistan had been nearly eradicated, along with their support infrastructure (e.g., training camps, weapon stores, and supply caches); the 5,000-strong ISAF authorized by the United Nations had restored a degree of peace and order to Kabul; and the US military began shifting to a distributed security strategy that emphasized reconstruction over combat operations.[489] The centerpiece of that strategy was creating 8-10 regional bases, located in urban centers, from which provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) could operate.[490] Working alongside newly trained units from the Afghan

[489] Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Richard Meyers foreshadowed this shift in strategy in comments at the Brookings Institution on November 4, 2002, when he opined that the US military was losing momentum in the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and disclosed that there was an increasing belief among the Pentagon leadership about the need to shift priorities from combat operations to reconstruction. For an excellent overview of the low and high points of US counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan between 2003 and 2005, see: Lieutenant General David Barno, "Fighting 'The Other War'—Counterinsurgency Strategy in Afghanistan, 2003–2005," *Military Review*, September–October 2007, p. 42. See also: James Dao, "U.S. Shifts Emphasis in Afghanistan to Security and Road Building," *New York Times*, November 12, 2002; Bradley Graham, "Pentagon Plans a Redirection in Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, November 20, 2002, p. A1; and Thomas E. Ricks and Vernon Loeb, "Afghan War Faltering, Military Leader Says," *Washington Post*, November 8, 2002, p. A1.

[490] The teams were originally referred to as "joint regional teams." Each team was staffed with approximately 60–70 military and civilian personnel including a mix of SF personnel, light infantry, civil affairs troops, engineering and communications specialists, US Agency for International Development (USAID) staff, medical teams, and diplomatic personnel. Between 200 and 300 additional US civil affairs personnel, roughly quadruple the number initially deployed, were sent to Afghanistan to bolster the PRTs. See Vernon Loeb, "U.S. Hopeful on Afghan Security," *Washington Post*, December 23, 2002, p. 14; Ahmed Rashid, "Plans for Afghan Enclaves Indicates Shift in U.S. Policies," *Wall Street Journal*, December 3, 2002; and Thomas Ricks, "U.S. To Set Up New Bases to Help Afghanistan Rebuild," *Washington Post*, December 20, 2002, p. 45.

National Army (ANA), US and coalition ground forces focused on maintaining local security, while the remainder of the team worked with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local government officials on reconstruction and humanitarian relief projects.

The United States and its coalition partners could tout myriad non-military accomplishments by the fall of 2002. US military civil affairs teams had dug hundreds of wells, built or refurbished dozens of hospitals and medical facilities, repaired roads and bridges, restored hundreds of kilometers of irrigation canals, and rebuilt scores of schools.[491] The United States also took the lead on a $250 million, multinational effort to rebuild the 900-kilometer-long "ring road" linking Kabul through Kandahar to Herat.[492] The United States and its coalition partners had delivered some 575,000 metric tons of food to cities and remote villages throughout Afghanistan, feeding nearly ten million people. USAID distributed 12,000 metric tons of seeds and 15,000 tons of fertilizer to more than 40,000 Afghan farmers, managed the rebuilding of 72 hospitals and health clinics, and arranged for more than four million measles vaccinations to be dispensed.[493] USAID also contributed to 6,000 water and irrigation projects across the country.[494] With the Taliban gone, security improving, and basic services coming back on line, nearly two million refugees returned to Afghanistan and approximately 630,000 internally displaced Afghans were able to return to their homes by the fall of 2002.[495] To accommodate the near

[491] The White House, "American Assistance to the People of Afghanistan," Fact Sheet, October 11, 2002; Donald Rumsfeld, Testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, July 31, 2002. As part of DoD's Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic Aid program, more than $6.6 million was allocated to 220 reconstruction projects in 2002, including 118 schools, 25 medical centers, 14 drinking water wells, nine agricultural projects, 10 road and bridge projects, and four irrigation projects. See U.S. Department of Defense, *2002 Year in Review*, December 31, 2002, p. 5.

[492] The United States has pledged $80 million to this reconstruction effort. The White House, "American Assistance to the People of Afghanistan," Fact Sheet, October 11, 2002. See also "Afghans Rebuild A Broken Lifeline," *Washington Post*, November 11, 2002, p. A16.

[493] In 2002, Afghanistan's agricultural production increased more than 80 percent relative to 2001. The White House, "Rebuilding Afghanistan," p. 3; The White House, "Operation Enduring Freedom: One Year of Accomplishments," Fact Sheet, October 11, 2002; and Peter Slavin, "U.S. Urged to Expand Presence in Afghanistan," *Washington Post,* April 22, 2002, p. 14.

[494] Briefing by Andrew S. Natsios, USAID Administrator, "Reconstruction and Rebuilding Efforts in Afghanistan," December 23, 2002, p. 3.

[495] The White House, "Afghanistan: Then and Now," *Fact Sheet,* October 11, 2002.

doubling of the student population in Afghanistan, USAID distributed nearly 15 million textbooks, as well as teaching materials and supplies. To complement the construction and rehabilitation of over 150 schools, 6,000 temporary classrooms were set up.[496] As of February 2003, over 2,000 soldiers, drawn from several ethnic groups, had completed training and were serving in the ANA. New recruit battalions, each comprising about 450 soldiers, were expected to complete training at a rate of one every 5–6 weeks.[497] By that spring, the first three PRTs were at work—and by most accounts, doing quite well improving the quality of life for Afghans—in Gardez, Bamian, and Kunduz.[498] All appeared to be going well in Afghanistan.

By mid-2003, however, the security situation slowly began to unravel. The original goal of fielding 13,000 soldiers in the ANA by the end of 2003 had to be scaled back to 9,000–12,000 by the first half of 2004.[499] In addition to sluggish recruitment and growing retention challenges, the effort to build a credible national army suffered from under-representation of Pashtuns, Afghanistan's largest ethnic group, and over-representation of Tajiks and Uzbeks.[500] The much anticipated demobilization of local militias made negligible progress and was actively

[496] The White House, "Afghanistan: Then and Now," *Fact Sheet*, October 11, 2002; and biefing by Andrew S. Natsio, "Reconstruction and Rebuilding Efforts in Afghanistan," December 23, 2002, p. 2. Other sources place the number of rehabilitated schools at 600. See DoD, "Afghanistan Relief and Reconstruction," slide 4, background briefing, February 27, 2003.

[497] According to DoD, as of February 27, 2003, U.S. and French military personnel had trained five ANA battalions and had two more in training. See DoD, "Background Briefing on Afghanistan Relief and Reconstruction," February 27, 2003, slide 9. See also: U.S. Department of State, "Rebuilding Afghanistan," *Fact Sheet*, January 9, 2003, p. 2; Chris Kraul, "Afghanistan's Fledgling Army Needs Far More than a Few Good Men," *Los Angeles Times*, January 8, 2003; and U.S. Department of Defense, 2002 Year in Review, December 31, 2002, p. 6.

[498] Chris Kraul, "U.S. Aid Effort Wins Over Skeptics in Afghanistan," *Los Angeles Times*, April 11, 2003; James Dao, "Wolfowitz, In Kabul, Calls for Rebuilding," New York Times, January 16, 2003; and Pamela Constable, "Courting Afghanistan Brick by Brick," *Washington Post*, December 8, 2002, p. 32.

[499] General Tommy Franks, Testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Hearing on "Progress in Afghanistan," July 31, 2002; James Dao, "Doubts Now Raised Over Extending Force Beyond Kabul," *New York Times*, September 18, 2002; and The White House, "Operation Enduring Freedom: One Year of Accomplishments," *Fact Sheet*, October 11, 2002.

[500] Elliot Blair Smith, "U.S. Helping Create An Army in Afghanistan," *USA Today*, November 27, 2002, p. 15.

undermined by foreign interference.[501] While the PRTs were delivering goods and services to Afghans in or near urban areas, the countryside was largely ignored—both in terms of aid and security. Neither the ANA nor coalition forces, for instance, maintained a substantial, visible, persistent security presence in Afghan's southern and eastern provinces. Across Afghanistan, but in the southern and eastern provinces in particular, Afghans grew disillusioned by the slower-than-expected pace of reconstruction and economic development, rampant government corruption, intensifying "warlordism," and above all else, lack of security. Having regrouped and rearmed, the Taliban slowly crept into this security vacuum. As President Karzai's chief of staff, Jawed Ludin, later reflected, "It's not that the Taliban were strong, it's that the government was weak. They have moved into a vacuum [in the south]."[502]

By 2004, the insurgency against the Karzai government was a motley assortment of surviving remnants of the Taliban and splinter groups, followers of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, foreign AQ-linked fighters (including members of Lashkar-e-Taiba from Pakistan), opium traffickers, and local fighters motivated by tribal politics. Coalition combat deaths in Afghanistan doubled in comparison to 2003. Two insurgencies started to take root: one in the south (i.e., Helmand Province, Zabol Province, Uruzgan Province, Kandahar Province) that was waged primarily by ethnically Pashtun fighters based in Baluchistan; and another in the east (i.e. primarily Paktia and Paktika Provinces, but also Kunar and Khost Provinces) with a more ethnically diverse fighter corps (e.g., Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Pakistanis, Chechens, and "foreign Arabs") operating out of Peshawar and Waziristan.[503]

With funds from the burgeoning drug trade and donations from the Middle East, the Taliban and its associates continued to rebuild and rearm in 2005, primarily in Pakistan. Equipped with better weapons and more powerful explosive devices, they carried out 20 percent more

[501] Iran reportedly continued its practice of supporting Ismail Khan, a warlord who controlled the area around Herat, while Russia supplied military equipment to the Tajik-dominated army of General Mohammed Fahim, who was serving as Afghanistan's defense minister, instead of to the ANA. Ahmed Rashid, "Dangerous Neighbours," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 9, 2003; and Ahmed Rashid, "Taking the Initiative, Karzai Seeks to Extend Kabul's Writ," *Wall Street Journal*, January 3, 2003.

[502] Rachel Morarjee, "Doubts Intensify Over Afghanistan's Future," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 11, 2006.

[503] Joshua Kucera, "Paving the Way to Peace—Counter-Insurgency in Afghanistan," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, December 15, 2004, p. 26.

attacks relative to 2004. As an ominous sign of the "Iraqification" of the Afghan insurgency, the number of suicide attacks increased almost four-fold and the number of improvised-explosive device (IED) attacks (mostly roadside bombings) doubled relative to 2004. The latter included the use of shaped explosives and remote-controlled detonators similar to those used by Iraqi insurgents.[504] Borrowing a page from Zarqawi's playbook in Iraq, the Taliban also carried out beheadings to terrorize the local population and discourage NGOs from providing economic aid and development assistance. The Defense Intelligence Agency cautioned at the time that "insurgents now represent a greater threat to the expansion of the Afghan government authority than at any point since late 2001..."[505] Most of their attacks were focused on relatively soft targets and rarely involved more than 20-40 guerrillas in any single attack. The modus operandi was to hit, claim credit in the international media, and fall back before US and coalition forces could respond. While their operations were costly—more than 1,200 fighters were killed, including several high-level commanders—they were effective.[506] Humanitarian relief and reconstruction teams started pulling out; the construction boom ground to a halt; and the number of US soldiers killed in action roughly tripled compared to the previous year.[507]

The High-Water Mark and Ebbing of the Afghan Insurgency, 2006–2007

By 2006, the emerging Afghan insurgency was estimated to have a total strength of between 7,000 and 10,000 fighters belonging to 20–25 militias of widely varying size and capability. Building upon a winter-spring campaign of suicide attacks, assassinations of government officials and moderate clerics, roadside IED attacks, ambushes of military patrols,

[504] Part of the explanation for the adoption of Iraqi tactics by Afghan insurgents is the "copy cat" effect, which is no surprise given the extensive coverage given to these tactics in the media. It is also very likely that groups operating in and around Afghanistan have shared ideas on the Internet. It has also been alleged, however, that some fighters with experience in Iraq have traveled to Afghanistan. According to at least one source, al Qaeda has created an "underground railroad" to facilitate the movement of jihadi fighters from Iraq to Afghanistan. Maples, "Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States," p. 8; and Sami Yousafzai and Ron Moreau, "Unholy Allies," *Newsweek*, September 26, 2005.

[505] Maples, p. 9.

[506] Scot Baldauf, "Small US Units Lure Taliban into Losing Battles," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 31, 2005, p. 1.

[507] Pamela Constable, "Afghan's City's Rebound Cut Short," *Washington Post*, August 19, 2006, p. 1.

and bogus road checkpoints (including on the newly built Kabul-Kandahar highway), the Taliban and associated groups started concentrating fighters in larger numbers and hitting harder targets. The number of suicide attacks soared—most of them carried out by foreigners.[508] The Taliban also burned down hundreds of schools and clinics, and even began to re-introduce *sharia* law in remote areas.[509] As Afghan Finance Minister Anwar ul-Haq Ahady put it in June 2006, "It is hurting us. We build a school, and they come and they burn it. We build a clinic, and they come and burn it. We build a bridge, and they knock it down. Security is the No.1 issue."[510] In a major shift from previous behavior, the Taliban and other terrorist groups began recording their attacks, releasing gruesome DVDs and Internet videos, both as a recruitment tool, as well as to spread fear among the population by graphically showing that neither the Afghan government nor outside powers (US military and ISAF) could protect them.[511]

Part of the impetus for the Taliban's stepped up attacks in the spring and early summer of 2006 was almost certainly the handover of responsibility for security in southern Afghanistan from the US-led coalition to the NATO-led ISAF taking place at the same time. One can reasonably speculate that the Taliban hoped to shatter the will of the countries contributing forces to ISAF and expand further into the pre-existing security vacuum in the south and east.[512]

That is not, however, how events unfolded. As the ISAF was moving into the south, the US-led coalition launched its largest offensive

[508] There was one suicide attack in 2002, two in 2003, 6 in 2004, and roughly 25 in 2005. As of September 2006, there had already been between 47–70 suicide attacks. Paul Wiseman, "Once Unknown, Suicide Blast Soar in Afghanistan," *USA Today*, September 11, 2006, p. 10; Carlotta Gall, "Attack in Afghanistan Grow More Frequent And Lethal," *New York Times*, September 27, 2006; and Carlotta Gall, "Taliban Threat is Said to Grow in Afghan South," *New York Times*, May 3, 2006, p. 1.

[509] The Taliban reportedly destroyed 200 schools, forced the closure of 400 additional schools through threats and intimidation, and killed at least 20 teachers in 2006. As a result, more than 100,000 Afghan students were forced out of school. Laura King, "Afghan Schools Take on the Taliban," *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 2007; and Noor Khan, "Taliban to Open Schools in Afghanistan," *Houston Chronicle*, January 22, 2007.

[510] Paul Wiseman, "Revived Taliban Waging 'Full-Blown Insurgency'," *USA Today*, June 20, 2006, p. 1.

[511] Scott Peterson, "Taliban Adopting Iraq-Style Jihad," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 13, 2006, p. 1.

[512] Jason Motlagh, "Ambassador Predicts Taliban Ferocity," *Washington Times*, June 2, 2006, p. 15.

since 2001, Operation Mountain Thrust. Beginning in mid-June, the 11,000-strong force—with Afghan, American, British, and Canadian contingents—swept into the south and killed hundreds of Taliban fighters, who, in a costly shift in tactics, opted to stand and fight in a series of pitched, direct-fire battles.[513] Reinforcing that success, the NATO-led ISAF launched Operation Medusa with some 6,000 troops, killing over 1,000 insurgents out of an estimated hard-core force of 4,000–5,000 in the south and compelling the Taliban to retreat.[514] As General James Jones, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR) recounted:

> The Taliban decided to make a test case of this region [southern Afghanistan]. The outcome of it was that they retreated and we are now in the consolidation phase and we are going to start to bring aid and reconstruction to the region.[515]

While General Jones' buoyant assessment may have been a bit premature given the record-setting number of clashes with regrouped Taliban forces in the months that followed, the underlying dynamic was favorable: ISAF was slowly consolidating control and compelling the Taliban to withdraw over the border to find sanctuary in Pakistan. Paradoxically, however, the frequency of terrorist attacks nationwide actually increased four-fold in 2006 relative to 2005. The number of suicide attacks increased by a factor of five, soaring from 27 to 139, and the number of remotely detonated bombings more than doubled from 783 to 1,677.[516] While part of the explanation for this spike in activity was the expansion and proliferation of Taliban bases in Pakistan's FATA and NWFP in the wake of Islamabad's failed peace initiatives with tribal leaders, a major driver was ISAF's adoption of a more pro-active security strategy. ISAF raids on suspected Taliban bases and operating areas in the south and east, which resulted in several hundred Taliban deaths in

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[513] Peter Bergen, "The Taliban, Regrouped And Rearmed," *Washington Post*, September 10, 2006, p. B1.

[514] Other sources estimate that only 500 fighters were killed and 136 captured. Rowan Scarborough, "Taliban Retreats After Losses, NATO Reports," *Washington Times*, September 21, 2006, p. 3; and Carlotta Call, "After Afghan Battle, A Harder Fight for Peace," New York Times, October 3, 2006, p. 1.

[515] Scarborough, "Taliban Retreats After Losses, NATO Reports," p. 3.

[516] The total number of armed attacks increased from 1,558 in 2005 to 4,542 in 2006. All of the figures cited here were released by Lt Gen Karl Eikenberry, the senior US commander in Afghanistan. Pamela Constable, "Gates Visits Kabul, Cites Rise in Cross-Border Attacks," *Washington Post*, January 17, 2007, p. 10.

October-November 2006, prompted reprisal attacks.[517] Closing out the year, Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Osmani—who was the Taliban's chief of military operations in Uruzgan, Nimroz, Kandahar, Farah, Heart, and Helmand Provinces, as well as a close associate of Osama bin Laden and Hekmatyar—was killed in a Coalition air strike.[518]

On the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, in late October 2006, Mullah Omar threatened, "With the grace of Allah, the fighting [in Afghanistan] will be increased…and it will be organized in the next few months."[519] Thus began the constant drumbeat of warnings from the Taliban about its upcoming "spring offensive" that reverberated in the international media through at least April 2007.[520] While these warnings caused some anxiety within NATO and United States, leading to significant troop increases at the start of 2007, the offensive never materialized. As General Dan McNeil, the commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan at the time, aptly remarked in April 2007, "We heard the much-ballyhooed spring offensive that the insurgents were going to make, and if there is an offensive…we were the first out of the block. What we did was launch a spoiling attack."[521]

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[517] Pamela Constable, "In Afghanistan's South, Mixed Signals for Help," *Washington Post*, November 20, 2006, p. 1; Abdul Waheed Wafa, "NATO Forces Fight Taliban in 5 Provinces of Afghanistan," *New York Times*, November 1, 2006; Reuters, "NATO Raid Kills Up to 22 Taliban in Afghan South," November 9, 2006; and Jason Straziuso, "Insurgent Activity Spikes in Afghanistan," *Associated Press*, November 13, 2006.

[518] Pakistan reportedly provided intelligence on Osmani and helped track him over the border prior to the airstrike. Carlotta, Gall, "Pakistan Role Seen in Taliban Surge at Border," *New York Times*, January 21, 2007, p. 1; and "Operation Enduring Freedom—Afghistan: Senior Taliban Leader Killed in Air Strike," *Air Force Magazine*, March 2007, p. 21.

[519] Terry Friel, "Taliban Leader Warns of More Attacks," *Washington Times*, October 24, 2006, p. 11.

[520] See, for example: "Taliban Vows Summer Wave of Suicide Bombers," *Washington Times*, January 28, 2007, p. 5; James Dobbins, "Ending Afghanistan's Civil War," Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, US House of Representatives, January 30, 2007, p. 3; Ann Scott Tyson, "General Warns of Perils in Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, February 14, 2007, p. 15; Peter Baker and Karen DeYoung, "Bush Promises Strong Effort to Counter Resurgent Taliban—U.S. to Extend Troop Increase in Afghanistan, Take Fight to Enemy Before Their Spring Offensive," *Washington Post*, February 16, 2007, p. 15; Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Pressing Allies, President Warns of Afghan Battle," *New York Times*, February 16, 2007, p. 1; and Thom Shanker, "Allies Meet to Discuss Afghan War, As Taliban Offensive Looms," *New York Times,* April 12, 2007.

[521] C.J. Chivers, "Expected Afghan Rebel Foray May Be Late, General Warns," *New York Times*, April 18, 2007.

Beginning in January 2007, the ISAF intensified its air campaign against Taliban fighters in the south and east. In February, Mullah Ghafour, a Taliban leader in restive Helmand province, was killed in a NATO airstrike and the former Taliban defense minister and senior leader of the Afghan insurgency, Obaidullah Akhund, was arrested by Pakistani authorities.[522] In March, the Coalition, committing 4,500 ISAF troops and 1,000 ANA troops, launched its own spring offensive, dubbed Operation Achilles, aimed at finding and neutralizing Taliban militants operating in the northern part of Helmand province.[523] In the weeks that followed, hundreds of Taliban fighters were killed.[524] On May 10, 2007, in Helmand province, US-led ground forces tracked down, surrounded, and killed Mullah Dadullah Akhund, the ranking Taliban military commander in Afghanistan, who had a well-deserved reputation for brutality and was the chief architect of the Taliban's terror campaign in southern and eastern Afghanistan.[525] The loss of Mullah Osmani, Mullah Ghafour, Obaidullah Akhund, and Mullah Dadullah Akhund within a period of six months was a serious blow to the Taliban insurgency—one from which it has yet to recover. Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, who replaced Mullah Dadullah, has yet to demonstrate whether he is an effective operational commander and it is unclear whether he will be able to gain the allegiance of disparate militias. During the summer and early fall of 2007, ISAF and ANA inflicted hundreds of additional Taliban casualties.[526] In its weakened condition, the Taliban has resorted to kidnappings, suicide bombings, IED attacks, and strikes against the

[522] Times Wire Services, "NATO Airstrike Kills Taliban Commander, Official Says," *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 2007; and AP, "NATO Warns Taliban Militants To Leave Afghan Town," *Los Angeles Times*, February 6, 2007.
[523] Griff Witte, "NATO Offensive Targets Taliban in S. Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, March 7, 2007, p. 10.
[524] "Afghan Forces Kill at Least 28 Taliban Fighters," *USA Today*, March 23, 2007, p. 8; "200 Taliban Fighters Ringed, Officials Say," *Washington Times*, April 24, 2007, p. 3; AP, "NATO, Afghan Troops Target Taliban in Helmand Province," *Los Angeles Times*, April 30, 2007.
[525] Times Wire Reports, "Key Taliban Leader Said to be Slain," *Los Angeles Times*, May 13, 2007; Griff Witte and Javed Hamdard, "Taliban Military Leader is Killed," *Washington Post*, May 14, 2007, p. 1; and "Death of a Talib," *The Economist*, May 19, 2007, p. 46.
[526] Abdul Waheed Wafa, "U.S. Says Raids Killed Taliban; Afghans Say Civilians Died," *New York Times*, May 1, 2007, p. 8; and Alisa Tang, "Coalition Reports Heavy Toll for Taliban," *Washington Post*, September 27, 2007, p. 19.

poorly trained and equipped Afghan National Police (ANP). Nevertheless, the Taliban continues to conduct successful attacks, most notably in the south and east, and has managed to sustain operational cells in and around key cities, including the capital, Kabul.[527]

It appears that the Taliban's "resurgence" has ebbed, at least for now. In assessing the situation in Afghanistan in June 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates commented, "I think actually things are slowly, cautiously headed in the right direction. I'm concerned to keep it moving that way."[528] To that end, the US government has pledged to keep at least 27,000 troops (inclusive of the 15,000-strong ISAF contingent) on the ground in Afghanistan through 2008.[529] The NATO-led ISAF now comprises some 35,000 troops drawn from 37 contributing nations.[530] The ANA is approaching 50,000 newly trained officers and soldiers, well along the way toward the goal of fielding a 70,000-strong professional national army by 2009. As an integral part of this effort, the US government has starting supplying the ANA with thousands of combat vehicles (primarily armored High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles), hundreds of helicopters, artillery, and a growing arsenal of light and heavy weapons.[531] While the ANP has roughly 62,000 men on its rolls, it

[527] In the first six monts of 2007, for example, the Taliban conducted over 80 suicide attacks. John Ward Anderson, "Emboldened Taliban Reflected in More Attacks, Greater Reach," *Washington Post*, September 25, 2007, p. 11; and Lieutenant General David Barno, "Fighting 'The Other War'—Counterinsurgency Strategy in Afghanistan, 2003–2005," *Military Review*, September–October 2007, p. 42.

[528] Mark Mazzetti, "Gates Cautious About Gains in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, June 4, 2007, p. 11.

[529] Peter Baker, "Bush Promises Strong Effort to Counter Resurgent Taliban," *Washington Post*, February 16, 2007, p. 15.

[530] The largest complements are from the United Kingdom with 5,200 troops deployed; Germany, 3,000; Canada, 2,500; and the Netherlands, 2,200. Several contributing countries (e.g., Germany), however, place restrictions on how and where their forces can be employed, which has caused considerable political strain within NATO. John Ward Anderson, "NATO Conflicted Over Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, October 21, 2007, p. 21; Pamela Constable, "Gates Visits Kabul, Cites Rise in Cross-Border Attacks," *Washington Post*, January 17, 2007, p. 10; AP, "US: Curbs on NATO Troops Easing," *Boston Globe*, January 27, 2007; Ann Scott Tyson, "General Warns of Perils in Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, February 14, 2007, p. 15; David Montero, "New Strategy in Taliban's Offensive," *Christian Science Monitor*, April 11, 2007, p. 1; and Thom Shanker, "Allies Meet to Discuss Afghan War, As Taliban Offensive Looms," *New York Times*, April 12, 2007.

[531] "Afghan Military Gets Arms, Trucks from U.S.," *Washington Post*, February 2, 2007, p. 12; and C.J. Chivers, "Expected Afghan Rebel Foray May Be Late, General Warns," *New York Times*, April 18, 2007.

is beset by a number of problems (e.g., competing loyalties, poor training, low pay, and corruption), and thus, is unable to perform its policing and internal security duties adequately.[532] With new international attention focused on this problem, hopefully, progress can be made toward the goal of building an 82,000-strong, professional ANP force.

In addition to the slowly improving security situation, there are myriad other reasons for optimism regarding the situation in Afghanistan. Over the past two years, millions of Afghans have voted in elections—reelecting President Karzai to a five-year term in 2004 and electing representatives to the new Afghan parliament in September 2005. In both instances, despite calls from the Taliban to boycott the elections, there was not a significant upsurge in violence. In the presidential election, some eight million Afghans made their way to the polls and for the parliamentary election, some six million Afghans cast ballots for a dizzying array of nearly 6,000 candidates.[533] Karzai's general amnesty program for Taliban rank and file, enacted in December 2004, has gradually diminished its ranks. The central government's campaign to disarm tribal militias has made some progress in the northern and western provinces, while several militias in the south have been co-opted, donning police uniforms to combat the Taliban and other insurgent groups.[534] With enhanced security, 25 Provincial Reconstruction Teams are at work, including four in the South (Kandahar, Lashkar-Gah, Tarin Kowt, and Qalat) and 11 in the East. Thousands of schools, clinics, and government buildings have been built across the country. Some six million children are now attending school, including 1.6 million girls (up from less than 1 million in total under the Taliban). Nearly 2,000 miles of road have been either restored or newly constructed. According to the IMF, official GDP growth in Afghanistan averaged 22.5 percent between 2002 and 2004, dipped to eight percent in 2004–2006, and is forecast to reach 13 percent for 2007–2008—a healthy rate of economic recovery.[535] While the international community has pledged over $24 billion in aid for Afghanistan at three donors'

[532] The political decision to integrate demobilized factional combatants into the ANP exacerbated preexisting internal challenges.
[533] Carlotta Gall and Somini Sengupta, "Afghan Voters Take Next Step to Democracy," *New York Times*, September 19, 2005, p. 1.
[534] Amir Shah, "Karzai to Arm Afghan Tribesmen in Bide to Stem Taliban Attacks," *Washington Post*, June 12, 2006, p. 15.
[535] Rachel Morarjee, "Doubts Intensify Over Afghanistan's Future," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 11, 2006. See also: http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2006/pr06144.htm; and http://www.imf.org/external/np/ms/2007/051007.htm.

conferences since 2002, about two-thirds of that has been committed.[536] While that aid is nowhere near sufficient for rebuilding Afghanistan after nearly three decades of conflict, and is in fact considerably less per capita than has been provided to Bosnia and Iraq, it has improved the lives of countless Afghans.[537]

While the overall trend seems positive, there is still ample room for pessimism regarding Afghanistan's future. An opinion poll conducted by the Asia Foundation in 2006 found that the number of Afghans who felt that their country was heading in the right direction had dropped from 64 percent on the eve of the presidential elections in 2004 to 44 percent as of the fall of 2006.[538] The three principle complaints of the Afghan people were pervasive government corruption, the central government's failure to deliver promised reconstruction and restore basic services, and its inability to secure the countryside, which is repeatedly thrust into the public consciousness by high-profile Taliban attacks and suicide bombings.[539]

While those remain major concerns, the Afghan public has grown increasingly irate over the number of civilian casualties caused by the ISAF and the ANA. Between January and July 2007, ISAF and the ANA

[536] Roughly $16 billion in foreign aid, including more than $10 billion from the United States, has been provided to Afghanistan. The Bush Administration requested another $10.6 billion in aid for Afghanistan for 2008, including $8.6 billion for training and equipping Afghan security forces and $2 billion in reconstruction projects and counter-narcotics efforts. Helene Cooper and David Cloud, "Bush to Seek More Aid for Afghanistan," *New York Times*, January 26, 2007, p. 6.

[537] According to RAND, international aid flowing into Afghanistan amounts to about $57 per person as compared with $679 in Bosnia and $206 in Iraq. Paul Wiseman, "Revived Taliban Waging 'Full-Blown Insurgency'," *USA Today*, June 20, 2006, p. 1; Paul Watson, "Steering His Nation Without a Rudder," *Los Angeles Times*, November 12, 2006, p. 1; and James Dobbins, "Ending Afghanistan's Civil War," Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, US House of Representatives, January 30, 2007, pp. 3–4.

[538] Twenty-one percent of the more than 6,200 Afghans polled felt their country was heading in the wrong direction, roughly twice the figure in 2004. The poll was conducted by the non-profit Asia Foundation and sponsored by USAID. In a public opinion poll released by ABC news in December 2005, 77 percent of Afghans asserted that their country was heading in the right direction. Paul Wiseman, "Poll: Afghans Express Confidence in Country's Direction, Security," *USA Today*, November 9, 2006, p. 4; Carlotta Call, "Afghans Losing Faith in Nation's Path, Poll Shows," *New York Times*, November 9, 2006; and Bergen, "The Taliban, Regrouped And Rearmed," p. B1.

[539] David Rohde and James Risen, "C.I.A. Review Highlights Afghan Leader's Woes," *New York Times*, November 5, 2006, p. 14.

operations appear to have been responsible for between one-third and one-half of the roughly 600 Afghan civilians killed.[540] In June, under mounting political pressure, a visibly angry President Karzai rebuked NATO and the US military, in particular, for "careless operations" and remarked that "Afghan life is not cheap and should not be treated as such."[541] While increased Coalition reliance on air power may have contributed to a rise in civilian casualties, the primary cause is Taliban tactics that intentionally put civilians in jeopardy, including withdrawing to civilian dwellings after ambushing Coalition forces, fighting from public buildings, and using civilians as "human shields." Regardless of the cause, however, civilian casualties at the hands of "friendly" forces undermine popular Afghan support for the war against the Taliban and provide useful grist for the Taliban's propaganda mill. They have also stressed relationships among members of the NATO alliance. The United States cannot hope to win over the hearts and minds of the Afghan people, if the Coalition is responsible for nearly as many civilian deaths as the Taliban.

As will be detailed below, Islamabad's unwillingness, inability, or both to prevent its western frontier from being used as a sanctuary by

[540] According to the NGO Safety Office in Afghanistan, 678 conflict-related deaths occurred in the first half of 2007; of which 347 were caused by insurgents and 331 by coalition forces. John Ward Anderson, "Emboldened Taliban Reflected in More Attacks, Greater Reach," *Washington Post*, September 25, 2007, p. 11. See also: Anna Mulrine, "Elusive Victory," U.S. *News & World Report*, July 16, 2007; Waheed Wafa, "U.S. Says Raids Killed Taliban; Afghans Say Civilians Died," p. 8; David Cloud, "U.S. Reviews Afghan Claims of Civilian Toll in Airstrikes," *New York Times*, May 4, 2007, p. 16; Pamela Constable, "Afghans Growing Irate Over Casualties," *Washington Post*, May 12, 2007, p. 10; Carlotta Gall, "Afghans Say Civilian Toll in Strikes Is Much Higher Than Reported," *New York Times*, May 11, 2007, p. 18; Carlotta Gall and David Sanger, "Civilian Deaths Undermine War on Taliban," *New York Times*, May 13, 2007, p. 1; and Griff Witte, "Airstrike Hits Civilians, Afghan Officials Say," *Washington Post*, June 23, 2007, p. 12; Barry Bearak and Abdul Waheed Wafa, "U.S. Account of Afghan Deaths At Odds With Head of Rights Groups," *New York Times*, June 30, 2007, p. 3; Barry Bearak and Taimoor Shah, "More Afghan Civilians Killed in Airstrikes," *New York Times*, July 1, 2007, p. 4; and Barry Bearak, "Tribal Chief Says NATO Airstrike Killed 108 Afghan Civilians," *New York Times*, July 8, 2007, p. 3.

[541] President Karzai also remarked: "The extreme use of force, the disproportionate use of force to a situation, and the lack of coordination with the Afghan government is causing these casualties. You don't fight a terrorist by firing a field gun from 37 kilometers away into a target. That is definitely bound to cause civilian casualties. You don't hit a few terrorists with field guns." Barry Bearak, "Karzai Calls Coalition 'Careless'," *New York Times*, June 24, 2007, p. 10.

the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other radical groups poses a serious security problem for Afghanistan. So, too, is the country's record-breaking cultivation of opium and the illicit funding stream it provides not only to jihadis, but also to warlords opposed to President Karzai's efforts to extend the central government's authority beyond Kabul. There are also some signs that foreign jihadis, many having honed their skills in Iraq, are beginning to flow into Afghanistan. The new fighters and suicide-bombers making their way to Afghanistan, primarily through Iran and Pakistan, comprise mainly Yemenis, Syrians, and Chechens.[542] In addition, there are clear indications that, despite its religious differences with the Taliban, the Iranian government has stepped up arms shipments (e.g., 107-mm mortars, rocket propelled grenades, C4 explosives, and EFP-armed IEDs) to Taliban cells in Afghanistan to aid them in their fight against US and NATO forces.[543]

The Pakistani Sanctuary and Opium Trade Problems

As mentioned above, Afghanistan's recovery and stabilization has been bedeviled by two serious and growing problems: the terrorist sanctuary in western Pakistan and the illegal poppy trade. Despite Pakistan's protestations to the contrary, it is clear that the Taliban, Hezb-i-Islami, al Qaeda, and other groups are based in and operate from Pakistani territory. Senior lieutenants of Mullah Muhammad Omar, the Taliban's supreme leader, are believed to be operating out of Baluchistan Province. Its capital is also the seat of the Taliban's most important leadership council, the Quetta Shura. From its Baluchistan base, the Taliban conducts operations in the south-central Afghan provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Zabol. From his base in Miramshah, the capital of Pakistan's North Waziristan Province, Maulana Jalaluddin Haqqani runs operations in Kabul and the eastern Afghan provinces of Khost, Logar, Paktia, and Paktika. Fighters belonging to Hezb-i-Islami, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former Afghan prime minister and fundamentalist warlord who fought against the Soviets during the 1979–1989 jihad, are based in Peshawar and the Bajur region of Pakistan. From the

[542] Sebastian Rotella, "War on West Shifts Back to Afghanistan," *Los Angeles Times,* October 25, 2006, p. 1.

[543] Robin Wright, "Iranian Flow of Weapons Increasing, Officials Say," *Washington Post*, June 3, 2007, p. 14; Robin Wright, "Iranian Arms Destined for Taliban Seized in Afghanistan, Officials Say," *Washington Post*, September 16, 2007, p. 19; and John Ward Anderson, "Arms Seized in Afghanistan Sent From Iran, NATO Says," *Washington Post*, September 21, 2007, p. 12.

relatively safety of this sanctuary, Hekmatyar runs operations in the Afghan regions of Kapisa, Kunar, Laghman, Nangahar, and Nuristan. Finally, al Qaeda fighters and foreign jihadists are believed to be operating primarily from bases in the FATA and North-West Frontier Province in Pakistan.[544]

As will be discussed below, while Pakistan has attempted to deny the Taliban and its allies these sanctuaries, efforts to date have been inadequate. Although Pakistani security forces have captured or killed more than 700 foreign jihadis (including members of al Qaeda) and Taliban-linked fighters in these areas, very few senior Taliban leader have been arrested or killed in Pakistan since 2001, nor have many of the top leaders of the militias headed by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Jalaluddin Haqqani that fight alongside the Taliban.[545] There is also growing evidence that the Taliban may be receiving intelligence on ANA, American and ISAF plans and tactical operations, as well as medical, financial, and logistical support from Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI).[546]

In 2006, opium cultivation in Afghanistan rose to 165,000 hectares, a 59 percent increase over 2005. An unprecedented 6,100 metric tons of opium was harvested, breaking Afghanistan's former world record in 1999 of 4,600 tons, and accounting for a staggering 92 percent of global production. According to a field survey completed by the Afghan government and the United Nations, poppy cultivation in 2006 increased in 13 provinces, remained unchanged in 16, and decreased in three. Helmand province led the way with 160 percent increase in production relative to 2005. Troublingly, nearly 13 percent of the Afghan population is involved in opium cultivation in some way.[547] According to early reports, the 2007 poppy harvest in Afghanistan will increase by more than 10 percent nationwide, led by Helmand province with an estimated crop increase of 45 percent. In addition, the number

[544] Robert Kaplan, "The Taliban's Silent Partner," *New York Times*, July 20, 2006; Peter Bergen, "The Taliban, Regrouped And Rearmed," *Washington Post*, September 10, 2006, p. B1; and David Rhode, "Al Qaeda Finds Its Center of Gravity," *New York Times*, September 10, 2006, p. WK3.

[545] Bergen, "The Taliban, Regrouped And Rearmed," p. B1; and Carlotta Gall, "Pakistan Arrests Chief Spokesman for Taliban," *New York Times*, October 5, 2005.

[546] Carlotta Gall, "Musharraf Vows to Aid Afghanistan in Fighting Taliban," *New York Times*, September 7, 2006.

[547] United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2006—Executive Summary* (New York, NY: UN, September 2006), pp. iv, 1–4. See also: Carlotta Gall, "Opium Harvest At Record Level in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, September 3, 2006, p. 1.

of laboratory facilities in the south that convert raw opium into heroine, dramatically increasing its value, soared from 30 to 50 in 2007.[548] General James Jones, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, observed in the spring of 2006 that "Afghanistan is on the way to recovery but is also fighting some internal demons. And one is certainly the narcotics culture and the dependence of the economy on narcotics."[549]

Revenue from the illegal sale of opium and heroin flows not only into the pockets of tribal warlords and corrupt government officials, but also into the coffers of the Taliban, Hezb-i-Islami, and other "insurgent" groups. It is not a coincidence that the largest areas of expanded cultivation are in the South, especially in Helmand and Kandahar Provinces, which were wracked by the mounting Taliban-led insurgency over the past few years. Ironically, the Taliban, which banned poppy production in the 1990s as un-Islamic, coerced local farmers to begin growing it or expand cultivation in exchange for protection. In Helmand and Uruzgan provinces, for example, the Taliban reportedly distributed leaflets threatening to kill farmers who did not plant a poppy crop.[550]

Hopefully, the forced withdrawal of the Taliban from Afghanistan's southern provinces, the growing ISAF presence in the south, the co-opting of tribal militias to serve as government security forces, and the ongoing work of PRTs in the area will lead to falling poppy production in the years ahead. While ground- or aerial spraying of poppy crops with herbicide might appear to be an attractive eradication solution because it promises immediate results, it could prove counter-productive strategically by stripping poor farmers of subsistence revenue, throwing thousands of Afghans out of work, stressing the country's already fragile economy, and pushing disaffected Afghans to join the Taliban.[551] What is needed instead is an international effort to assist Afghan farmers

[548] David Rohde, "Taliban Raise Poppy Production to a Record Again," *New York Times*, August 25, 2007, p. 3; and AP, "Afghan Opium Poppy Crop Hits Record," *Chicago Tribune*, July 18, 2007.
[549] Ann Scott Tyson, "Afghan Threat Played Down," *Washington Post*, March 7, 2006, p. 13.
[550] Jason Motlagh, "Opium Poppy Harvest to Grow," *Washington Times*, June 13, 2007, p. 11.
[551] To the extent herbicide eradication is pursued at all, it should be coupled with short-term economic aid and crop substitution efforts. In addition to their apprehension about the political ramifications of large-scale herbicide use, Afghan officials also remained concerned about possible adverse environmental and public health consequences. Kirk Semple, "Afghanistan Seeks Review of Herbicides in Poppy War," *New York Times*, October 22, 2007, p. 12.

with cultivating profitable substitute crops (e.g., cantaloupes, apricots, eggplants, pomegranates, saffron, and pistachios), as well as to develop a reliable storage and transportation infrastructure for getting those crops to market. Afghan farmers would benefit enormously from increasing exploitation of irrigation technology, high-quality seeds, and modern planting techniques.

Pakistan

On September 13, 2001, General Pervez Musharraf was given an ultimatum: either discontinue Pakistan's decade-long support of the Taliban and join the United States in its war against terrorism or face serious diplomatic, economic, and military consequences. Musharraf opted for the former course—pledging to terminate Pakistan's support to the Taliban, granting unrestricted over-flight and landing rights for US military and intelligence flights, sharing critical intelligence with the United States on known or suspected al Qaeda terrorists, and stepping up domestic counter-terrorism activities.[552] Since 2001, Musharraf has been a reluctant ally in the GWOT, putting his career and indeed his life in jeopardy. Pakistan authorities have apprehended more than 700 suspected members of al Qaeda, including nearly all of the senior leaders that have been captured globally to date, most of whom were promptly turned over to the United States for interrogation. Pakistan has also deployed an unprecedented 80,000 troops (with surges up to 100,000 troops) to the western frontier—Baluchistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)—in a costly, politically risky effort to seal the border and hunt down al Qaeda and Taliban fighters who fled from Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. At a cost of some 1,000 soldiers' lives and thousands of injuries—more than any other American ally in the war on terrorism, Pakistan has captured hundreds and killed scores of Islamist militants in this rugged, volatile region.[553] In his letter to Zarqawi in July 2005, Zawahiri characterized Pakistan's patrols and sweeps in the

[552] Reuters, "Pakistan Tells of U.S. Threat After 9/11, CBS Reports," *New York Times*, September 22, 2006, p. 12.
[553] AP, "Pakistan Says U.S. Has Custody of Al Qaeda Suspect," *Washington Post*, June 7, 2005, p. 24; Ismail Khan and Carlotta Gall, "Pakistan Lets Tribal Chiefs Keep Control Along Border," *New York Times*, September 6, 2006, p. 8; and Paul Wiseman and Zafar Sheikh, "Militants' Gains in Pakistan Mostly Territorial," *USA Today*, October 25, 2007, p. 13.

FATA as a dire threat to the jihadi movement, stating that the "the real danger comes from the agent Pakistani army that is carrying out operations in the tribal areas looking for mujahedeen."[554]

Despite these laudable efforts, the Salafi-Jihadi threat in Pakistan has not diminished since 2001. In fact, a persuasive case can be made that the terrorist threat has intensified for at least two reasons: the increasing radicalization of Pakistan's Muslim population of 160 million and the increasing "Talibanization" of the FATA, especially North and South Waziristan. The arrest of so many members of al Qaeda and other foreign jihadists in Pakistan is in part a reflection of the fact that it remains a terrorist breeding ground: its madrassas and mosques continue to churn out radicals who are recruited into myriad terrorist organizations and its largely "ungoverned" western frontier is a *de facto* sanctuary where foreign jihadists have found refuge and can plot, prepare, and train for future attacks. As one former Pakistani parliamentarian commented, "It is ironic that our very success in thwarting plots and arresting a large number of terrorists reinforces the perception that this country is a bastion of terrorism. Our triumphs in the war against terror have become advertisements of our failure."[555]

As will be elaborated upon below, taken as a whole, Pakistan's cooperation in the GWOT is at once invaluable and insufficient. While the US government is pleased by what Pakistan has accomplished since 2001, it is also frustrated by its lack of progress in several critical areas. Although the US government has strong incentives to push Musharraf harder to clamp down on terrorism, it must simultaneously acknowledge that he is severely constrained by his tenuous political situation. Pushing Musharraf too hard could force him to break off his partnership with the United States, or alternatively, to take imprudent political risks that put his presidency in even further jeopardy. While Musharraf, who came to power in a military-backed coup in 1999, may not be the ideal partner in the GWOT, the United States could do much worse with possible successors.

In light of the fact that several attempts have been made on Musharraf's life, including two linked to al Qaeda, and his uncertain political prospects, the United States should develop contingency plans for retaining Islamabad's cooperation in the GWOT in a post-Musharraf

[554] Letter from al-Zawahiri to Zarqawi, July 9, 2005, p. 1.
[555] Pamela Constable, "Pakistan's Awkward Balancing Act on Islamic Militant Groups," *Washington Post*, August 26, 2006, p. 10.

Pakistan. The emergence of a regime that is much less supportive of, if not openly hostile toward, the United States is very real possibility. Given its large Muslim population and nuclear weapons arsenal, preventing Pakistan from falling to radical Islamists is a strategic imperative of the highest order.

While Pakistan has accomplished much in the past six years—including capturing or killing nearly a score of senior al Qaeda leaders, operatives, facilitators, and financiers—it faces three serious and growing challenges: intensifying, home-grown Wahhabi-Jihadi radicalism; its demonstrated inability to secure its border with Afghanistan and deny sanctuary to terrorists based in and operating from tribal areas; and the "Talibanization" of Waziristan, which is beginning to spill over into the wider FATA and the NWFP (e.g., Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, and the Swat Valley).[556] Although Musharraf might have the will to confront these problems, his ability to do so will be severely constrained by domestic political considerations.

Musharraf's efforts to track down jihadis operating in the religiously conservative FATA and NWFP have encountered stiff resistance not only from the tribal community and local religious leaders, but also from Islamist political parties in Islamabad. Nicknamed "Mush" by his Islamist critics, he is frequently denounced as a traitor and puppet of the United States.[557] Within his own administration, there are credible reports that elements within the ISI and the military may be undercutting his publicly announced policy of suspending any and all support for the Taliban. They reportedly are interested in retaining the Taliban (and Kashmiri separatist groups) as strategic "agents of influence" against Pakistan's archrival, India, which could be especially critical in the event that Afghanistan collapses back into chaos.[558]

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[556] Hassan Abbas, "Increasing Talibanization in Pakistan's Seven Tribal Agencies," *Terrorism Monitor*, September 17, 2007, pp. 1–5.

[557] Kim Barker, "Situation Normal for Key Ally: Under Siege," *Chicago Tribune*, March 3, 2006.

[558] There are many reports that Pakistan's ISI and Military Intelligence are continuing to provide intelligence and material support to the Taliban. Hamid Gul, the former director general of Pakistani intelligence, is an outspoken, public supporter of the Taliban. Robert Kaplan, "The Taliban's Silent Partner," *New York Times*, July 20, 2006; Peter Bergen, "The Taliban, Regrouped And Rearmed," *Washington Post*, September 10, 2006, p. B1; Carlotta Gall, "Pakistani Role Seen in Taliban Surge at Border," *New York Times*, January 21, 2007, p. 1; and David Montero, "More Evidence of Taliban Leader Hiding in Pakistan," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 19, 2007, p. 1.

Weakening his already tenuous position, Musharraf's decision on March 9, 2007 to suspend and arrest the chief justice of the Supreme Court, Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry, prompted the mass resignation of several judges and the deputy attorney general; triggered nationwide public protests by lawyers, journalists, women's groups, opposition parties, and other outraged citizens; and galvanized and re-energized the pro-democracy movement.[559] The fact that Musharraf's decision was subsequently reversed by a Supreme Court panel suggests that he has lost the support of much of the judiciary. It subsequently ruled that former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, an opponent of Musharraf who was exiled to Saudi Arabia in 2003, could return to Pakistan. Upon his arrival in Islamabad on September 10, 2007, however, he was immediately deported. In the midst of this flap with the Supreme Court, Islamist militants ensconced themselves in the Red Mosque (Lal Masjid) complex on July 3rd, triggering a bloody, week-long siege and eventual assault by government security forces, primarily the Special Services Group (SSG) of the Pakistani Army.

Although Musharraf was elected to a new five-year term on October 6, 2007, receiving 98 percent of the 700 ballots cast by representatives in the national and provincial assemblies, all of the major opposition parties boycotted the election and the Supreme Court had yet to rule on whether Musharraf's candidacy was constitutionally permissible while he was still the head of Pakistan's military.[560] In an attempt to shore up his support base, the US government helped broker a power-sharing plan with the late former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who was granted amnesty by Musharraf for alleged corruption and allowed to return to Pakistan on October 18, 2007.[561] Bhutto, who headed the popular Pakistan People's Party and planned to run for an unprecedented third-term as prime minister, had a long history of political rivalry with and personal animosity toward Musharraf.

[559] Ahmed Rashid, "Musharraf At The Exit," *Washington Post*, March 22, 2007, p. 21; Somini Sengupta, "Musharraf Finds Himself Weakened After Firing of Judge," *New York Times*, March 25, 2007, p. 10; Griff Witte, "Battle Brews Over Rule by Military in Pakistan," *Washington Post*, April 2, 2007, p. 10; Kim Barker and Bay Fang, "Musharraf Opposition Galvanizes," *Chicago Tribune*, April 9, 2007; Laura King, "Musharraf's Grip Falters in Pakistan," *Los Angeles Times*, May 29, 2007, p. 1; Najam Sethi, "Pakistan in the Balance," *Wall Street Journal*, June 16, 2007, p. 9; and Ahmed Rashid, "America's Bad Deal With Musharraf, Going Down in Flames," *Washington Post*, June 17, 2007, p. B1.

[560] Griff Witte, "Pakistan's Musharraf Sweeps Presidential Vote," *Washington Post*, October 7, 2007, p. 24.

[561] Helene Cooper and Mark Mazzetti, "Backstage, U.S. Nurtured Pakistan Rivals' Deal," *New York Times*, October 20, 2007, p. 1.

Because of her support for secular policies, Bhutto was also a lightning rod for conflict with the Islamist community. As an omen of events to come, her motorcade was attacked by two Pakistani suicide bombers on the evening of her "triumphant" return, killing some 140 people.[562]

Informed that the Supreme Court was going to invalidate his re-election to a new term as president, Musharraf declared a "state of emergency" on November 3, 2007, temporarily suspending the country's constitution.[563] Over the following week, the government suspended the Supreme Court and dismissed several members who refused to sign an oath to abide by a "provisional constitutional order"; detained or arrested opposition leaders, lawyers, and other protestors nationwide; seized control of the media; and established military tribunals.[564] Several prominent leaders in Pakistan, including Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry and the Benazir Bhutto, called for Musharraf to step down as president.[565] Yielding to mounting pressure, Musharraf resigned as chief of the army in late November and, after pushing through several contentious constitutional amendments and swearing in a new panel of Supreme Court judges, he lifted the state of emergency on December 15, 2007.[566] Less than two weeks later, on December 27th, Bhutto was assassinated, reportedly by members of the al-Qeada backed Taliban Movement in Pakistan, during a political rally in Rawalpindi.[567] Her death prompted widespread popular unrest that resulted in several hundred deaths. Parliamentary elections scheduled for January 8, 2008 were postponed until February 18th. As this report went to press, the domestic political situation in Pakistan was extremely volatile.

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[562] Griff Witte, "Pakistan's Bhutto Vows to Persevere Despite Deaths of 140, New Threats," *Washington Post*, October 20, 2007, p. 9.
[563] David Rohde, "Musharraf Declares Emergency Rule," *New York Times*, November 4, 2007, p. 1.
[564] Griff Witte, "Pakistan Moves Against Opposition," *Washington Post*, November 5, 2007, p. 1.
[565] Pamela Constable and Emily Wax, "Bhutto Calls on Musharraf to Resign," *Washington Post*, November 14, 2007, p. 1; and David Rohde and Jane Perlez, "Ousted Chief Justice in Pakistan Urges Defiance," *New York Times*, November 7, 2007, p. 1.
[566] Carlotta Gall, "Musharraf Lifts State of Emergency in Pakistan," *New York Times*, December 16, 2007.
[567] The Taliban Movement in Pakistan is led by Baitullah Mehsud and has close operational links to al Qaeda central. Griffe Witte, "Bhutto Assassination Sparks Chaos," *Washington Post*, December 28, 2007, p. 1; and Carlotta Gall, "Pakistan Says Bhutto's Death Has Qaeda Link," *New York Times*, December 29, 2007, p. 1.

Even if Musharraf retains his tenuous hold on power, his political position has been badly weakened, undermining his ability to wage an aggressive counter-insurgency campaign in the border area with Afghanistan. Although he promised in July 2007 that "extremism and terrorism will be defeated in every corner of the country," Musharraf's ability to tackle those problems—assuming he remains in power—will be severely constrained by domestic political factors for the foreseeable future.[568]

Pakistan's Victories in the GWOT

As mentioned above, since 2001, Pakistan has achieved a number of victories in the GWOT. Pakistan banned several militant and terrorist organizations, enacted numerous anti-terrorism laws, tightened up financial controls (including freezing dozens of bank accounts suspected of being controlled by terrorist organizations), and captured or killed hundreds of suspected al Qaeda terrorists and other foreign jihadis. Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has developed a closer working relationship with the Central Intelligence Agency and other foreign intelligence services. As will be discussed below, although Pakistan's efforts to bring radical madrassas into the mainstream and deny sanctuary to terrorists groups in Baluchistan, the FATA, and NWFP have failed, it has been very successful in hunting down senior al Qaeda leaders and operatives (see Table 5). In many cases, these individuals have been apprehended or killed with intelligence support provided by the United States.

[568] Khalid Tanveer, "Pakistan Pledges to Fight Militants," *Washington Times*, July 13, 2007, p. 1.

Table 5: Senior Al Qaeda Leaders and Operatives Captured or Killed in Pakistan Since 2001[569]

Name	Description	Location and Date
Ibn al-Sheikh al-Libbi	Head of al Qaeda training infrastructure in Afghanistan, Khalden training camp commander	Captured crossing into Pakistan, December 2001
Abu Zubaydah	30-year old, Saudi-born Palestinian; one of al Qaeda's chief recruiters/trainers and intimately involved in its global operations	Arrested in Faisalabad, Pakistan, February 2002
Ramzi Bin al Shibh	Organizer of Hamburg, Germany cell that formed the core of the September 11th hijackers; logistics handler and financier	Arrested in Karachi, Pakistan, September 2002
Khalid Sheik Mohammed	September 11th mastermind and head of al Qaida's military committee following Atef's death. Involved in 1993 World Trade Center bombing, a foiled 1995 plot to down a dozen US airliners over the Pacific, the bombing of US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the attack on the USS Cole, the bombing of a Tunisian synagogue in April 2002, and the beheading of Daniel Pearl	Arrested in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, March 2003
Tawfiq bin Attash (Khallad)	Head of Bin Laden's security detail; al Qaeda trainer; senior-level communications courier; and planner of the 1998 West African embassy bombings, USS Cole attack, the September 11th attacks, and the attack on the US Consulate in Pakistan in 2002	Arrested in Karachi, Pakistan, April 2003
Ahmed Said Khadr	Senior-ranking financier for al Qaeda	Killed in Waziristan, October 2003
Mussad Aruchi (Abu Musab al Baluchi)	Nephew of Khalid Sheik Mohammed; operational planner, facilitator, and financier for al Qaeda; mastermind behind several attacks in Pakistan, including the bombing of a Shiite mosque in Quetta	Arrested in Karachi, June 2004

[569] Zahid Hussain et al, "Al Qaeda Arm in Pakistan is Tied to 12 Years of Plots and Attacks," *Wall Street Journal*, August 6, 2004; AP, "Pakistan Sys U.S. Has Custody of Al Qaeda Suspect," *Washington Post*, June 7, 2005, p. 24; Douglas Jehl, "Remotely Controlled Craft Part of U.S.-Pakistan Drive Against Al Qaeda, Ex-Officials Say," *New York Times*, May 16, 2005; Dana Priest, "Surveillance Operation in Pakistan Located and Killed Al Qaeda Official," *Washington Post*, May 15, 2005, p. 25; Josh Meyer, "Terror Arrest Reported," *Los Angeles Times*, November 4, 2005; and Mohammed Khan and Carlotta Gall, "Al Qaeda Bomb Expert Killed in Pakistan was a Paymaster," *New York Times*, April 22, 2006.

Table 5 Continued

Name	Description	Location and Date
Dawood Badini	Leader of al Qaeda-linked Lashkar-e-Jhangvi terrorist group	Captured in June 2004
Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani	Senior-ranking operational planner for al Qaeda, involved in 1998 embassy bombings	Captured by Pakistani authorities, July 2004
Muhammed Naeem Noor Khan	Key al Qaeda operative closely tied to Khalid Sheik Mohammed; computer / communications expert	Apprehended in Lahore, Pakistan, July 2004 [Released August 2007]
Amjad Hussain Farooqi	Senior member of al Qaeda; linked to beheading of Daniel Pearl, and two assassination attempts of President Musharraf in 2003	Killed by Pakistani authorities, September 2004
Abu Farraj al-Libbi	Born in Libya; senior al Qaeda commander and operative; mastermind behind two attempted assassinations of President Musharraf	Arrested near Peshawar, Pakistan in May 2005
Haitham al-Yemeni	Al Qaeda facilitator and logistician	Killed by Hellfire missile launched from CIA-operated Predator UAV in Toorikhel, North Waziristan, May 2005
Abdul Latif Hakimi	Senior Taliban spokesman	Arrested in Baluchistan, October 2005
Mustafa Setmarian Nasar (Abu Musab al-Suri)	Instructor at terrorist camps in Afghanistan, specializing in poisons and CW; linked to 9/11 and Madrid bombing; important ideologue and propagandist for the jihadi movement	Arrested in Quetta, Pakistan, October 2005
Abu Hamza Rabia	Egyptian; senior al Qaeda operations officer; headed operations in/around Pakistan after the arrest of Khalid Sheik Mohammed	Killed in Asorai, Pakistan, December 2005
Muhsin Musa Matwalli Atwah (Abdul Rahman al-Muhajir)	Egyptian; senior al Qaeda operative suspected of playing a key role in the bombing of the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998	Killed in Pakistani gunship strike near Miram Shah, North Waziristan, April 2006
Marwan Hadid al-Suri (Abu Marwan)	Explosives expert and trainer for al Qaeda	Killed in Waziristan, April 2006
Obaidullah Akhund	Former Taliban defense minister; senior leader of Afghan insurgency; close associate of Mullah Omar	Arrested in Quetta, March 2007 (Possibly released)

What is conspicuously absent from this list are senior-ranking Taliban officials and top leaders of militias headed by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Jalaluddin Haqqani. With the notable exceptions of Taliban defense minister, Obaidullah Akhund, and Taliban spokesman, Abdul Latif Hakimi, few other high-ranking Taliban leaders have been captured or killed by Pakistani authorities, despite the fact that the Taliban is known to be operating out of Baluchistan and Waziristan.[570] According to many reports, the Taliban has set up senior leader "shura councils" in both Quetta and Peshawar. As will be elaborated upon below, there are at least two explanations for Islamabad's failure to find and apprehend Taliban officials. The first is that elements of the central government, primarily the ISI, have intentionally circumvented government efforts to crack down on the Taliban in order to preserve the group as "agents of influence" in Afghanistan, if and when it collapses, to counter Indian- and Iranian-backed groups. The second is that the while the central government may have the will to hunt down Taliban leaders, it has neither the political or military capability to extend its authority into the FATA where the Taliban has strong cultural, religious, and ethnic ties with the fiercely independent, well-armed Pashtun tribes that control the area.

[570] Several dozen low-ranking Taliban fighters, however, have been arrested. (According to Pakistani officials, Pakistani security forces have captured and handed over to Afghanistan more than 1,500 Taliban militants between 2004 and 2007. The veracity of that claim, however, is suspect.) Interestingly, Obaidullah Akhund's arrest was leaked by Pakistani intelligence officials within 24 hours of Vice President Cheney's meeting with President Musharaff in Islamabad duirng which he reportedly urged Musharraf to step up efforts against the Taliban and al-Qaeda-linked jihadis operating in the border area. According to a Swiss newspaper, Obaidullah Akhund was released two days after his arrest. Senior al Qaeda operatives arrested by Pakistani authorities have also been subsequently released. Muhammad Naeem Noor Khan, for example, who served as a computer expert for al Qaeda and was a close associate of Khalid Sheik Mohammed, was arrested in Lahore in July 2004 only to be released in August 2007. Griff Witte and Kamran Khan, "Arrest in Pakistan Spurs Hope of Stronger Effort," *Washington Post*, March 3, 2007, p. 11; Carlotta Gall, "Pressed by U.S., Pakistan Seizes a Taliban Chief," *New York Times*, March 2, 2007; and "Report Says Former Taliban Leader is Free," *USA Today*, March 12, 2007, p. 6; Munir Akram, "A United Front Against the Taliban," *New York Times*, April 7, 2007, p. 13; "Pakistan Releases a Man Accused of Aiding Al Qaeda," *New York Times*, August 21, 2007; and Craig Whitlock and Griff Witte, "Pakistan Frees Alleged Al-Qaeda Operative," *Washington Post*, August 22, 2007, p. 10.

Pakistan as a Hot Bed of Radicalism

Despite Musharraf's domestic counter-terrorism initiatives, including what he described in July 2005 as a "jihad against extremism," Pakistan remains a hotbed of ideological radicalism and a well-traveled recruiting ground for Salafi-Jihadi groups. It is no coincidence that several of the major attacks conducted over the past few years—the 2002 Bali nightclub bombing, Madrid train bombings, London underground bombings, and airliner bombing plot over the Atlantic—had links back to Pakistan. In the wake of the revelation that the bombers of the London underground had links to Pakistan, Musharraf addressed the nation on television to announce:

- A crackdown on banned organizations, hate materials, and incitement to violence by religious leaders;
- The expulsion of foreign madrassa students; and
- New registration and financial disclosure requirements for the country's thousands of madrassas.

Unfortunately, while the government remains rhetorically committed to these goals, they have yet to be implemented in a meaningful way. Although banned by the central government, several violent Islamic terrorist groups continue to operate in Pakistan, including: Harakat ul-Mujahedin (HUM), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM), Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LT), and Laskar-i-Jhangvi (LJ).

HUM and JEM are both aligned with the radical Fazlur Rehman faction of the Islamist political party Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam and are focused primarily upon liberating predominantly Muslim Kashmir from India and uniting it with Pakistan.[571] HUM has close links with al Qaeda; its former leader, Fazlur Rehman Khalil, for example, signed Osama bin Laden's February 1998 *fatwa* calling for a "jihad against Jews and Crusaders." JEM, which is a splinter group of HUM, rivals its parent organization in strength. It is believed to have several hundred armed supporters, including a large cadre of former HUM members, as well as tens of thousands of followers who support its attacks against Indian and Pakistani government targets. JEM has openly declared war against the United States. In 2003, it spawned two splinter groups:

[571] In 2003, HUM began using the name Jamiat ul-Ansar. *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, pp. 196–197.

Khuddam ul-Islam (KUI), headed by Masood Azhar; and Jamaat-ul Furqan (JUF), led by Abdul Jabbar. JEM and its splinter groups are believed to be responsible for several attacks over the past six years, including the October 2001 suicide car bombing of the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly building in Srinagar that killed more than 30 people; the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament, killing nine people and injuring 18; and two assassination attempts on President Musharraf.[572]

LT was formed in mid-1980s and its one of the largest and best-trained military groups fighting in Kashmir against India.[573] Recent operations include the attack, along with JEM, on the Indian Parliament building in December 2001, probably the attack in May 2002 on the Indian Army base in Kaluchak that left 36 dead, and attacks in New Delhi and Bangalore in October and December 2005, respectively. Nearly all of LT's members are either Pakistanis, recruited from local radical madrassas, or Afghan veterans of war against the Soviet Union and the Northern Alliance. LT has links with al Qaeda. Not coincidentally, when Abu Zubaydah was captured by Pakistani authorities in March 2002, he was hiding in a LT safehouse in Faisalabad.[574]

LJ is a radical Sunni sectarian group, formed in the mid-1990s, which focuses its attacks primarily, but not exclusively, on Shiites. After being banned by Musharraf in August 2001, many LJ members sought refuge in Afghanistan with the Taliban. When they were forced out of Afghanistan just a few months later, they began providing members of al Qaeda and other Afghanistan-based terrorist groups with safe houses, false identification documents, and protection in Pakistan's densely populated cities, especially Karachi, Peshawar, and Rawalpindi. LJ members are believed to be responsible for the abduction and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002; probably the car bombings in Karachi against a French shuttle bus and the US consulate in May and June 2002, respectively; a grenade assault on a Protestant International Church in Islamabad in March 2002; the abduction and killing of 13 Shia police cadets in June 2003; the bombing of a Shiite mosque in Quetta in July 2003; and the bombings of two Shiite mosques in Karachi in the summer of 2004.[575]

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[572] Ibid, pp. 201–202.
[573] After being banned, LT changed its name to Jamaat ud Dawa.
[574] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, pp. 207–208.
[575] Ibid., pp. 208–209; and Nasra Hassan, "Al Qaeda's Understudy," *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 2004, pp. 42–43.

These organizations' "hate materials" in the form of written literature, DVDs and video-cassette tapes, and Internet postings are widely available. These shockingly sanguine, violent materials are feeding a growing sub-culture of grievance and anger toward United States, in particular, and the West more broadly. More than two years after Musharraf's promise to bring madrassas into the mainstream, scant substantive progress has been made: there has been no systematic effort to register madrassas; foreign students are allowed to remain so long as they have permission from their home countries, which is impractical to verify; and an estimated 15 percent of madrassas in Pakistan continue to teach extremist interpretations of Islam and churn out radicalized graduates.[576]

The Pakistani government's tolerance of radicalism is now being felt across the country—not just in border areas with Afghanistan, which draws most of the media's attention in the West. In 2007, hundreds of people were killed in attacks from Karachi in the south to Peshawar in the north.[577] In July, for example, radicalized students responsible for a series of public demonstrations against the Musharraf government barricaded themselves within the Lal Majid, or Red Mosque, complex in Islamabad. After a much publicized week-long standoff, the government was forced to storm the building, resulting in hundreds of casualties.[578] By strengthening long-standing alliances with radicalized religious groups, charities, and criminal gangs, al Qaeda is believed to have established operational bases in Quetta, Karachi, and other Pakistani cities.[579]

Terrorist Sanctuaries in the "Wild West"

Pakistan's FATA, which hugs the border with Afghanistan, has an estimated population of about 3.5 million people, who are overwhelmingly Pashtun. It encompasses over 27,000 square kilometers—mostly

[576] Samina Ahmed and Andrew Stroehlein, "Pakistan: Still Schooling Extremists," *Washington Post*, July 17, 2005, p. B7.
[577] Griff Witte, "Deadly Violence Spreads in Pakistan," *Washington Post*, July 20, 2007, p. 12.
[578] Griff Witte, "Pakistan Launches Operation Against Radicals in Mosque," *Washington Post*, July 6, 2007, p. 8; Carlotta Gall, "Pakistani President Tell Militants: Surrender or Die," *New York Times*, July 8, 2007, p. 6; and Carlotta Gall, "Leader of Pakistan Mosque Vows to Fight," *New York Times*, July 9, 2007, p. 3.
[579] Josh Meyer, "Al Qaeda Said to Operate Across Pakistan," *Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 2007.

difficult-to-access, rugged, mountainous terrain. The FATA is home to about 60 Pashtun tribes, including a dozen major ones, which spill over into Afghanistan. Ever since Pakistan was founded, the FATA has been a semi-autonomous zone into which the central government's authority does not extend in any meaningful way. The tribesmen value their independence highly and have historically resisted any effort by Islamabad to expand the central government's influence. While the tribes are generally religiously conservative, they also adhere to a pre-Islamic tribal code, Pashtunwali, which demands hospitality, generosity when someone asks for pardon or protection, and an absolute obligation to avenge any slights.[580] For administrative purposes, the FATA is divided into seven separate agencies that vary considerably in terms of their proclivity for supporting religious extremism.[581]

In the wake of Operation Enduring Freedom, members of the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other foreign jihadi groups (most notably, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) streamed over the porous Afghan border into the FATA, as well as into Baluchistan Province to the south and the NWFP to the north. Around 600 al Qaeda operatives—including Arabs, Uzbeks, Chechens, and Tajiks—are believed to have found refuge in Waziristan agencies alone.[582]

At the insistence of the United States, beginning in late 2002, President Musharraf took the unprecedented step of sending thousands of Frontier Corps, regular army, and paramilitary troops into the FATA to secure the border, as well as to track down remnants of al Qaeda and the Taliban. Initially, the effort was limited to relatively small raids and sweeps into the FATA and NWFP, but it ramped up quickly over the next two years. By 2003–2004, Pakistan had deployed some 70,000–80,000 troops to the border region (including Baluchistan). While many of these troops focused on constructing over 500 schools, setting up health clinics, and building some 800 miles of road, most of them were committed to conducting more extensive sweeps and more frequent border patrols.[583] Unsurprisingly, the tribesmen viewed these

[580] Hassan Abbas, "Profiles of Pakistan's Seven Tribal Agencies," *Terrorism Monitor*, October 19, 2006, pp. 1–2.
[581] The seven agencies are Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Mohmand, Bajaur, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan. The agencies most closely linked to the Taliban are Bajaur, Mohmand, Orakzai, and North and South Waziristan.
[582] Owais Tohid, "Cash Weans Tribes from Al Qaeda," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 16, 2005.
[583] Jason Szep, "Pakistan Seeks Reform on Afghan Border," *Washington Times*, April 13, 2004, p. 1.

incursions as a challenge to their independence, a threat to their way of life, and affront to their honor. The level of violence skyrocketed.

In January 2004, the government surged some 12,000 additional military and paramilitary troops into the FATA and NWFP to track down al Qaeda and Taliban elements. Pakistani officials put pressure on tribal leaders to hand over the "foreign terrorists," as well as more than 100 tribesmen wanted for providing them sanctuary. In an effort to compel compliance, the government threatened to impose hefty fines and carry out home demolitions for each day that passed without the wanted individuals being turned over. Several of the tribes stood up militias to hunt down the foreigners.[584] While about 60 of the wanted tribesmen were turned over, none of the most-wanted tribesmen were apprehended nor were any of their al Qaeda and Taliban guests. Making matters worse, the government's heavy-handed tactics enraged the Pashtun tribal community.[585]

Following a series of raids in the opening months of 2004 during which Pakistani forces encountered increasingly fierce resistance, the government launched the largest single operation in South Waziristan, directly involving about 5,000 Pakistani troops, in March–April 2004. During a 12-day clash with tribesmen, reinforced by Taliban and al Qaeda fighters, the government claims that it killed 60 foreign militants or their local supporters, arrested 163 suspected militants, and dismantled "a hardened den of miscreants."[586] Collateral damage, however, was also high: scores of civilians were killed and dozens of homes were destroyed. During the fighting, eight captured Pakistani soldiers and two local officials were found executed. Tribesmen also took 12 Pakistani soldiers and government officials hostage.[587] The cease-fire and truce that was reached was hardly a victory for the government. In return for amnesty, tribal leaders agreed to stop fighting Pakistan security forces, withdraw their support for al Qaeda and other "foreign terrorists," and refrain from attacks against US-led forces across the border in Afghanistan. Militants were also supposed to surrender their heavy weapons and register with local authorities. For its part, the government pardoned the five tribal commanders wanted for attacking

[584] Owais Tohid, "Pakistan Gains in Al Qaeda Hunt," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 16, 2004.
[585] Ibid.
[586] Pamela Constable, "Conflict Ends in Pakistani Tribal Lands," *Washington Post*, March 29, 2004, p. 14.
[587] Pamela Constable, "Pakistan's Untamed Frontier," *Washington Post*, April 7, 2004, p. 13.

Pakistani troops (and executing eight soldiers) and agreed to release 60 of the captured militants.[588] Notably, the agreement was silent on handing over members of the Taliban and did not bar all cross-border attacks into Afghanistan. It was, in any event, not honored—attacks on Pakistani security forces continued unabated.

After deadlines for turning over the "foreign terrorists" came and went, and following repeated clashes between the tribesmen and Pakistani security forces, a new peace agreement was eventually reached in November 2004. The Pakistani government agreed to pay more than $800,000 in total to four tribal commanders, supposedly so they could reimburse al Qaeda and Taliban guests who had already paid wildly inflated prices for shelter, supplies, and protection.[589] In exchange, the tribal leaders committed to terminate their support to the foreigners, cease attacks against Pakistani security forces, and suspend cross-border attacks into Afghanistan. The agreement, however, did not stop or even slow the frequency of attacks on Pakistani personnel; cross-border attacks into Afghanistan from South Waziristan continue to this day; and al Qaeda and other foreign guests still reside and operate from there.

Meanwhile, the stand-off in North Waziristan escalated, culminating in a serious of major clashes with government forces in the vicinity of Miran Shah, Mir Ali, and Saidgi in March 2006 during which upwards of 80 tribesmen were reportedly killed.[590] Violence continued through the spring and summer. On September 5, 2006, Islamabad signed a peace agreement with tribal elders, with the apparent consent of the Taliban.[591] According to President Musharraf the truce had "three bottom lines." The first was described as "no Al Qaeda activity in our tribal agencies or across the border in Afghanistan; the second was "no

[588] Zahid Hussain, "Pakistan Border Offensive Fails," *Wall Street Journal*, May 10, 2004, p. 15; and Owais Tohid, "Cash Wean Tribes from Al Qaeda," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 16, 2005.

[589] According to one interviewed tribesman, Mohammad Noor, al Qaeda and other foreigners were charged $15 for a chicken that sold for $1 on the market and $150 for a bag of sugar worth only $7. Facilities that typically rented out for $17–25 would be given to al Qaeda as a training camp/hide out for around $10,000. Owais Tohid, "Cash Wean Tribes from Al Qaeda," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 16, 2005.

[590] AP, "Pakistan Strikes Again in Tribal Area," *Washington Post*, March 5, 2006, p. 19.

[591] The truce was reportedly approved not only by representatives of the "local Taliban," but possibly also Mullah Omar as well. Jim Krane, "Taliban Strikes on U.S. Troops Triple After Truce," *Washington Times*, September 28, 2006, p. 13.

Taliban activity" in the same areas; and the third was "no Talibanization" of the region.[592] The tribesmen agreed to force foreign militants to leave the area unless they vowed to "take up a peaceable life."[593] They also pledged to discontinue attacks against Pakistani government officials and security forces in the region. In exchange, the government agreed to cease all ground and air operations in North Waziristan, release all detainees, and resolve future problems using local customs and traditions.[594]

As with the truce in South Waziristan, the problem with this agreement was that it was utterly unenforceable. While no longer fighting Pakistani government and security personnel, who largely withdrew from the region, the Taliban, foreign fighters (including many linked to al Qaeda), and Pashtun militants used the camps within the North Waziristan border area as hubs for attacks into Afghanistan. Absent the pressure from Pakistani security forces, they were able to triple the frequency and expand the scale of attacks into eastern Afghanistan.[595] Providing direct evidence of this problem, in January 2007, NATO forces tracked two large groups of fighters infiltrating out of Pakistan and attacked them on the ground and from the air once they crossed over into Afghanistan's Paktika province, killing between 80 and 150 of them.[596] NATO and US forces interdicted hundreds of fighters crossing into Afghanistan from camps in Pakistan during the first half of 2007. Most notably, they tracked and killed the notorious Taliban military commander, Mullah Dadullah Akhund, as he crossed the border into Helmand Province on May 10, 2007.

While President Musharraf described Pakistan's truces with "tribal elders" in Southern and Northern Waziristan as defeats for the Taliban, they are more properly viewed as face-saving retreats by the

[592] David Sanger, "Musharraf Defends Deal With Tribal Leaders," *New York Times*, September 23, 2006.
[593] Michael Abramowitz and Karen DeYoung, "Bush Seeks Increased Pakistani Cooperation," *Washington Post*, September 23, 2006, p. 2.
[594] Ismail Khan and Carlotta Gall, "Pakistan Lets Tribal Chiefs Keep Control Along Border," *New York Times*, September 6, 2006, p. 8.
[595] American and ISAF troops in eastern Afghanistan have reported a tripling of attacks since the truce. Jim Krane, "Taliban Strikes on U.S. Troops Triple After Truce," *Washington Times*, September 28, 2006, p. 13.
[596] Pamela Constable, "Scores of Insurgents Killed in Afghan Border Area," *Washington Post*, January 12, 2007, p. 10.

central government driven by political necessity.[597] Duty-bound by the Pashtunwali code to protect their guests, many of whom had deep tribal roots within Waziristan, the tribesmen would rather fight "intruding" Pakistani security forces than dishonor themselves.[598] Musharraf's effort to assert central government control into the FATA and NWFP between 2002 and 2006 was politically unsustainable for at least three reasons: heavy-handed government tactics enraged the tribesmen accustomed to independence and ignited an open rebellion, it alienated conservative Islamic parties upon which he depended politically, and mounting casualties demoralized the Army.

Unfortunately, within months of their implementation, it became manifest that the truces were a strategic failure. As Brigadier Mahmood Shah, who was the senior Pakistani government official in charge of security in the FATA until last year, conceded in June: "It's a policy of appeasement. It hasn't worked. The Talibanization has increased in the past year."[599] In July 2007, after building up their offensive capability for nearly a year without interference from the central government, Taliban fighters in North Waziristan declared the 2006 peace agreement void and announced the start of an all-out guerrilla war against the Pakistani Army. In the weeks that followed, scores of Pakistani military, police, and government personnel were killed in Waziristan.[600] In response, the government began moving tens of thousands of troops into the restive area and re-manned checkpoints vacated less than one year earlier.[601] In mid-August, the South Waziristan peace agreement collapsed as well, triggering increased violence.[602]

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[597] It is unclear whether the truce in North Waziristan was signed by tribal leaders or with wanted militants, including leaders of the "local Taliban" and the members of the displaced Afghan Taliban. See Isambard Wilkinson, "Taliban Militias Take Control," *Washington Times*, October 26, 2006, p. 15.

[598] To complicate matters, even some of the "foreign terrorists" had tribal connections to the region. While some had families that came to region and married into Pashtun tribes during the jihad against the Soviet Union and later the Northern Alliance, others arranged to marry their daughters to the sons of tribal leaders after being pushed out of Afghanistan in the fall of 2001.

[599] Jane Perlez and Ismail Khan, "Taliban Spreading, Pakistani President Is Warned," *New York Times*, June 30, 2007, p. 6.

[600] Griff Witte and Imtiaz Ali, "Pakistan Truce Appears Defunct," *Washington Post*, July 16, 2007, p. 1.

[601] Griff White and Kamran Khan, "Army Plans Offensive in Pakistan's Northwest," *Washington Post*, July 19, 2007, p. 10.

[602] Griff White and Imtiaz Ali, "Taliban Fighters Void Second Truce in Pakistan," *Washington Post*, August 20, 2007, p. 11.

While details are sketchy, it appears that the Pakistani government's latest plan for restoring order and denying terrorists sanctuary in its "wild west" has four core elements:

- Offering financial, military support, and other incentives to relatively moderate tribal leaders to cooperate, cleaving their tribes off from hard-core militants;[603]

- Funding economic development projects in the area to gain the allegiance of the local population, while isolating the Taliban and foreign jihadis and cutting off their means of support;

- Closing four long-established Afghan refugee camps (Kacha Gari, Jalozai, Jungle Pir Alizai, Girdi Jungle) near the border, housing an estimated 240,000 refugees, from whom the Taliban recruits and draws support;[604] and

- Bolstering the military capabilities of the 80,000-strong Frontier Corps and other security forces in the FATA to find and capture or kill hard-core Pashtun militants and foreign jihadis.

To date, while considerable progress has been made in implementing this plan, several of its core elements remain contentious. The United States has pledged $750 million in aid over five years to develop the border area economically that will be matched, at least in part, by

[603] In March–April 2007, Pashtun tribesmen in South and North Waziristan launched an offensive against foreign jihadis, mainly Uzbeks. Several tribes accepted assistance offered by the Pakistani Army, including fire support, intelligence, and securing strategic hilltops and ridges. This successful experiment, in which hundreds of foreign militants were reportedly killed, may provide the model for an expanded effort to support moderate tribal groups against foreign jihadis and their local Taliban protectors. Griff Witte and Kamran Khan, "Pakistan Officials Applaud Fighting in Tribal Region," *Washington Post*, March 23, 2007, p. 13; Carlotta Gall and Ismail Khan, "Pakistani Army Says Its Forces Are Gaining in Tribal Lands," *New York Times*, April 13, 2007; and Behroz Khan and David Montero, "Pakistan's Taliban Fight Each Other," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 2, 2007.

[604] Bill Gertz, "Pakistan Will Close Four Camps to Foil Afghan Terror," *Washington Times*, January 16, 2007, p. 1; Katrin Bennhold and Mark Landler, "Pakistani Premier Faults Afghans for Taliban Woes on Border," *New York Times*, January 25, 2007; and AP, "Pakistan Pressing Afghan Refugees to Leave," *Los Angeles Times*, February 8, 2007.

funds provided by the Pakistani government.[605] The manner in which these funds should be disbursed, however, is a matter of some debate. While most agree that it is impractical for the central government to administer the aid program, it is unclear how to ensure that funds given to tribal leaders will actually be expended on relevant projects and not just to line the pockets of a relative few.[606] A significant portion of the refugee population has either been moved to other camps in Pakistan, which will remain open until 2009, or repatriated to Afghanistan with assistance provided by the UN High Commission for Refugees.[607] The influx of refugees, however, will tax Afghanistan's frail economy and place a heavy burden on its already over-stressed social service network. If they are not administered properly, new refugee camps in Afghanistan could become a major source of support for the Taliban. DoD, the State Department, and other concerned US government agencies have developed a multifaceted program to help Pakistan fight a "a full-blown and complex insurgency in the FATA."[608] That plan includes the steady-state deployment of multiple SOF Operational Detachment-Alpha (ODA) teams, military trainers, and other US government personnel to strengthen Pakistan's Special Service Group and Frontier Corps through the provision of training assistance, intelligence support, and basic military equipment.[609] In seeking funding for the multi-year program, which is already underway, DoD confronted Congressional skepticism regarding the loyalty of the Frontier Corps' rank and file, who hail predominantly from the same Pashtun tribes that have given the Taliban safehaven.[610] Musharraf's November 2007 decision to declare a "state of emergency" could embolden some members of the US Congress

[605] AP, "U.S. Seeks to Build Up Pakistani Tribal Areas," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 2007; and Walter Pincus, "U.S. Official Defends Pakistan's Efforts Against Al Qaeda," *Washington Post*, July 13, 2007, p. 11.

[606] Jane Perlez, "Aid to Pakistan in Tribal Areas Raises Concerns," *New York Times*, July 16, 2007, p. 1.

[607] David Montero, "To Root Out Taliban, Pakistan to Expel 2.4 Million Afghans," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 14, 2007.

[608] Ann Scott Tyson, "Pakistan Strife Threatens Anti-Insurgent Plan," *Washington Post*, November 9, 2007, p. 1.

[609] The total cost of the ramped-up military assistance program is roughly $350 million. Farah Stockman, "Pakistan Aid Plan Facing Resistance," *Boston Globe*, July 22, 2007, p. 1; "US Gen Pace: US Offers To Help Pakistan in Terror Fight," *Wall Street Journal*, July 20, 2007; Tyson, "Pakistan Strife Threatens Anti-Insurgent Plan," p. 1; and Eric Schmitt, Mark Mazzetti, and Carlotta Gall, "U.S. Hopes to Use Pakistani Tribes against Al Qaeda," *New York Times*, November 19, 2007.

[610] Nicholas Kralev, "U.S. Calls for Force in Tribal Pakistan," *Washington Times*, July 18, 2007, p. 1; and Stockman, "Pakistan Aid Plan Facing Resistance," p. 1.

to cut off or restrict financial and military assistance to Pakistan. In short, the mechanics of implementing the strategy described above, as well as its ultimate effectiveness, are uncertain.

The "Talibanization" of Waziristan

The Pakistani Army's efforts to secure the western border and hunt down al Qaeda and Afghan Taliban militants in the FATA and NWFP, not only enraged tribal leaders accustomed to autonomy and deference, but also alienated the Pashtun population more broadly. Heavy-handed Pakistani tactics such as imposing heavy fines or threatening home demolitions for non-compliance with their demands, while somewhat effective in the short-run, fostered deep-seated enmity. Civilian casualties, estimated to total in the hundreds, during repeated clashes with Taliban and tribal militants further enraged the population—converting formerly moderate Pashtuns into Taliban supporters; and radicalizing Pashtun youth, who felt beholden by the Pashtunwali code to avenge the deaths of relatives, into willing jihadis. Far from the declared goal of empowering tribal leaders, Musharraf's policies in fact undermined their legitimacy by calling into question their ability to provide for and protect their people. During the chaos that reigned in the FATA between 2004 and 2006, the Taliban and associated groups assassinated more than 200 tribal leaders, allegedly for cooperating with Pakistani officials or spying for the United States and its allies.[611]

The Afghan Taliban, which sowed the seeds of disorder and rebellion in the FATA, is now taking full advantage of the resulting security vacuum to consolidate its position. It was instrumental in creating the "homegrown" Taliban Movement in Pakistan, which provides security, supplies, and fighters for the Afghan Taliban and al Qaeda. This loosely organized network of several tribal groups, which is currently led by Baitullah Mehsud, is also creating an alternative government structure in South Waziristan.[612] Pro-Taliban militants have set up a "parallel administration" in North Waziristan as well. They have opened recruiting offices and distributed propaganda materials, introduced

[611] An estimated 120 tribal leaders were killed in North Waziristan alone since the fall of 2005. See Isambard Wilkinson, "Taliban Militias Take Control," *Washington Times*, October 26, 2006, p. 15; Paul Watson and Zulfiqar Ali, "Suspected U.S. Spies Targeted," *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 2006, p. 1.

[612] Pamela Constable, "In Tribal Pakistan, An Uneasy Quiet," *Washington Post*, September, 28, 2006, p. A1; "In Tribal Pakistan, A Tide of Militancy," *Washington Post*, June 20, 2006, p. 11; and Paul Watson and Zulfiqar Ali, "Suspected U.S. Spies Targeted," *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 2006, p. 1.

tax or "donation" schedules for local businesses, and started to enforce *sharia* law. Armed Taliban militants patrol village streets. Extremist madrassas, many with links to JUI, are thriving. Radical clerics preach sermons in mosques and over the FM airwaves inciting violence and calling all faithful Muslims to wage a jihad against the apostate, puppet regime of President Musharraf, the United States, and the West more broadly. Similar activity is reported in South Waziristan.

At the apparent insistence of the United States, on October 30, 2006, the Pakistani military conducted an air strike on a madrassa in the Bajaur tribal area, killing some 80 people, whom US and Pakistani authorities confidently claim were Islamist militants training for jihad operations.[613] Although the attack was a tactical success—including killing Maulana Liaqatullah (Liaquat Hussain), who was a senior member of the banned Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammad terrorist group and an associate of Zawahiri—it triggered a series of an anti-government, anti-American protests involving thousands of participants across the FATA. In a retaliatory suicide bombing, a jihadi terrorist killed 42 Pakistani army recruits and wounded 20 more—the most deadly terrorist attack against the Pakistani military ever—by blowing himself up in the middle of a training camp in the Malakand tribal district.

An even more troubling trend is the spread of Islamic extremism from Waziristan not only into other FATA agencies, but also into the NWFP, which had been relatively tranquil. Pro-Taliban militants have launched a campaign of intimidation: threatening the lives of barbers who shave beards and teachers who educate girls, closing hotels for promoting sexual promiscuity, ordering movie theaters to close, confiscating televisions and VCRs from people's homes and burning them in bonfires, bombing video and music stores, and fining or beating motorists who play their car radios.[614] Taliban militants openly recruit youth to join the Afghan jihad and dispense *sharia* justice in the street, including conducting public beheadings for petty theft. The popularity of the Taliban is growing in the FATA and NWFP. In 2006, there were dozens of reports of this type of Taliban activity across several NWFP Districts, including Dir, Dera Ismail Khan, Swat, Tank, Malakand, Lakki

[613] Pamela Constable and Kamran Khan, "In Pakistan, Recent Attacks Shred Hopes for Regional Peace Model," *Washington Post*, November 11, 2006, p. 1.
[614] Laura King, "Pakistanis Suffer Under Militants," *Los Angeles Times*, March 9, 2007.

Marwat, Bannu, Mardan, and Kohat.[615] In June 2007, Pakistan's Interior Ministry reportedly warned President Musharraf that the extremism in the border tribal area was spreading eastward, threatening Peshawar, Nowshera, and Kohat. The report asserts that "the ongoing spell of active Taliban resistance has brought about serious repercussions for Pakistan" and that the "general policy of appeasement towards the Taliban" has emboldened them.[616]

More recently, however, there have been encouraging signs that the Taliban may have over-stayed its welcome in the FATA and NWFP. The Taliban's harsh tactics may be alienating the population. Some tribal groups have reportedly stepped up offensive operations against the Taliban in selected areas.[617] Hopefully, with the backing of the Pakistani government and possibly covert US assistance as well, this nascent tribal uprising against the Taliban can gain momentum and strength in a manner similar to that of the Al Anbar Salvation Council in Iraq against AQI.[618]

Europe

On balance, the terrorist threat in Europe has intensified since 2001. The key driver of that trend is the exploitation by radical Islamic groups of the "civil liberties sanctuary" in the European Union to support ongoing operations. US intelligence believes that al Qaeda has made European recruitment a priority because European nationals generally do not require a visa to enter the United States. As Director of National Intelligence Michael McConnell stated, "Purposely recruiting an operative in Europe gives them an extra edge into getting an operative, or two or three, into the country with the ability to carry out an attack that might be reminiscent of 9/11."[619] It is also worth mentioning that,

[615] Open Source Center, "Analysis: Pakistani Media Say 'Talibanization" Increasingly 'Spilling Over' into NWFP," Document No. FEA20060420022208, April 20, 2006.
[616] Jane Perlez and Ismail Khan, "Taliban Spreading, Pakistani President is Warned," *New York Times*, June 30, 2007, p. 6.
[617] Paul Wiseman and Zafar Sheikh, "Militants' Gains in Pakistan Mostly Territorial," *USA Today*, October 25, 2007, p. 13.
[618] Schmitt, Mazzetti, and Gall, "U.S. Hopes to Use Pakistani Tribes against Al Qaeda."
[619] Associated Press, "Al Qaeda Recruits Europeans to Train," *Washington Times*, September 26, 2007, p. 9.

despite genuine efforts at increasing their CT capabilities, Bosnia and Herzegovina remain weak and potentially vulnerable to jihadi penetration. On a positive note, however, al Qaeda's cells in Turkey, while probably not eliminated, were dealt a serious blow by Turkish authorities in the wake of the 2003 attacks in Istanbul.

For at least the past decade, and arguably substantially longer than that, radical Islamists have taken advantage of the "civil liberties sanctuary" within the European Union to travel, recruit and indoctrinate followers; export their violent ideology overseas; raise funds; and plan and organize terrorist operations. Al Qaeda's "Hamburg cell" was instrumental in carrying out the attacks in New York City and Washington, DC on September 11, 2001. Members of the Hamburg cell included Mohamed Atta al Sayed, who led the four hijacking teams and piloted American Airlines flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center; Ramzi Bin al Shibh, who managed logistics and finances for the operation from Germany since he was unable to enter the United States; and Marwan al-Shehhi, who piloted United Airlines flight 175 into the South Tower of the World Trade Center. In addition, Ziad Jarrah, who piloted United Airlines flight 93 until it crashed into a field in Shanksville, PA, lived in Hamburg prior to the attacks and was very likely a member of the al Qaeda cell there.

While steps are finally being taken by members of the European Union to deny sanctuary to jihadists, the overall situation has deteriorated considerably since 2001. Europe's growing Muslim population has become more rather than less radicalized. While solid numbers are difficult to find, according to British and German intelligence assessments, tens of thousands of "active" supporters of al Qaeda and "Islamic extremists" are now entrenched in Western Europe.[620] Al Qaeda is reportedly focusing recruitment operations in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands because they have fewer restrictions on allowing their citizens to travel to Pakistan.[621]

[620] German intelligence estimated that there were over 30,000 Islamic extremists in Germany who posed a potential security risk. Michael Taarnby, "The European Battleground," in Christopher Heffelfinger, ed., *Unmasking Terror—A Global Review of Terrorist Activities* (Washington, DC: The Jamestown Foundation, 2005), p. 466.
[621] Matthew Lee and Katherine Shrader, "Al Qaeda has Rebuilt, U.S. Intel Warns," *Washington Post*, July 12, 2007.

The former Director General of the Security Service (MI5) in the United Kingdom stated publicly in November 2006 that MI5 was investigating "200 groupings or networks, totaling over 1,600 identified individuals," who were "actively engaged in plotting, or facilitating, terrorist attacks" within the United Kingdom and overseas. She revealed that some thirty terrorist plots had been disrupted to date, many with "links back to Al Qaida in Pakistan."[622] Just a year later, her successor in MI5, Jonathan Evans, reported that the number of individuals under investigation for terrorism-related activity had risen to 2,000 and that MI5 suspected that "there are as many again that we don't yet know of."[623] He asserted that "the majority of these attacks, successful or otherwise, have taken place because al-Qaeda has a clear determination to mount terrorist attacks against the United Kingdom."[624]

The March 2004 Madrid bombing, the July 2005 bombing of the London underground, the violent Muslim mass protest over the publication of Danish cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad, the plot to down as many as ten aircraft in flight from the United Kingdom to the United States, a string of disrupted bomb plots in London and Glasgow in the summer of 2007, and the thwarted plot by a German cell of the Islamic Jihad Union to conduct multiple car bomb attacks against US interests in Germany in September 2007 constitute a trend that is difficult to ignore. These incidents have forced European political leaders to accept that they face a mounting security problem that requires them to confront the unpleasant reality that radical Islamists are taking advantage of Europe's protection of civil liberties, especially the freedom of speech and assembly, to wage a jihad against the West.[625]

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[622] Eliza Manningham-Buller, Director General of the Security Service, "The International Terrorist Threat to the UK," speech, November 9, 2006. Available on-line at http://www.mi5.gov.uk/print/page568.html.

[623] Jonathan Evans, Director General of the Security Service, Address to The Society of Editors, "A Matter of Trust" Conference, Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Manchester, England, November 5, 2007. Available on-line at: http://www.mi5.gov.uk/output/Page562.html. See also: Kevin Sullivan, "At Least 4,000 Suspected of Terrorism-Related Activity in Britain, MI5 Director Says," *Washington Post*, November 6, 2007, p. 15.

[624] Ibid.

[625] In a May 2006 video, Mohammad Hassan, speaking on behalf of al Qaeda, made the jihad within Europe explicit, calling on Muslims to attack Denmark, Norway, and France for publishing cartoons of the prophet Muhammad. "Muslims avenge your prophet…We deeply desire that the small state of Denmark, Norway, and France…are struck hard and destroyed…Destroy their buildings, make their ground shake and transform them into a sea of blood." The disrupted plots in the summer of 2007 included a plot by five British men

As John Reid, the British Home Secretary, observed recently, "we face a persistent and very real threat across Europe" in that terrorists hope to "abuse our open societies" in pursuit of their violent ends. Highlighting the need to strike a better balance between protection of civil liberties and counter-terrorism imperatives, Reid asserted that "the rights of the individual must be balanced against the collective right of security and protection of life and limb."[626]

In addition to home-grown jihadi cells, several al Qaeda "franchises" are active in Europe, most notably North African Salafist groups such as the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, the Armed Islamic Group, and GSPC/AQIM.[627] In addition to their own activities—which focus mainly on recruitment, fundraising, and propaganda—these groups serve as facilitators for local cells, such as those responsible for the Madrid and London bombings, as well as the recently foiled London airliner plot. By providing a conduit to the larger jihadi network, as well as hands-on advice, training, and logistical support, these North African Salafist groups and other al Qaeda affiliates may enable local cells to be more effective than would otherwise be the case. Al Qaeda has also expanded into Turkey. Several members of the local jihadi cell, the Great Eastern Islamic Raiders Front, responsible for the two double bombings in Istanbul in November 2003, killing a total of 66 people and injuring over 800, visited al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan and met with senior al Qaeda leaders prior to the attacks.[628]

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to bomb a London shopping center or nightclub, as well as thwarted car bomb attacks in downtown London and the Glasgow Airport by a cell dominated by foreign-born physicians practicing in the United Kingdom. "Al Qaeda Video Urges Europe Attacks," *Washington Times*, May 12, 2006, p. 15; Kevin Sullivan, "5 British Men Guilty in Foiled Bombing Plot," *Washington Post*, May 1, 2007, p. 1; Alan Cowell, "London Police Defuse Bombs; Iraq Ploy Cited," *New York Times*, June 30, 2007, p. 1; Alan Cowell and Raymond Bonner, "4 Held in Scottish Attack As British See Broader Plot," *New York Times*, July 1, 2007, p. 1; Alan Cowell and Raymond Bonner, "In Intense Hunt for Bombers, Britain Sees Qaeda Link," *New York Times*, July 2, 2007, p. 1; and Kevin Sullivan and Craig Whitlock, "Bomb Plot Suspects Are Foreign Physicians," *Washington Post*, July 3, 2007 p. 1.

[626] Heather Timmons and Eric Pfanner, "Europe Says It Will Unify Effort to Fight Terrorism," *New York Times*, August 17, 2006.

[627] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, p. 19.

[628] Interestingly, Turkish police and intelligence had been following several of these individuals for months, even years, before the 2003 bombings, but were unable to arrest them preemptively because of new civil liberty protections enacted by the government in an effort to qualify for membership in the European Union. Catherine Collins, "Small Terror Groups Pose Grim Risk," *Chicago Tribune*, February 16, 2004.

Muslim minorities now represent five percent of the population of Western Europe (or about 23 million out of 460 million) and, given current demographic trends, that figure is expected to double by 2025. Large expatriate Muslim populations exist in Britain, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Belgium.[629] As a general rule, Europe's Muslim communities, including second- and third-generation immigrants, have been poorly integrated into society and have higher than average rates of unemployment. While societal alienation, discrimination, and economic hardship may make Muslims more susceptible to radicalization, social-economic factors alone do not account for jihadi gains in Europe. Most of the members of al Qaeda's Hamburg cell, for example, had what would be considered a middle-class background. Similarly, most of the individuals responsible for the attacks in Madrid and London were also raised in middle-class households and several were married, well-educated, and employed. Women are also increasingly being recruited into the jihadi ranks. At least three of the 24 individuals suspected of being involved in the August 2006 aircraft bombing plot, for example, were women, including one who was married with an infant son.[630]

Several of the Salafi-Jihadi terrorists that have emerged in Europe have been radicalized by al Qaeda propaganda and ideology on the Internet, in formal and informal prayer groups, and by sermons delivered in radical mosques. The expansion of radical countercultures in Europe's major urban centers and recruitment based on established social networks appear to be major contributing factors as well. While EU states have taken tentative steps to address these problems (e.g., increasing intelligence sharing, blocking Internet sites that incite Muslims to violence and provide detailed information on weapons and explosives, employing biometric screening technologies on flights into and out of EU countries, and reaching out to Muslim instructors and preachers to discourage violence), much more needs to be done, especially with respect to reining in radical clerics (e.g., Britain's Abu Hamza al-Masri) who intentionally and repeatedly incite Muslims to violence against non-Muslims.[631] It is also disconcerting that the EU as a whole,

[629] Frederick Kempe, "U.S. Sees Europe as New Front Against Islamists," *Wall Street Journal*, April 11, 2006, p. 8.
[630] Cassell Bryan-Low and David Crawford, "Terrorist Profile Gains Disturbing Features," *Wall Street Journal*, August 16, 2006, p. 5.
[631] Heather Thomas and Eric Pfanner, "Europe Says It Will Unify Effort In Fight On Terrorism," *New York Times*, August 17, 2006.

and France in particular, has been reluctant to take the steps needed to block ongoing fundraising effort by HAMAS and Hezbollah.[632]

While Bosnia and Herzegovina have taken modest steps to improve their CT capabilities, they remain weak states that could be easily exploited by transnational terrorist groups. Terrorist cells with links to Western Europe are already operating there, albeit at a relatively low level. In October 2005, for example, two terrorist operatives with links to transnational groups were arrested as part of a raid on a safe house in a suburb of Sarajevo. In addition, Aktivna Islamska Omladina (AIO), which is a Bosnian-rooted NGO formed in 1995 that seeks to establish an Islamic state in Bosnia and Herzegovina, continues to expand. It conducts a variety of outreach activities—including operating youth centers, summer camps, and Internet cafes—to indoctrinate young Bosnians with a strict literal interpretation of Islam.[633]

The Islamic terrorist threat in Turkey has fallen over the past six years as the Turkish National Police (TNP) and National Intelligence Organization have focused even more attention on domestic CT initiatives. Following the two major bombings in Istanbul in November 2003, which together killed more than 60 people and injured over 800, Turkey mounted an aggressive CT campaign and detained numerous suspected terrorists in scores of raids. Many of those involved in the Istanbul attacks have been apprehended and convicted. In August 2005, Turkish authorities arrested Luay Sakka, a Syrian national linked to al Qaeda who not only played a role in funding the 2003 bombings in Istanbul, but also supported AQI operations.[634]

[632] France opposed the EU designation of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. It also allows charities affiliated with HAMAS and Hezbollah to operate freely. *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, pp. 84 and 97.
[633] *Country Reports on Terrorism—2005*, pp. 91–92.
[634] Ibid., pp. 121–122.

V. Strategy and Capabilities for the "Long War"

The *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, released in September 2006, asserts that the US government's "strategic vision" is that in the short run:

> The fight involves the application of all instruments of national power and influence to kill or capture the terrorists; deny them safehaven and control of any nation; prevent them from gaining access to WMD; render potential targets less attractive by strengthening security; and cut off their sources of funding and other resources they need to operate and survive.[635]

It specifically calls for hunting down terrorist leaders around the world, capturing or killing terrorist foot soldiers, interdicting weapon shipments and financial transfers, disrupting the ability of terrorists to travel internationally, cutting off or exploiting terrorist communications, and countering terrorist propaganda operations. It also reaffirms that it is US policy to terminate state sponsorship of terrorism, as well as to eliminate physical, legal, cyber, and financial safe havens currently exploited by terrorists.

As detailed earlier in the study, at least with respect to the Salafi-Jihadi movement, the United States has made impressive gains since 2001 on nearly all of these fronts. To date, roughly two-thirds of senior al Qaeda leaders have been captured or killed, more than 4,000 lower-level operatives have been neutralized in over 100 countries, and scores of terrorist cells linked to al Qaeda have been rolled up in America, Europe, Southwest Asia, Central/South Asia, Southeast Asia, and

[635] The White House, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, DC: White House, 2006), p. 7.

Africa.[636] Afghanistan has been eliminated as a state-sponsored terrorist sanctuary and the United States has repeatedly demonstrated an ability to reach into "ungoverned areas" in Yemen, the pan-Sahel, the NWFP and FATA in Pakistan, and elsewhere around the globe. US accomplishments have been relatively less impressive, however, with respect to the admittedly daunting tasks of cutting off terrorist supplies and funding, disrupting their communications (especially on the Internet), and debunking terrorist propaganda and conspiracy theories.

The strategy that follows seeks to reinforce US successes in the GWOT and shed light on how some of the most critical performance shortfalls might be remedied. It departs significantly, however, from current US *long-term* strategy for the GWOT, which is to advance freedom, opportunity, and human dignity through democracy. While one can debate the merits and feasibility of promoting democratic ideals as a means of ameliorating the social, economic, and political plight of the Muslim world and other so-called "root causes" of radical Islamic terrorism, publicly declaring it is the US policy to do so is strategically ill-advised for several reasons. First, the promotion of democracy could dramatically undermine the overall US position in the GWOT in the near term by jeopardizing the security of key partner states, most notably, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Algeria, and Egypt. Pushing these countries to open up their respective domestic political processes and enact liberal reforms is unlikely to be in the US interest for quite some time. Second, US promotion of democracy provides valuable grist to the Salafi-Jihadi propaganda mill. Credible arguments have been made by well-respected Islamic scholars and AQAM leaders that democracy is antithetical to Islam because it replaces divinely revealed law in the Quran and hadith with human-made law. While there are, of course, counter-arguments to be made that Islam is compatible with democracy, the US government ignores at its peril the fact that many mainline conservative Muslims fervently believe that it is not.

The GWOT is likely to be protracted and increasingly fought within states with which the United States is not at war. While the US government has focused most of its attention and resources on Afghanistan and Iraq since September 11, 2001, terrorist cells are active in roughly 60

[636] J. Cofer Black, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, US Department of State, Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on International Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Human Rights, Hearing on "Al Qaeda: The Threat to the United States and its Allies," April 1, 2004, p. 38.

other countries around the world. US relations with those countries span the gamut from close (e.g., Great Britain) to confrontational (e.g., Iran). To prevail in this war, the seven pillars of US strategy should be to:

- Sustain a global "smother campaign" on radical Islamic terrorists that includes relentless manhunting, comprehensive sanctuary denial, disruption operations, severing transnational links, and impeding jihadi recruitment and training;

- Employ UW and covert action against state sponsors of terrorism and transnational terrorist groups globally;

- Defend and hold the "key terrain" of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan;

- Maintain a significant "surge" capability for responding to protracted COIN and state-failure contingencies;

- Create and exploit divisions within and among jihadi groups;

- Discredit Salafist-Jihadi and Khomeinist ideology and covertly promote credible, alternative Islamic voices (i.e., engage in the counter-*fatwa* war); and

- Isolate Islamic extremists from mainline, conservative Muslims and avoid legitimizing the call to defensive jihad.

Each of these strategic pillars will be described below in more detail and, where appropriate, the capability and capacity implications of pursuing them will be addressed briefly as well. It should be noted at the outset that clandestine and covert capabilities will play an increasingly central role in the execution of US strategy in the "long war." It is assumed, moreover, that the United States will continue to take prudent steps to protect the US homeland and safeguard US and allied interests overseas. Given that compelling the United States to spend disproportionately to defend against low-level threats globally is an integral element of AQAM's "bleed-until-bankruptcy" strategy, care should be exercised to avoid over-spending on defensive measures. While it is obviously desirable to make it as difficult as possible for terrorists to strike the US homeland or American interests overseas, the opportunity cost and defensive "return" on such investments must be carefully assessed relative to other elements of the strategy.

Sustain a Global Smother Campaign on Radical Islamic Terrorists

For the better part of three decades, the strategic posture of the United States in combating terrorism was predominantly defensive. While the United States periodically conducted limited strikes against terrorists or their state sponsors after an attack (e.g., Libya in 1986, Iraq in 1993, al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Sudan in 1998), the primary focus of American CT policy was to reduce the vulnerability of potential American targets at home and abroad through defensive measures (e.g., heightened airport security; increased physical security around embassies, military installations, and other government facilities; enhanced protection of critical infrastructure; etc.).

Since September 11th, the United States has adopted a posture that might be termed a forward offense. This change in posture not only shifts some of the strategic initiative from terrorists to the United States, it also alters the strategic balance from one in which terrorist organizations are able to impose significant costs on the United States to one where greater costs (e.g., less security, greater disruption of operations, increased transaction costs) are imposed on the terrorists. As former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld asserted in the wake of September 11th:

> It is not possible to defend against every threat, in every place, at every conceivable time. The only defense against [them] is to take the war to the enemy. *The best defense is a good offense*...Victory in the war against terrorism requires steady pressure on the enemy, leaving him no time to rest and nowhere to hide. This means that the United States should give no strategic pauses that would allow the enemy breathing room or time to regroup.[637]

Thus far, the United States has been reasonably effective in prosecuting this global "smother campaign." AQAM leaders are on the run and generally more concerned with their personal security than planning and orchestrating offensive operations. While operatives have found sanctuary in various "ungoverned" areas around the world and

[637] Emphasis added. Rumsfeld, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress 2001*, pp. 30–31.

have flocked to Iraq to gain practical training and experience, there is nothing like the former training camps in Afghanistan for indoctrination, training new recruits, and planning and preparing for complex, global operations.

That being said, Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist terrorist groups are believed to have a presence in more than sixty countries around the world. In addition to rolling up terrorist cells globally, it is also imperative to eliminate physical safe havens around the world—most notably in Iraq; southern Lebanon; Pakistan, especially the FATA, NWFP, and Baluchistan; Afghanistan's southern and eastern provinces; Yemen; Aceh, Indonesia; the pan-Sahel of Africa (i.e., Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and Chad); the Fergana Valley; and the Trans-Caucasus, Chechnya, and Dagestan. Syria and Iran should be pressured diplomatically, economically, and militarily to terminate their active support of terrorist groups. The US government should maintain ongoing efforts to encourage partner-states, most especially in Europe, to deny terrorists "legal sanctuaries," as well as activities focused on the very daunting task of denying jihadis a "virtual sanctuary" on the Internet. The United States must also continue ongoing efforts to disrupt terrorist plans and operations, sever transnational links relied upon by terrorist groups (i.e., financial, transportation, and communication), and impede their recruitment and fundraising. Finally, it is imperative to prevent WMD from falling into terrorist hands.

To increase global pressure on terrorist groups and sustain it over time, the United States will need to:

1. Build partner capacity in counter-terrorism (CT) and counter-insurgency (COIN) capabilities;

2. Generate persistent air and maritime surveillance and strike coverage over ungoverned / "under-governed" areas and littoral zones; and

3. Conduct clandestine and covert operations, including in politically sensitive and denied areas.

Build Partner Capacity

The United States cannot win a protracted global war against the Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist branches of radical Islam by itself—it has neither the financial nor manpower resources needed. A self-destructive attempt to win the war unilaterally (or even with a handful of Western allies) would also be strategically counter-productive by adding credibility to Islamist charges that the United States is waging a "Zionist-Crusade" against the Muslim world and legitimizing the call to defensive jihad. An indirect approach is required, owing both to US resource constraints and the need to put a "Muslim face" on global CT operations.

The premier US capability for building foreign CT capabilities, as well as foreign internal defense (FID) capabilities more broadly, currently resides in the Special Forces (SF) community.[638] SF operators not only have language fluency and cultural training that far exceeds that of conventional forces, they also have extensive training in organizing, training, and equipping foreign armed forces. Unlike their conventional counterparts, SF units have considerable expertise in using and servicing foreign weapon systems. Right now, roughly 75 percent of SF capacity is focused on Iraq and Afghanistan. A sixty-country problem cannot be solved with a two-country solution. To meet steady-state GWOT requirements, it will be necessary to both expand SF force structure significantly and reorient general purpose forces (GPF) from traditional to irregular warfare, with an emphasis on training and advising foreign military, paramilitary, and police forces.

[638] The Army currently has five active Special Forces Groups (SFGs) and two SFGs in the National Guard. The core operational unit of a SFG is the twelve-man Special Forces Operational "A" Detachment (SFODA or ODA), of which there are 54 per Group (18 per battalion and 6 per company).

Additional SF Operational Detachment-Alphas (ODAs) are clearly required for the GWOT. To address this capacity gap, the 2006 QDR directed the Department to add five additional active SF battalions to the force, beginning in FY 2007, which represents a one-third increase in force structure (i.e., 15 to 20 battalions).[639] Current plans call for adding one battalion to each of the five active Special Force Groups (SFGs). A strong case can be made for creating two additional SFG headquarters and reorienting the SFGs geographically to better reflect GWOT requirements and the shift in US national security focus toward Asia.[640] The primary advantage of this approach is that with seven active SFGs it would be possible to assign one SFG to each of seven critical areas in the world: Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, and Latin America. This reorientation would focus additional SF capacity where it is most needed: the Islamic World and Asia. A 20-battalion active force would appear to be sufficient to conduct steady-state GWOT missions, prepare for SF-intensive major combat operations (MCOs) and unconventional warfare (UW) contingencies, and respond to several small-scale contingencies (see Table 6). Depending on how the GWOT evolves and whether China emerges as a more aggressive military competitor, considerably more SF capacity may be required in the future. Options for expanding active SF force structure beyond the currently planned 20 battalions should be examined in the 2009–2010 QDR.

[639] The QDR also directed the Department to expand psychological operations and civil affairs units by 3,700 personnel, increase SEAL Team force levels, and establish a Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC) composed of 2,600 Marines and Navy personnel to train foreign military units and conduct direct action (DA) and special reconnaissance (SR) missions. *2005–2006 QDR Report*, pp. 44–45.

[640] The respective geographic orientation of the current five active SFG headquarters is also poorly aligned with emerging strategic challenges. Responsibility for Africa, a key region in the GWOT, is divided among the 3rd, 5th, and 10th SFGs. The 5th SFG not only has responsibility for the Middle East and Persian Gulf, but also Central Asia and the Horn of Africa.

Table 6: Re-orientation of Expanded SF Force Structure

SFG Headquarters	Active Battalions	Primary Operational Focus
Latin America	2	• Counter-narcotics and COIN operations in Colombia, the Andean Ridge, and the Tri-Border Region • UW (Cuba and possibly Venezuela)
Europe	2	• COIN/CT/FID (Balkans, Turkey, the Trans-Caucasus, and Azerbaijan • CP (Russia)
Sub-Saharan Africa	2	• COIN/CT/FID/Transnational UW (West African littoral, Central Africa and the Pan Sahel; and East African littoral and South Africa)
Arab World	4	• COIN/CT/FID/Transnational UW (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, and Yemen) • UW (Syria) • Counter-WMD (Syria)
Iran & Central/ South Asia	4	• COIN/CT/FID/Transnational UW (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India) • UW (Iran) • CP/Counter WMD (Iran, Pakistan)
China & Northeast Asia	4	• UW (China) • MCO (China, North Korea) • CP/Counter-WMD (China, North Korea)
Southeast Asia	2	• COIN/CT/FID/Transnational UW (Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Indonesia)
TOTAL	**20**	

In addition, ground general purpose forces (GPF) must develop the capabilities and capacities needed to train and advise foreign security forces in multiple, widely dispersed countries simultaneously. The US Marine Corps' decision to stand up a dedicated foreign-military training unit (FMTU) and the US Navy's decision to develop "Navy Expeditionary Battalions" are promising first steps in this direction. Much more could and should be done, however. The US military must build partner

capacity on a persistent basis in more countries than it is doing so currently—and the only practical way to do so on a sustained basis is for the GPF to take it on as a core competence. This will likely require major institutional changes within the US Army and Marine Corps, including the possible creation of organizations dedicated to training and advising foreign militaries and conducting irregular warfare operations more broadly. The precise form such organizations might take is presently a subject of intense debate. Options include, for example, creating a dedicated headquarters that manages foreign-military training rotations involving an expanded pool of general-purpose soldiers with a modest amount of specialized training; establishing a permanent advisor corps with standing, full-time units with highly specialized training; and reinventing military assistance and advisory groups (MAAGs) reminiscent of the Vietnam-era.[641] Advantages common to all of these approaches are minimizing or obviating the need to strip operational units of their mid-level leadership to form *ad hoc* training and advisory units, and providing both officers and non-commissioned officers sustained irregular warfare experience that could be invaluable in subsequent US-led operations. By taking on the partner capacity-building mission as a core competence, the GPF would also free up SOF for other GWOT tasks that more fully leverage their unique capabilities. SOF would, however, remain responsible for training, equipping, and advising missions in politically sensitive areas where a "low-visibility" presence is essential, as well as for instructing foreign elite forces in intelligence collection and advanced military skills.

Generate Persistent Air and Maritime Surveillance-Strike Coverage

Currently, the vast majority of unmanned air vehicles controlled by the CIA, Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), and the Air Force more broadly are concentrated in Iraq and Afghanistan. There is a clear need for additional UAVs to provide persistent air surveillance-strike coverage over key GWOT operating areas. The US government should have the capacity to maintain at least one continuous surveillance-strike orbit simultaneously in several key GWOT operating areas to:

[641] John Nagl, "Institutionalizing Adaptation—It's Time for a Permanent Army Advisory Corp," Center for a New American Century, June 2007; and Bob Killebrew, "The Left-hand Side of the Spectrum—Ambassadors and Advisors in Future U.S. Strategy," Center for a New American Century, June 2007.

- Locate, track, and strike time-sensitive, high-value targets (HVTs);

- Detect and interdict the movement of WMD;

- Enable partner operations (e.g., providing actionable intelligence and fire support, as needed); and

- Constrain the freedom of operation of jihadi groups in ungoverned land areas.

Given that currently available UAVs have significantly longer unrefueled range and mission endurance relative to manned surveillance platforms, they are the preferred platform for providing wide-area persistent surveillance in the GWOT. As has been amply demonstrated over the past several years, armed UAVs also provide an effective remote-strike capability for covert or low-visibility attack. While other systems might be used in this role, at present, it appears that the best available option is a combination of MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper aircraft. Although additional analysis is required to determine the optimal "low-high" mix of MQ-1 Predators and MQ-9 Reapers, the fleet should be weighted heavily in favor of the latter because of the operational flexibility it provides owing to its increased payload, higher operating altitude, and faster cruising speed. As a first-order approximation, to cover known jihadi operating areas on a steady-state basis, a doubling of the currently planned MQ-9 Reaper fleet would be warranted along with a proportional increase in the number of trained air vehicle pilots, sensor operators, and mission coordinators. A reserve fleet that can be "surged" for GWOT contingencies would also be needed. In addition, high-altitude long endurance (HALE) UAVs (e.g., GlobalHawk), tethered dirigibles/aerostats, and high-altitude airships should be used for GWOT-focused, persistent, *wide-area* surveillance. With cueing provided by these systems, the Predator-Reaper "hunter-killer" fleet could effectively cover much more terrain than would be otherwise be possible.

It is well established that AQAM is exploiting commercial shipping to move personnel, materiel, finances (i.e., currency, gold, and jewels), and contraband (e.g., opium). According to one source, al Qaeda possesses a "phantom fleet" of nearly two dozen cargo ships around

the world.[642] These vessels, owned by an ever-changing array of shell companies, are constantly renamed and re-registered. Terrorist groups like AQAM also take advantage of legitimate commercial shipping firms to move containers globally. While recognizing that it is impractical to completely deny jihadis the ability to operate at sea, the US Navy should be postured and equipped to:

- Maintain persistent surveillance over littoral zones adjacent to countries where terrorist groups are believed to be operating;
- Monitor critical chokepoints globally;
- Board and inspect suspicious vessels routinely in cooperation with partner states;
- Seize vessels by force, when necessary; and
- Conduct small quick-reaction raids against ground targets in coastal regions.

The Navy's recent decision to stand up three riverine squadrons, which can be used to deny terrorists inland maritime sanctuaries, is a step in the right direction.[643] To better meet these requirements, however, the Navy should consider developing GWOT-tailored payload modules for its planned fleet of 55 littoral combat ships (LCS) and routinely embarking SEALS or Marine Special Operations Forces on them as well. Many of the modules and offboard systems already being developed for the LCS have direct relevance to the GWOT, including various

[642] Akiva J. Lorenz, "Al Qaeda's Maritime Threat," p. 17. Available on-line at: http://www.cicte.oas.org/Database_/50637-Al%20Qaeda's%20Maritime Threat.pdf. See also: "International Authorities Track Terrorist Shipping Assets, Activities," at http://www.amo.union.org/newspaper/morgue/// 1-2002/Sections/News/terrorist.htm.
[643] Director of the Navy Staff, Memorandum for Distribution, "Implementation of the CNO Guidance—GWOT Capabilities."

types of UAVs, USVs, and precision-guided missiles.[644] Myriad sensor and weapons systems tailored to the GWOT mission, moreover, could be developed to fit into the LCS's payload stations. GWOT mission modules might include, for example, specialized SIGINT and communications intelligence (COMINT) sensors; equipment for detecting chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons aboard cargo vessels; UAVs equipped with biometric identification systems; various types of TTL systems; and SF/SEAL mission planning tools and equipment. (As an alternative to the LCS, the Navy could consider developing a GWOT-variant of the National Security Cutter that is currently being fielded by the US Coast Guard.)

For maritime surveillance and interdiction in support of the GWOT, the LCS fleet will need to be sized, organized, configured, and postured to support persistent operations within at least eight littoral zones, each adjacent to known jihadi operating areas, simultaneously: the Caribbean and southern approaches to the United States; the west coast of Africa; the Mediterranean; the east coast of Africa; the Arabian Gulf; the South Asian littoral; the Strait of Malacca and Indonesian archipelago; and the Philippine Sea. To maintain a robust, continuous presence in all of these areas, the LCS fleet will need to be forward based.[645] In addition to increasing the amount of time each ship can remain on-station, this would also allow LCS crews to gain a better appreciation of local operating conditions, develop better operational ties with smaller regional navies and coast guards allied with the United States in the GWOT, and facilitate "training and advising" activities aimed at enhancing the capabilities of local forces. Operating the LCS fleet forward on a sustained basis, however, will require a forward

[644] GWOT-relevant offboard platforms currently under development include the SPARTAN USV and the Non-Line-of-Sight Launch System (NLOS-LS). The SPARTAN is a remotely controlled, modular USV based on a 7-meter and 11-meter Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boats, or RHIBs. The payload for the 7-meter RHIB is 3,000 pounds; the payload for the 11-meter RHIB is 5,000 pounds. An LCS can carry two 11-meter and two 7-meter SPARTANs. The NLOS-LS is designed to carry a total of 15 missiles—either Precision Attack Missiles (PAMs) with ranges of 40–60 kilometers, or Loitering Attack Missiles (LAMs) with ranges up to 200 kilometers. See Vittorio "Vic" Ricci, "SPARTAN Unmanned Surface Vehicle, More Than A US Navy 'Toy'," *Naval Forces*, Vol. 6, 2004, pp. 62–63; Majors Mark J. Emerson, Jr., et al, "NLOS Systems for the Modular and Future Forces," *Field Artillery*, November–December 2004, pp. 7–11; and Christopher F. Foss, "US Army Hastens Development of Missiles for FCS," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, November 24, 2004, p. 30.

[645] Robert O. Work, *"To Take and Keep the Lead:" A Naval Fleet Platform Architecture for Enduring Maritime Supremacy* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2006), pp. 191–200.

support network to provide logistics support; to perform maintenance on mission modules and offboard systems; to store and swap out LCS mission packages; and to provide support for LCS crews conducting extended operations in austere environments. To limit political risk, the network's backbone of forward bases should be located on sovereign US territory, or on the territory of trusted allies.

Conduct Clandestine and Covert Operations Globally

Clandestine and covert operations capabilities will be critical to a global "smother campaign" against jihadi cells, especially for operations in sensitive or denied areas. While many aspects of such a campaign are likely to be shrouded in secrecy, thus precluding a detailed discussion of precisely how these capabilities could be brought to bear, core missions in the future might include the following:

- Collecting intelligence on terrorist networks and infrastructure, including penetrating targeted terrorist groups and foreign liaison services;
- Building the intelligence and counter-intelligence capabilities of selected partner states;
- Working with foreign intelligence and security services to capture/kill identified terrorist leaders and operatives, interdict the movement of material resources (e.g., money, weapons, explosive, and other supplies), and disrupt terrorist plots;
- Tracking down and rendering safe "loose" WMD material or devices; and
- Conducting covert political action, strategic communication, and PSYOP activities to discredit Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist ideology, as well as to bolster competing mainstream conservative voices in the Muslim world.

To carry out these missions globally, it will be necessary to expand and reinvigorate the National Clandestine Service (NCS), as well as DoD's clandestine military capabilities, especially its GWOT-relevant

intelligence and technical-collection resources. Currently, outside of Iraq and Afghanistan, the task of locating and tracking terrorists is being performed almost exclusively by the CIA's Directorate of Operations. It is imperative for DoD to become more actively involved in the global "find" mission by increasing its intelligence-collection capacity, investing in more relevant collection technologies, and fielding more effective capabilities to tag, track, and locate (TTL) terrorists.[646] More specifically, DoD should also develop a military strategic HUMINT service that can maintain clandestine coverage of GWOT-relevant countries and other military intelligence targets globally. To do so, it will need to invest in supporting infrastructure, hardware, and trained personnel. DoD needs to develop new SIGINT, COMINT, and information operations capabilities to operate effectively against fleeting targets in cluttered and concealed information-collection environments. Advanced algorithms for natural language processing, pattern recognition, and data mining will be essential for managing the "needle in the haystack problem," sorting through terabytes of data in order to identify and locate individual targets globally.[647] Finally, a major, national-level R&D program is needed to develop new technologies to locate, tag, and track terrorists in order to provide the United States with the same advantage in situational awareness in transnational irregular warfare that it has at present in traditional warfare.

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[646] "TTL" is a misleading acronym in that a target must be identified and located before it can be either tagged or tracked. Accordingly, it would be more accurate to refer to locate, tag, and track (LTT) capabilities. Since TTL is the more commonly used acronym, however, it will be the one used here.

[647] DARPA was developing these and related technologies under the Total Information Awareness (TIA) program launched in 2002. The TIA effort included many supporting R&D programs. The Genisys program sought to develop "ultra-large-scale, semantically rich, easily implementable database technologies" requiring the fusion of new and legacy databases with disparate data forms. Advanced natural language processing R&D was conducted under the Effective, Affordable, Reusable Speech-to-Text (EARS); Translingual Information Detection, Extraction, and Summarization (TIDES); Global Autonomous Language Exploitation (GALE); and Babylon/Symphony programs. The Evidence Extraction and Link Discovery (EELD) and Scalable Social Network Analysis (SSNA) programs sought to push the state of the art in data mining and pattern-recognition techniques. The TIA program, however, was significantly restructured in 2003 following intense criticism from Congress regarding privacy issues. The current status of the individual R&D programs that were under the TIA "umbrella" is not clear. See John Poindexter, "Overview of the Information Awareness Office," remarks at the DARPATech 2002 Conference, August 2, 2002; and DARPA, Report to Congress regarding the Terrorism Information Awareness Program in response to Consolidated Appropriations Resolutions, 2003, Public Law No. 108-7.

Employ UW and Covert Action against State Sponsors of Terrorism and Transnational Terrorist Groups Globally

In his address to a joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001, President Bush announced that no longer would the United States restrict its actions to tracking down terrorists and attempting, often unsuccessfully, to gain the cooperation of the states in which they reside in order to bring them to justice. Instead, the president stated:

> We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, *any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime*.[648]

As noted earlier, sanctuary denial is a key element of a global smother campaign to keep terrorists groups under pressure and unable to plan, organize, and train effectively for complex, large-scale offensive operations. Sanctuary denial also complicates enemy fundraising and recruitment, and facilitates US-led manhunting and disruption operations globally. While building partner CT capacity and reducing ungoverned areas are necessary elements of a comprehensive sanctuary-denial campaign, they alone are not sufficient. When dealing with hostile state sponsors of terrorism, regime change may sometimes be the only assured means of ending their support. In Afghanistan, for example, the Taliban and al Qaeda were inextricably linked. Osama bin Laden reportedly provided the Taliban with an estimated $100 million in funding and military assistance, making him the single greatest supporter of the fledgling regime.[649] He also provided the Taliban with seasoned and loyal fighters in their bid to exterminate the Northern Alliance. The CIA thus concluded that bin Laden effectively "owned

[648] Emphasis added. President George W. Bush, *Address to Joint Session of Congress and the American People*, September 20, 2001.
[649] Bob Woodward, "Bin Laden Said to 'Own' the Taliban, Bush is Told He Gave Regime $100 Million," *Washington Post*, October 11, 2001, p. A1.

and operated" the Taliban.[650] In return, the Taliban provided al Qaeda with sanctuary and operational support. In response to an ultimatum extended by President Bush prior to OEF, the leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar, claimed to have no recourse but to offer protection to Afghanistan's al Qaeda "guests" and absorb US attacks, arguing that it would be un-Islamic to turn over Muslims who had started "a journey on God's path."[651] The relationship between Hezbollah and its state sponsors, Iran and Syria, is comparable to the one that existed between al Qaeda and the Taliban. Absent a change in their respective ruling regimes, it is very unlikely that either country will terminate its sponsorship of Hezbollah and other terrorist groups in the region.

Accordingly, the US government should seriously examine the feasibility of conducting covert UW operations and/or direct action against Iran, Syria, and any other major state sponsors of transnational terrorism that emerge in the years ahead. The prospective development of nuclear weapons by Iran within the next 5-10 years would significantly change strategic balances in the Middle East and the GWOT more broadly, embolden Iran to be even more adventurous than it is today, make regime change in Tehran more problematic, and potentially fuel nuclear proliferation in the region. Consequently, the feasibility, risks, and likely implications of competing options for bringing about regime change in Iran within that timeframe should be carefully assessed. UW approaches should be explored for neutralizing both Salafi-Jihadi (e.g., AQAM) and Khomeinist (e.g., Hezbollah) transnational terrorist groups globally. The US government could, for example, provide covert nonlethal/lethal aid to non-state actors willing to oppose jihadi groups. This covert support would generally be indirect—flowing through the host nation, allied states or other surrogates.

Defend and Hold the "Key Terrain" of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan

The "long war" is being waged on a global battlefield. Jihadis are not constrained by national boundaries; indeed, they exploit them to facilitate their operations. While they have carved out *de facto* sanctuaries in

[650] Ibid.
[651] Partial transcript of Voice of America interview with Mullah Mohammed Omar as compiled by Washington Post Staff, September 23, 2001.

various places, jihadis do not exercise sovereign control over any terrain. War zones range from desolate deserts in the pan-Sahel of Africa, to rugged mountainous terrain in Pakistan's FATA, to jungles in Indonesia and the Philippines, to densely populated cities around the globe. That being said, there is "key terrain" in this war that must be held, if possible. The two most important examples are Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

As discussed earlier, overthrowing the "apostate" Saudi royal family is one of the original and most deeply held goals of al Qaeda and its founder, Osama bin Laden. His focus on the Kingdom, however, transcends his personal antipathy for the ruling family and thirst for vengeance—it is strategic. As he wrote to Mullah Omar well in advance of September 11th:

> The Arabian Peninsula has a great significance for many reasons. The most important of which are the following: the existence of the Ka'abah and the Prophet's mosque; and the existence of 75 percent of the world's oil in the gulf region—and *whoever controls the oil controls the world economy*.[652]

For both the reasons he cites, it is imperative to prevent Saudi Arabia from falling into the hands of al Qaeda or any other similarly inspired radical group. The propaganda value and fundraising-recruitment potential of controlling Mecca and Medina for the Salafi-Jihadi movement would be incalculable. Publicly taking on the duty of defending Islam's two holiest sites would dramatically elevate the status of the movement throughout the Muslim world. As alluded to by Osama bin Laden, Saudi Arabia possesses 25 percent of the world's proven oil reserves (about 262 billion barrels of oil) and is the world's largest net oil exporter. It maintains a production capacity of about 11 million barrels per day, which could be increased, if necessary, to as much as 15 million barrels per day.[653] Simply put, control over that much oil would give jihadis a practically inexhaustible source of revenue for conducting ramped up global operations and could also be leveraged to conduct strategic economic warfare against the West. Fortunately, since 2003, the Saudi government has been very effective in finding and eliminating terrorist cells operating within the Kingdom.

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[652] Emphasis added. Osama bin Laden, Letter to Mullah Mohammed Omar, undated. Harmony database, AFGP-2002-600321, p. 2.
[653] Department of Energy, EIA-Country Analysis Brief—Saudi Arabia, August 2005.

Pakistan represents "key terrain" for two reasons: first, as a Sunni-dominated Islamic republic with a population of roughly 165 million, it would provide an ideal state-sponsored sanctuary for the jihadi movement; and second, it is currently the only majority Muslim state armed with nuclear weapons. With respect to the former, over the past year, al Qaeda has made a concerted effort to expand and consolidate its sanctuary in the FATA and NWFP. It is also intensifying operations focused on destabilizing the Pakistani government. As Secretary of Defense Gates put it, "Al-Qaeda right now seems to have turned its face toward Pakistan and attacks on the Pakistani government and the Pakistan people."[654] Al Qaeda in Pakistan, which began as a relative small band of foreign fighters who were forced to flee Afghanistan in 2001, has grown in strength and geographic reach by absorbing a diverse mix of homegrown Pakistani jihadis into its ranks.[655] It is reportedly headed by Zawahiri and Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, and has close operational ties with the Afghan Taliban, the recently formed Taliban Movement in Pakistan, and an assortment of other Pakistani terrorist groups.[656] Baitullah Mehsud, a tribal leader in South Waziristan who has provided security and manpower for al Qaeda in Pakistan since at least 2005, was chosen to the head the Taliban Movement in Pakistan in December 2007. Baitullah's organization is widely believed to have been responsible for the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, as well as several other suicide attacks in Pakistan.[657]

Pakistan is believed to have 24–48 implosion-type atomic devices (and possibly significantly more) in storage, each with an estimated explosive yield of roughly 10 kilotons of TNT.[658] In addition to delivery by truck, the warheads can be delivered by Pakistan's F-16 fleet or growing arsenal of Ghauri-1 (Hatf-5) and Ghauri-2 (Hatf-6) ballistic missiles. If the Musharraf government was replaced by a more militantly anti-Western, Salafi-Jihadi regime, these weapons might be used to coerce regional friends and allies of the United States. Given the apocalyptic jihadi world view, which is admittedly far more prevalent within

[654] Thomas Ricks, "Gates: Pakistan an Al-Qaeda Target," *Washington Post*, December 22, 2007, p. 9.
[655] Carlotta Gall, "Qaeda Network Expands Base in Pakistan," *New York Times,* December 30, 2007, p. 1.
[656] Sami Yousafzai and Ron Moreau, "Al Qaeda's Newest Triggerman," *Newsweek*, January 14, 2008.
[657] Ibid. See also: Imtiaz Ali and Craig Whitlock, "Taliban Commander Emerges as Pakistan's 'Biggest Problem'," *Washington Post*, January 10, 2008, p. 17.
[658] Robert S. Norris, Hans M. Kristensen, and Joshua Handler, "Pakistan's Nuclear Forces, 2001," NRDC Nuclear Notebook, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, January–February 2002, pp. 70–71.

the Khomeinist branch than among Sunni Salafis, the use of a nuclear weapon against Israel or other targets in the West to hasten the arrival of the "end of days" cannot be discounted. In a more likely scenario, in the chaos leading up to and following the fall of President Musharraf (or his successor), one or more of these weapons might fall into terrorist hands. Even with security safeguards put in place over the past several years, the prospect of major political instability in Pakistan leading to an erosion of the government's control of its nuclear arsenal is disconcertingly high.[659]

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is imperative for the United States to defend and hold the "key terrain" of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Loss of either would likely have catastrophic effects—rapidly shifting regional power balances against the United States and severely weakening the overall US strategic position. Accordingly, a serious effort should be made to bolster them. Key elements of this effort might include:

- Launching economic (for Pakistan) and diplomatic initiatives to bolster domestic political support for the current regimes;

- Increasing US intelligence collection and analysis on internal and external threats to both states, and sharing as much of that intelligence as possible with their respective intelligence services and internal security forces;

- Providing "covert" training in intelligence collection and analysis, personal security, CT, and COIN;[660]

- Providing "covert" advisory assistance and equipment, including sensitive intelligence collection and CT technologies, as requested; and

- Preparing to deploy US military forces in an overt FID role, to include securing Saudi Arabia's petroleum-related infrastructure and Pakistan's nuclear arsenal.

[659] Joby Warrick, "Pakistan Nuclear Security Questioned," *Washington Post*, November 11, 2007, p. 1.
[660] Technically these activities would not be "covert" in that elements of the host nation's government would be aware of the US government's involvement. The intent, however, would be to conceal US involvement from the host-nation population and surrounding countries, and possibly, from some organs of the host government.

Maintain a "Surge" Capability for Protracted COIN and State-Failure Contingencies

Despite the best efforts of the United States to shore up vulnerable partner states by training, advising, and equipping their intelligence, police, and military forces as part of the global smother campaign described above, jihadi-backed insurgencies will likely arise and some states, under mounting strain, may be at risk of collapse. It is essential that the US government not allow the jihadi movement to exploit the social and political disorder associated with these circumstances. Recall that in his strategic opus, *The Management of Barbarism*, Naji specifically calls on jihadis in "every region of the Islamic world" to create zones of "barbarism" so that jihadi "administers" can later step in to take control of them. A key element of US strategy, therefore, must be to maintain a significant "surge" capability for conducting protracted COIN operations and restoring order in the wake of future state failures.

While all of the Services have important roles to play, the primary responsibility for these missions falls squarely on the US Army and Marine Corps. It is important to appreciate that the ground GPF may also be called upon to perform a wide array of other missions, including high-intensity campaigns against regional powers armed with nuclear weapons. Much could be done, however, to improve their capabilities and expand current capacity for COIN and irregular warfare more broadly.

Improving irregular warfare skill sets will require the US Army and Marine Corps to dedicate significant resources to introducing or, in some cases, expanding the following specialized capabilities: intelligence collection and analysis, military police, psychological operations, civil affairs, and language/cultural expertise. The professional military education system and current training programs need to be restructured to focus on building an institutional competence in COIN strategy and operations, as well as on developing and refining irregular warfare tactics, techniques, and procedures. To accomplish this across the force in a reasonable timeframe, it will likely be necessary to create new training infrastructure. Increased investment in simulation tools to facilitate mission planning, rehearsal and execution at the small–unit level is also warranted.

The ground GPF will also need equipment/weapon systems that are better suited to IW challenges than much of what is currently available in the inventory. For instance, while US Army and US Marine Corps have nearly 20,000 High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) in service in Iraq and Afghanistan, they were never intended to provide protection against improvised explosive devices (IEDs), which are responsible for more than 70 percent of American casualties. HMMWVs were originally designed to provide rear-area mobility along the central front in Europe during the Cold War—in IW, however, there is no rear area.[661] Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected (MRAP) vehicles, which feature V-shaped steel hulls that deflect blast pressure up and away from the passenger compartment, provide much better protection against IEDs. Deployed in limited numbers in Iraq over the past three years, they have shown that they can dramatically reduce casualties.[662]

In a memo written on May 2, 2007, Secretary Gates declared that "the MRAP program should be considered the highest priority Department of Defense acquisition program and any and all options to accelerate production and fielding of this capability to the theater should be identified, assessed and applied where feasible."[663] He created a special task force, chaired by John Young, the director of defense research and engineering, on May 30, 2007, to accelerate MRAP acquisition. As Secretary Gates put it, "the only requirement that's important to me now is to produce as many of these vehicles and to get them into the field as fast as possible…"[664] Given the near-term need for these types of vehicles, Secretary Gates is right to stress the importance of producing them in quantity and shipping them to Iraq and Afghanistan as soon as possible. It is important to recognize, however, that MRAPs will not

[661] The original design specifications for the vehicle were completed in 1979, prototype vehicles were built and evaluated in the early 1980s, and the vehicle went into mass production in 1985.
[662] In a letter to General Peter Pace, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General James Conway, the commandant of the Marine Corps, asserts that V-shaped vehicles can reduce casualties by 80 percent relative to HMMWVs or "Humvees." Tom Vanden Brook, "Marines, Others Clamor for New Armored Trucks," *USA Today*, March 28, 2007, p. 5.
[663] Jason Sherman, "Gates Designates MRAP Pentagon's 'Highest Priority' Acquisition Program," *InsideDefense.com*, May 8, 2007.
[664] Jason Sherman, "Gates Establishes MRAP Task Force to Speed Production, Fielding," *InsideDefense.com*, June 4, 2007.

be a panacea for the IED problem.[665] Indeed, the most recent IED to emerge in Iraq, which features an explosively formed projectile (EFP) warhead, can penetrate the standard armor of most MRAPs.[666] To counter this threat, the Marine Corps and Army are already developing plans to "up-armor" future MRAPs. That being said, the MRAP is far better protected than the up-armored HMMWVs currently in service. Moreover, in addition to enhanced survivability, the MRAPs also offer other important advantages including improved situational awareness made possible by multiple, blast-resistant windows; multiple firing ports that enable soldiers inside the vehicle to engage the enemy with their personal weapons while still inside the vehicle; and a more diverse array of external armaments.

For the GPF to take on irregular warfare as a core competency, while also preparing for the full slate of conventional warfighting missions, it will likely be necessary to expand US Army and Marine Corps force structure. In January 2007, the Bush Administration proposed expanding the ground GPF by 92,000 troops (65,000 for the Army and 27,000 for the Marine Corps). Consideration should be given to allocating a portion of this build up to the creation of a standing foreign military advisor corps, as mentioned earlier; a significant expansion in the number of high-demand specialists in current combat units; and possibly the creation of specialized irregular warfare combat units. Even with this 92,000-soldier increase, however, the active GPF may not have sufficient manpower for responding to large-scale insurgencies or managing state failures in large, densely populated countries (e.g., Pakistan or Indonesia). Given current trends, it appears that complex, irregular warfare contingencies and non-state threats to the US homeland are likely to be prominent elements of the future security environment. Accordingly, the Department should consider re-orienting a portion of the reserve component toward irregular warfare and homeland defense. A more detailed assessment of how the active and reserve ground GPF should be reshaped and sized for future irregular warfare missions is required. New concepts for dealing with state failure in populous countries also need to be developed.

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[665] Andrew Krepinevich and Dakota Wood, *Of IEDs and MRAPs: Force Protection in Complex Irregular Operations* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2007).

[666] Tom Vanden Brook, "MRAPs Can't Stop Newest Weapon," *USA Today*, May 31, 2007, p. 1.

Create and Exploit Fissures Among and Within Salafi-Jihadi Groups

The Salafi-Jihadi movement is far from monolithic. Significant differences exist among and within groups with regard to strategic goals and how the struggle should be waged. Some Salafi groups, for example, eschew violence and believe that Islamic renewal can be best achieved through *da'awah*, or peaceful proselytizing and preaching (i.e., educating the *ummah* about "true" Islam), and internal jihad, meaning a personal struggle for piety. Some jihadi groups focus almost exclusively on defeating the "near" enemy (i.e., domestic regimes that oppress the faithful), while others are more concerned about the threat posed by the "distant" enemy (i.e., the United States, Israel, and other Western states). Some groups are interested in short-term, Islamic reform at the national or sub-national level and would be content to see the *sharia* as the dominant, but not exclusive, law of the land. More extremist groups, in contrast, envision a war of destiny between infidelity and Islam that is global in scale and effectively infinite in duration. Borrowing from Ibn Taymiyya, they hold that unless a government rules exclusively by the *sharia*, it is un-Islamic, and thus, subject to attack. As will be detailed later, there are also passionate debates within the "movement" on narrow questions of theological interpretation, many with clear operational implications, including:[667]

- The definition of *Dar al-Islam* today given the absence of a caliphate, and conversely, the definition of *Dar al-Harb*;

- Whether an offensive jihad must be declared by a competent Islamic ruler and how that is possible in the absence of a caliphate;

- To what extent treaties and other diplomatic agreements between Muslim countries and "infidel" countries should be honored;

- The legitimacy of suicide attacks given the severe prohibition against taking one's life clearly and repeated specified in the Quran;

[667] Shmuel Bar, "The Religious Sources of Islamic Terrorism," *Policy Review*, June 2004; and Shmuel Bar, "Jihad Ideology in Light of Contemporary Fatwas," Research Monograph, Hudson Institute—Center on Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World, August 2006.

- The status of Muslims who participate in political elections or provide aid to infidels;

- The legitimacy of general declarations of *takfir*;

- The degree to which the lives and property of "innocent" Muslims should be protected;

- The lawfulness of killing infidel women and children; and

- The permissibility of using various types of weapons and means of attack (e.g., using hijacked commercial aircraft as explosive missiles in light of Islamic prohibitions on killing prisoners or the use of explosives given Quranic injunctions reserving the use of fire to Allah alone).[668]

In addition to theological disagreements, there are several other wedges that could be exploited to divide the Salafi-Jihadi movement and create potential fracture points. Groups compete with each other over their relative status within the Muslim world. This competitive aspect is reflected, for example, in al Qaeda's policy of requiring all new recruits to swear loyalty *exclusively* to al Qaida and barring them from having dealings with "any other Islamic group."[669]AQAM's endless self-promotion of being the "vanguard" of a global Islamic movement that will restore an Islamic caliphate is a source of irritation to other groups. Second, there are long-standing, personal rivalries among the leaders of various groups. Third, there are ethnic fissures within the movement, most notably between the Arab-dominated al Qaeda central and Central Asian "franchises" and affiliates. After the capture in Pakistan of senior al Qaeda operative Abu Farraj al-Libbi, for example, it came to light that captured Central Asian jihadis tipped off Pakistani intelligence on the whereabouts of al-Libbi. As the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point notes about this incident, "Bad blood generated by the chauvinistic

[668] On this issue, the cognitive dissonance of senior al Qaeda leaders is astonishing. During his September 2007 video, for example, in discussing how the holocaust would never have occurred in Muslim-controlled lands, he states, "In fact, burning living beings is forbidden in our religion, even if they be small like the ant, so what of man?!" Yet in the same speech, he extols the 19 mujahideen who, "by the grace of Allah," were able to kill nearly 3,000 innocent civilians in jet-fuel-fed infernos. Osama bin Laden, "The Solution," Video to the American People, as obtained by the SITE Intelligence Group, September 7, 2007.

[669] Harmony AFGP-2002-600045.

disdain for Central Asian jihadis displayed by Arab al-Qa'ida personnel in the region led captured Uzbek, Tajik and Chechen jihadis to provide information on al-Qa'ida's operations, leading to a series of raids and arrests that ultimately led to al-Libbi's capture."[670] Finally, there is a generational divide between veterans of jihadi operations over the past several decades (e.g., in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Algeria, and most especially, Afghanistan in 1980s) and new recruits that have not yet proven their mettle. Strong bonds of trust and friendship, forged in battle and in prisons across the Muslim world, unite jihad veterans. Those same bonds, however, act as a barrier to the acceptance and assimilation of new recruits. There is a general sense among veterans that the indoctrination process has become less rigorous and the screening process less reliable over the past decade. As a result, while new recruits are trying to earn their jihadi spurs, they are viewed with suspicion. In several captured AQAM documents, jihadi commanders express concern about the dependability of new recruits, anxiety over whether they can be adequately controlled, and fear of treachery and penetration.

There also fissures *within* various Salafi-Jihadi groups. In the case of AQAM, for example, there are significant differences of opinion among senior leaders over strategic goals and the means for achieving them. While Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri have called for jihadi operations to focus on the "far enemy," nearly all of the organization's major "franchises" (see Table 1) remain focused on attacking the "near enemy." There are also major disputes over operational approaches and tactics for waging jihad. One of the more striking examples of the latter is the strained relationship between the now deceased Zarqawi and senior al Qaeda leaders and ideologues.[671] In July 2004, Zarqawi's former religious mentor, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, published a jail-cell missive, entitled *Support and Advice, Pains and Hopes*, that was harshly critical of Zarqawi's actions in Iraq. He took him to task for issuing declarations of general *takfir*, targeting Shi'a Muslims, conducting reckless operations outside of Iraq, issuing "meaningless threats against countries around the world" that discredit the mujahidin as a serious force, his excessive use of suicide attacks, and most of all, the indiscriminate killing of fellow Muslims. He charged that the jihad in Iraq under Zarqawi had become a "crematory" for Muslim youth who were "precious jewels" that "must not be wasted for targets that can be

[670] Combating Terrorism Center, *Cracks in the Foundation* (West Point, NY: USMA, 2007), p. 22.
[671] David Johnston, "Some See Hints of Disharmony in Qaeda Tapes," New York Times, May 1, 2006, p. 1.

claimed without losses of this type." [672] Similarly, as was discussed at length earlier, Zawahiri differed sharply with Zarqawi as well, rebuking him for his brutal tactics (e.g., videotaped beheadings), attacks on Muslim mosques, and killing Sunni tribal leaders and Shiite civilians. Zarqawi, however, did not take these and other critiques of his performance sitting down. In a scornful rejoinder to Maqdisi, he casts his former mentor as a complacent, out-of-touch scholar who is unwilling to risk his life for the cause. Obviously upset about Maqdisi's accusation that he was senselessly sending Muslim youth to their deaths in a crematorium "inferno," Zarqawi responded derisively:

> What inferno are you talking about? The real inferno awaits those who shy away from implementing the verdict of Allah and refuse to answer the call to jihad…The real inferno awaits those who do nothing to free Muslim prisoners from Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and other locations. The real inferno awaits those who betray our honored sisters who are being raped day and night by the cross worshippers and the *Rafidhah* [Shi'a].[673]

Zawahiri was also not immune from Zarqawi's vitriol. In an online posting called, "It is Allah Whom ye Should More Justly Fear," he expresses his strong disapproval of scholars advising the mujahideen from locations of safety far from arenas of jihad. In a thinly veiled jab at Maqdisi, Zawahiri, and other critics, he wrote:

> People always respect the one who accompanies his words with deeds and the opposite is true…Recently some of our brotherly scholars, who were pioneers in the call for God's way, fell into fault and made mistakes, caused by their distance from the arenas of jihad and by the fact that they are not actually involved in jihad…A scholar living in the land of infidels away from the arenas of jihad and the real situation of the mujahadeen should not issue *fatwas* to the people…[674]

[672] Brooke, "The Preacher and the Jihadi," p. 62.
[673] Ibid., pp. 62–63.
[674] Posted on www.world-news-network.net on October 14, 2005. Translated by FBIS, report on jihadist websites, on October 19, 2005. See Harmony and Disharmony, pp. 35–36.

Even at the highest levels of the al Qaeda hierarchy there are potentially exploitable divides. It appears that a rivalry may be growing between Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri over leadership of the movement. Other senior AQ leaders have questioned Osama bin Laden's decision to shift strategic focus to the "distant" enemy, and the decision to attack the US homeland on September 11, 2001, in particular. In a captured letter written to Khalid Sheikh Mohammad in June 2002, Abd-al-Halim Adl, who is clearly in the upper strata of the al Qaeda leadership, implores him to disregard Osama bin Laden's operational directives and concentrate instead on re-organizing and reinvigorating the group's organizational infrastructure in the wake of US offensive actions. He writes to his long-time friend that:

> During [the past] six months, it has become apparent to the observer that there is a new hand that is managing affairs and that is driving forcefully; every time it falters, it gets up and rushes again, without understanding or awareness. It rushes to move without vision, and it is in a hurry to accomplish actions that now require patience…Let us stop and think…*[Bin Laden] pushes you relentlessly and without consideration as if he has not heard the news and as if he does not comprehend the events*. To absolve my conscience before Allah, and to announce my innocence in front of Allah, I say today we must completely halt all external actions until we sit down and consider the disaster we have caused…The East Asia, Europe, America, Horn of Africa, Yemen, Gulf, and Morocco Groups have fallen, and Pakistan has almost been drowned in one push…*Stop all foreign actions, stop sending people to captivity, stop devising new operations, regardless of whether orders come or do not come from Abu-Abdalla* [Bin Laden].[675]

More recently, it has become apparent that serious internal divisions exist within AQIM over Abdelmalek Droudkel's decisions to merge GSPC with al Qaeda and rename the organization. Scores of rank and file fighters, along with selected commanders, have apparently abandoned AQIM because of its focus on the global jihad as

[675] Emphasis added. Harmony Database, "Letter to Mukhtar," document name: Al Adl Letter.

opposed to overthrowing the secular government of Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, as well as AQIM's willingness to attack civilians intentionally.[676]

In short, there are significant and, in some cases, growing divides among and within the groups comprising the Salafi-Jihadi movement. Senior ideologues and strategists, most notably Abu Bakr Naji and Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, have expressed concern about those fissures. To reinforce their call for increased unity, they point to the fact that most jihadi movements in the past have failed, not because of the effectiveness of CT-related efforts in the state in which they were waged, but because of internal fragmentation. The United States should exploit all of the fissures described above, or any others that develop over time, to weaken and divide the Salafi-Jihadi movement so that it can be defeated in detail.

Widening and exploiting such divides should be an integral component of a broader covert strategic communications/influence campaign focused on the Muslim world. The goal would be to highlight differences and exacerbate latent tensions among and within Salafi-Jihadi groups. As will be discussed later, a dedicated federal agency will likely need to be created to plan and orchestrate an intense, national-level strategic communications/influence effort. The CIA's Directorate of Operations and "black" SOF units would likely play important roles in collecting the intelligence needed to shape and guide this effort over time, as well as in disseminating propaganda, conducting PSYOP efforts, and carrying out supporting covert action. Other national assets will be relied upon to conduct computer network attacks (e.g., covertly manipulating web postings and internal e-mails, sending fraudulent but credible e-mails to key targets, manipulating bank accounts, etc.), offensive information operations activities, and other special technical activities.

[676] Geoff Porter, "Splits Revealed Inside Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb," *Terrorism Monitor*, September 13, 2007, pp. 5–7.

Discredit Salafist-Jihadi and Khomeinist ideology and Promote Alternative Islamic Voices

As the current *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* correctly points out, "in the long run, winning the War on Terror means winning the battle of ideas."[677] It observes that "terrorism ultimately depends upon the appeal of an ideology that excuses or even glorifies the deliberate killing of innocents" and asserts that "Islam has been twisted and made to serve an evil end."[678] America's enemies also recognize the central importance of ideology in the "long war." In December 2001, Zawahiri characterized the current conflict as "a battle of ideologies, a struggle for survival, and a war with no truce."[679] In his oft-cited letter to Zarqawi in July 2005, Zawahiri explained that "we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media" and that the jihadi movement is "in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma."[680] Given this, AQAM has put a major emphasis on propaganda or what its leadership generally refers to as the "media war." Osama bin Laden has asserted that propaganda is in fact one of movement's strongest weapons. "It is obvious," he says, "that the media war in this century is one of the strongest methods; in fact, its ratio may reach 90% of the total preparation for the battles."[681]

Although the United States has won many important tactical victories in the GWOT to date—eliminating al Qaeda's sanctuary in Afghanistan, rolling up terrorist cells around the world, cutting off terrorist funding streams, killing or capturing scores of senior leaders and operatives, and disrupting numerous planned attacks—it appears to be losing the war in the madrassas, on the air waves, on jihadi websites and countless Internet chat rooms, and during Friday prayers in mosques around the world. While it has become a hackneyed recommendation, it nevertheless remains true that the US government must engage more effectively in the ongoing "war of ideas" in the Muslim world by developing and implementing an agile, coherent, multifaceted strategic communications campaign. The primary objective of this campaign should

[677] *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, p. 7.
[678] Ibid., p. 10.
[679] Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, Part VI.
[680] Letter from al-Zawahiri to Zarqawi, July 9, 2005. Available on-line at: http://www.dni.gov/letter_in_english.pdf.
[681] Osama bin Laden, Letter to Mullah Mohammed Omar, undated. Harmony database, AFGP-2002-600321, p. 2.

be to discredit Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist ideologies while simultaneously promoting alternative, credible, non-violent voices in the Islamic world. CIA Director General Michael Hayden characterized this as the "deep fight" and asserted that:

> It requires discrediting or eliminating the jihadi ideology that motivates this hatred and violence. It requires winning what is essentially a war of ideas....[It] requires that jihadists' ideas of violence and extremism and intolerance be countered by ideas of peace, moderation, and inclusion. It requires a tireless global campaign by a broad coalition of nations and societies.[682]

Since statements by the US government lack credibility in much of the Muslim world, especially among the target audience of Salafists and other conservative Islamists, this campaign will need to be waged indirectly. Since any association with the US government by respected Muslim speakers would discredit them, the primary effort will also need to be covert. In shaping this indirect, covert strategic communications campaign, it is important to appreciate two realities. First, contrary to arguments made in the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* and numerous US government statements on the topic, the basic tenets of Salafi-Jihadi ideology are not "twisted" perversions of Islam but are firmly rooted in the Quran, the hadith, and a long history of Islamic jurisprudence.[683] While one may disagree with Salafi-Jihadi interpretations of various passages and the relative weight they ascribe to some texts as opposed to others, the fact that they are based upon legitimate sources and historically accepted interpretations of them cannot be ignored. When jihadis cite Ibn Taymiyya, al-Wahhab, Sayyid Qutb, Maqdisi, and numerous other Islamic scholars, they generally do so accurately. The latter, moreover, are highly respected by much of the Muslim community. In short, rather than trying to discredit jihadi ideology by simply declaring it to be a corruption or falsification of true Islam, a more nuanced approach is necessary. Key elements of this campaign might include the following:

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[682] General Michael Hayden, CIA Director, Speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, September 7, 2007.

[683] For a detailed treatment of this issue, see: Shmuel Bar, *Warrant For Terror—Fatwas of Radical Islam and the Duty of Jihad* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006); and Shmuel Bar, "The Religious Sources of Islamic Terrorism," *Policy Review*, June 2004.

- Calling into question the religious credentials of radical clerics who issue *fatwas* supporting jihadi operations;[684]

- Focusing increased public attention in the Muslim world on jihadi activities that are broadly considered to be "un-Islamic," including charging entire Muslim populations with *kufr* [heresy] and thereby placing a death sentence upon them (i.e., general *takfir*), the slaughter of hostages, the indiscriminate killing of innocent Muslims, the killing of women and children (and other protected classes like the elderly and clerics), encouraging suicide, and attacking the sources of wealth (e.g., tourism and oil industry) of Muslim states;

- Holding up the tyrannical rule and social-economic failures of the Taliban in Afghanistan as an example of the type of society that jihadis seek to create;

- Covertly supporting a vigorous counter-*fatwa* campaign in which respected *muftis* (Islamic scholars) are "encouraged" by their host nations or other agents of influence (e.g., individuals, religious foundations, and Islamic universities) to issue authoritative rulings countering jihadi arguments on key issues of Islamic jurisprudence (e.g., the meaning and obligations of jihad, the definition of *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb* in the modern age, the extent to which treaties and other diplomatic agreements with "infidel" countries should be honored, the permissibility of suicide attacks, the status of Muslims who participate in political elections or provide aid to infidels, the degree to which the lives and property of "innocent" Muslims should be protected, the lawfulness of killing infidel women and children, and the permissibility of using weapons of mass destruction);[685]

[684] According to Islamic jurisprudence, *fatwas* can only be given by a scholar who has sufficient experience and knowledge of the sharia to be considered a mufti. Many of the *fatwas* issued in support of Salafi-Jihadi movement have been authored by individuals who do not meet that requirement.

[685] As Shmuel Bar, an expert of jihadi fatwas, has recommended, "for every fatwa that promises paradise to those who engage in jihad, an authoritative counter-fatwa is needed that threatens hellfire for those actions." Shmuel Bar, "Jihad Ideology in Light of Contemporary Fatwas," p. 15.

- Publicizing widely and repeatedly those instances when influential scholars associated with the Salafi-Jihadi movement renounce certain targets and tactics (implicitly threatening hellfire to jihadis who continue to conduct such attacks);

- Denying terrorists semantic victories by, for example, publicly describing their conduct not as a "jihad," which is considered a highly venerated undertaking blessed by Allah, but as "*hirabah*," which is the rough equivalent of the Western concept of "terrorism" and is the most severely punished crime in Islam;[686]

- Exploiting missteps by jihadis (e.g., repeatedly airing images from the Zarqawi-directed bombing of the wedding in Jordan and graphic images of woman and children killed in suicide-bombings/car bombings in Iraq) whenever possible;

- Visibly providing economic aid, humanitarian assistance, and, when needed, natural disaster relief to Muslim countries;[687] and

- Covertly promoting, credible alternative "narratives" focused on non-violent Islamic reform, including peaceful Salafi prescriptions for returning to the "straight path" and other approaches to reform that are critical of emulating the West.

Over the past 2–3 years, several prominent leaders and scholars within the Salafi and Wahhabi communities have stepped forward to critique al Qaeda's prosecution of the jihad. Examples include: the renunciation of suicide attacks after the London bombings by Abu-Basir al-Tartusi, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, and Muhammad Sayed Tantawi; Maqdisi's scathing critique of Zarqawi's actions in Iraq; Sheikh Nasser al-Fahd's televised denunciation that "blowing oneself up in such

[686] The term *"hirabah"* refers to the murder with the intent to cause terrorism or intimidation. The punishment for *hirabah*, which is considered a heinous crime and sin, as specified in the Quran (5:33–34), includes execution, crucifixion, or amputation of hands and feet. For an expanded discussion of the semantic argument over jihad and *hirabah*, see J. Michael Waller, "Making Jihad Work for America," *The Journal of International Security Affairs*, pp. 15–22.

[687] According to the DIA, public opinion of the United States improved in several predominantly Muslim states, especially those in Asia, following US assistance to tsunami victims in Indonesia and earthquake victims in Kashmir. Maples, "Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States," p. 5.

operations [on Muslim soil] is not martyrdom, it is suicide;" and the condemnation of AQI's attack on a wedding celebration in Amman, Jordan by Hamas, Jordan's Islamic Action Front, Egypt's Islamic Jihad, and Gamaa Islamiyya.[688] More recently, al Qaeda's theology of jihad has been dealt powerful blows Salam bin Fahd al-Oadah, a the widely known Saudi preacher and Wahhabi scholar; Abdul-Aziz el-Sherif, a long-time companion of Zawahiri and the author of *The Essential Guide for Preparation*, which is considered a must-read by aspiring jihadis; and Abdulaziz al-Ashaikh, the grand *mufti* of Saudi Arabia.[689] Abdul-Aziz el Sherif denounced al Qaeda for intentionally targeting civilians based upon their religious identity and nationality. Abdulaziz al-Ashaikh issued a *fatwa* prohibiting Saudis from engaging in jihad and accused bin Laden and corrupt Arab regimes of "transforming our youth into walking bombs to accomplish their own political and military aims."[690] One of the most stinging rebukes was leveled by Shiekh Oadah, who wrote this in his four-paged, open letter to Osama bin Laden posted on his website Islamtoday.net in September 2007:

> How much blood has been spilled? How many innocent children, women, and old people have been killed, maimed, and expelled from their homes in the name of "al Qaeda"?...[Islam] can never accept the murder of innocent people, regardless of what supposed justification is given for it....The image of Islam today is tarnished. People around the world are saying how Islam teaches that those who do not accept it must be killed. They are also saying that the adherents of Salafi teachings kill Muslims who do not share their views....

[688] Al Tartusi lives in London and has a large following in Europe and across the Middle East. Al Qaradawi is an Egyptian scholar with a global audience owing to his popular show "Shariah and Life" on *Al Jazeera* and his founding role with IslamOnline. Tantawi is the sheikh of al-Azhar, which is widely respected as a center of Islamic thought across the Muslim world. At the time, Sheikh Nasser al-Fahd was considered to be one of al Qaeda's spiritual leaders. In addition to condemning suicide bombings, he also declared that it is not permissible to attack non-Muslims who had travelled legally to Islamic countries. He did not, however, object to attacks on America or other infidel countries. Uzi Mahnaimi, "Al Qaeda Split as Mentor Condemns Saudi Attacks," *London Sunday Times*, January 11, 2004; and Marc Lynch, "Al Qaeda's Media Strategies," *The National Interest*, Spring 2006, pp. 54–55.

[689] Fawaz Gerges, "Osama Bin Laden's Growing Anxiety," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 26, 2007.

[690] Ibid.

> Brother Osama, what is to be gained from the destruction of entire nations—which is what we are witnessing in Afghanistan and Iraq—seeing them torn with plague and famine? What is to be gained from undermining their stability and every hope of a normal life?....Who is responsible—brother Osama—for promoting the culture of excommunication which has torn families asunder and has led to sons calling their fathers infidels? Who is responsible for fostering a culture of violence and murder that has led people to shed the blood of their relatives in cold blood, rather than nurturing the spirit of love and tranquility that a Muslim family is supposed to have? Who is responsible for the young men who leave their mothers cryings; who abandon their wives; whose small children wake up every day asking when daddy is coming home?...Who is responsible—brother Osama—for filling the prisons of the Muslim world with our youth, a situation which will only breed more extremism, violence, and murder in our societies?...My heart pains me when I think of the number of young people who had so much potential—who would have made such great and original contributions to society, who had so much to offer that was constructive and positive—who have been turned into living bombs. Here is the vital question that you need to ask yourself and that others have the right to demand an answer for: What have all these long years of suffering, tragedy, tears, and sacrifice actually achieved?[691]

While it might be the US preference to align exclusively with Muslim advocates of democracy, liberalism, and secular reform in the effort to discredit Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist ideology, that impulse should be avoided. To the contrary, an indirect, covert strategic communications campaign should focus *primarily* upon identifying and bolstering alternative, non-violent *conservative* scholars (e.g., non-violent Salafis) since they can compete much more effectively with the jihadis in winning over the "hearts and minds" of the ummah. This is especially important in the Middle East and North Africa where a significant portion, if not a majority, of "mainstream" Muslims are Salafi or otherwise

[691] Sheikh Salman bin Fahd al-Oadah, "A Ramadan Letter to Osama bin Laden," posted on Islamtoday.net on September 14, 2007. Available at: http://www.islamtoday.com/showme2.cfm?cat_id=29&sub_cat_id=1521

conservative in orientation.[692] To a limited extent, non-violent conservative voices are already beginning to question the ideological/theological underpinnings of violent jihadism; a development that leaders of the movement view as a grave threat because it weakens their legitimacy and, as Naji put it, "siphons off recruits among the youth."[693] (Owing to its denunciation of violence, the growing appeal of its peaceful model of reform, increasing participation in the political process, and the popularity of its social services network, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey is frequently cited as a major threat to the jihadi movement.)[694] The goal of the United States should be to give these speakers as a powerful a microphone as possible without jeopardizing their credibility.

Over the past six years, however, the US government has failed to plan and orchestrate a national-level strategic communications/influence campaign—broadly defined to include overt public diplomacy and media activities, propaganda and counter-propaganda, and black PSYOP and IO activities—focused on the Muslim world. By nearly all accounts, the jihadis—both Salafi-Jihadis and Khomeinists—are currently winning the "media war" and the radical ideology they espouse is spreading rather than receding. Across much of the Muslim world, the United States has failed to counter effectively the portrayal of America, and the West more broadly, as an aggressive, predatory force (i.e., Zionist Crusaders) that poses a threat to Islam. US efforts to reverse these trends have, thus far, been limited, fragmented, and largely ineffective. Aborted efforts by the State Department to improve the image of the United States by extolling American values (especially democracy) have been counter-productive. To gain ground in what is likely to be an indirect, protracted "war of ideas," the US government should stand up an independent agency (i.e., a more powerful follow-on to the Cold War-era US Information Agency) to plan and orchestrate a coherent, national strategic communication strategy.[695] That strategy will need to

[692] William McCants and Jarret Brachman, Militant Ideology Atlas (West Point, NY, US Military Academy, 2006), p. 10.
[693] Several AQAM strategists and ideologues, most notably Naji and Zawahiri, have voiced their concern about the danger posed by competing voices, especially those that deny the legitimacy of violent jihad and focus instead on peaceful proselytizing and teaching "true" Islam to the ummah. See, for example, Naji, *The Management of Barbarism*, pp. 46–47, 73–80.
[694] See, for example: Robert Leiken and Steven Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood," *Foreign Affairs*, March–April 2007.
[695] Michael Zwiebel, "Why We Need to Reestablish the USIA," *Military Review*, November–December 2006, pp. 26–35.

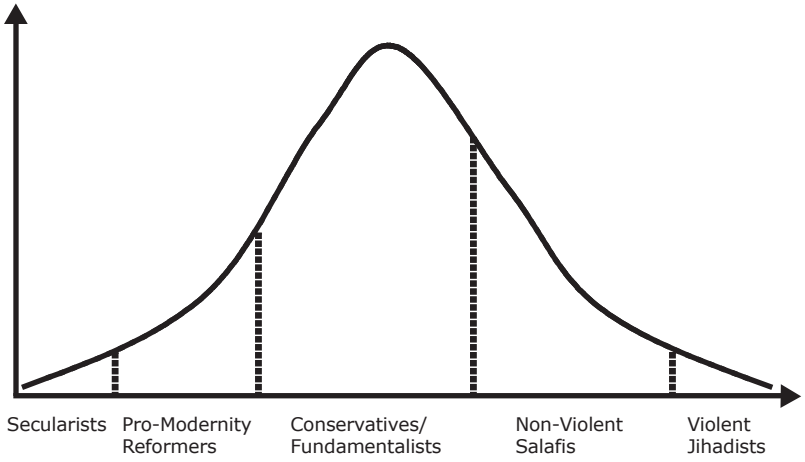
be carefully tailored to different societies and cultures around the world and exploit the full-range of modern communications technologies, most especially the Internet. To do so, it will be imperative for this effort to recruit not only individuals with true fluency in relevant languages, but also cultural experts, psychologists, marketing professionals, technical staff, and range of other subject matter experts.[696]

Isolate Islamic Extremists and Avoid Legitimizing the Call to Defensive Jihad

Although precise figures are unavailable, it is widely reported that most Muslims in the world have what might be termed a "fundamentalist" or "conservative" orientation. The next two largest demographics are non-violent Salafis and pro-modernity reformers. Secularists and jihadis/terrorists represent comparatively small minorities (see Figure 3). Admittedly, the dividing lines between these cohorts and their relative sizes are rather ambiguous. Nevertheless, the basic concept illustrates an important strategic point.

[696] For a brief summary of the challenges of conducting a strategic communications campaign in the GWOT and some of the requirements for doing so, see: Franklin Kramer, "Strategic Communications and the Battle of Ideas: Winning the Hearts and Minds in the Global War against Terrorism," Testimony to the Housed Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, July 11, 2007.

Figure 3: Illustrative Depiction of Global Muslim Population by Islamic Orientation



Assuming that this characterization is broadly accurate, the overriding goal of US strategic communications and GWOT strategy more broadly over the long term should be to shift all of the cohorts to the left while cleaving off as much of the violent jihadist population as possible. Given their large relative size, it is especially important to focus on moving the conservatives/fundamentalist population toward pro-modernity reform, and the non-violent Salafi population (which is expanding in the Middle East and North Africa) toward mainline conservatism. The overriding imperative, however, is to do so *without* creating incentives or otherwise encouraging conservatives/fundamentalists and non-violent Salafis to shift to the right, expanding the jihadi ranks. Avoiding the latter should be the controlling concern—it is better to do nothing than to take actions that are likely to expand significantly the terrorist population.

The key policy instrument for encouraging a gradual migration toward pro-modernity and secularism is the promotion of alternative, non-violent "voices" in the Muslim world through a sustained, indirect, national-level strategic communications campaign. The latter is also critical for discrediting violent jihadist ideology, which should both reduce the jihadi recruiting base over time and possibly convince some currently active jihadis to renounce violence. From a strategic communications perspective, there are three tools that might prove especially

useful for isolating the violent jihadi population and shrinking it over time. The first, which was described above, is to focus increased public attention on jihadi activities that are broadly considered to be "un-Islamic." The second is to encourage authoritative Muslim spokesmen to refer consistently to jihadis using terms that cast them as alien to mainstream Islam. Options include "Hirabists," the root of which refers to a heinous crime and grave sin; "Qutbis," which is fully consistent with their constant references to the writings of Sayyid Qutb, but reduces them to followers of a human as opposed to individuals fighting in the name of Allah; "Takfiris," to reflect their frequent and wide-scale use of general *takfir*, which contradicts the deeply rooted Islamic value of maintaining unity and avoiding *fitna* [communal discord]; and "Khawarijites," referring to a radical, early Islamic sect that is widely considered as deviant. The third tool is to exploit the fact that the ideology of the Salafi-Jihadi movement is inherently—and unavoidably—exclusionary. Any Muslim that does not believe in their peculiar interpretation of Islamic texts and follow their dictates is *ipso facto* an apostate, guilty of "allowing that which God has forbidden," and thus subject to death. Given their extreme views on *tawhid* [absolute unity of God] and exclusive reliance upon the *sharia*, jihadis have scant ideological "wiggle room" in this regard. As Mary Habeck explains:

> This attitude has created a dilemma for the jihadis. They understand that they must appeal to ordinary Muslims to join their cause if they are going to win their lengthy war against the "Crusaders" and "Jews." Yet, at the same time, they believe that ideological and religious purity is necessary for their case, and this purity demands that they regard as enemies any Muslims who do not actively support them.[697]

As part of its strategic communications campaign, the US government should exploit the exclusivity of jihadi ideology as a wedge to drive away non-violent Salafist and mainline conservatives. The target audience should be constantly reminded that jihadis view them as "lesser believers" whose lives and property are not protected and, in some cases, as apostates who must be killed. Isolated from mainstream Muslims and with an evaporating recruitment base, the jihadi population would shrink over time as manhunting operations, defections encouraged by government amnesty offers, continued "martyrdom" operations, and death by natural causes take their toll.

[697] Habeck, p. 167.

What the United States should *not* do is attempt to extol the virtues of democracy, secularism, women's rights, and other Western concepts and values that are too easily misconstrued as an attack on Islam and are also likely to reawaken unpleasant memories of European imperialism. While compelling academic arguments have been made that Islam is not necessarily incompatible with democracy, the fact of the matter is that Salafi-Jihadis and Khomeinists have convinced their constituencies to the contrary. Frequently citing the works of Taymiyya, Maqdisi has been an especially vocal critic of democracy, as well as Muslims who participate in democratic activities. He and many other clerics argue that the creation of a constitution and a body of legislation that replaces or supplements the divine law and judgment of Allah is apostasy.[698] Human-made law cannot, in their view, add to or take away from the *sharia* in any way. Maqdisi harshly rebukes the Muslim Brotherhood, among others, for participating in the democratic process, asserting that they parrot "many of the words of Said [Qutb]" while at the same time [racing] one another to beg the *taaghut* [false deities] who turn away from the legislation of Allah…so that they may attain a seat in the councils of *shirk* [polytheisim] and transgressions and disobedience."[699]

Like it or not, the argument that democracy is un-Islamic because it places human-made law above divine law resonates across much of the Muslim world. In time, counter-arguments may gain traction, but they have yet to do so. Therefore, when senior officials of the US government publicly state that it is the policy of the United States to "democraticize" the Middle East, they provide powerful ammunition to the enemy in the ongoing "media war." For example, the repeated use of the term "democracy" and related concepts throughout the most recent *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, available to all on the World Wide Web, is strategically ill-advised.[700] While one can reasonably debate whether or not "effective democracy" is in fact the "long-term solution for winning the War on Terror," it is unambiguously clear that it should not be the *public* message of the United States.[701] The US government should avoid creating the perception that the West is trying to convert Muslims into something they do not want to become by, among other things, assiduously avoiding religiously charged rhetoric like "democracy" and "secularism."

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[698] For an extended discussion of this topic, see Brooke, "The Preacher and the Jihadi," pp. 54–57.
[699] Abu Muhammad Asim al-Maqdisi, *The Religion of Abraham* (Tibyan Publications, 1985), p. 110.
[700] *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, pp. 1 and 7–10.
[701] Ibid., p. 9.

VI. Conclusion

> It's been now more than six years since the enemy attacked us on September the 11th, and we are blessed that there has not been another attack on our soil. With the passage of time, the memories of the 9/11 attacks have grown more distant. And for some, there's a temptation to think that the threats to our country have grown distant as well. They have not. The terrorists who struck America that September morning intend to strike us again…We are at war—and we cannot win this war by wishing it away or pretending it does not exist.[702]
>
> President George W. Bush, November 1, 2007

Since September 2001, the United States and partner nations in the global war on terrorism have accomplished a great deal: eliminating the state-sponsored al Qaeda sanctuary in Afghanistan, capturing or killing scores of senior leaders and thousands of rank-and-file operatives in the jihadi movement, rolling up terrorist cells around the world, cutting off many of the funding pathways relied upon by terrorist groups, and disrupting dozens of plots. That being said, both the Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist branches of violent Islamic radicalism continue to make progress along their major lines of operation discussed in Chapters II and III in pursuit of their strategic objectives. The United States does not appear to have weakened the jihadis' will or their ability to inspire and regenerate.

As examined in Chapter IV, the jihadist threat has, on balance, remained constant or declined slightly in four regions: Africa, Russia and Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Americas. Conditions appear

[702] President George W. Bush, "President Bush Discusses Global War on Terror" at The Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C., November 1, 2007, as released by White House, Office of the Press Secretary. Available on-line at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/11/print/20071101-4.html.

ripe, however, for a resurgence of the jihadi threat in the Maghreb, pan-Sahel, and Horn of Africa (e.g., Somalia). In Southwest Asia, South Asia, and Europe, the threat has intensified, in some cases sharply. The creation of a *de facto* jihadi sanctuary in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area over the past few years is especially alarming, as is the mounting political instability within nuclear-armed Pakistan. While AQI has been seriously weakened, especially over the past year, Iraqi Shiite militias backed by Iran have grown in strength and influence. Iraq could collapse into anarchy at any time, creating a fertile environment for even more virulent manifestations of Islamic radicalism in Iraq and throughout the Middle East. In the wake of last summer's conflict with Israel, Hezbollah is stronger than ever as it consolidates control over southern Lebanon and undermines the democratically elected government in Beirut.

To date, US efforts in the GWOT have been focused nearly exclusively on Iraq and Afghanistan. As detailed in Chapter IV, the United States has been successful in reducing the jihadi threat in both countries—albeit at a high cost in terms of lives, treasure, and providing valuable grist for jihadi propaganda mills. US operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have also imposed a very high opportunity cost with respect to the conduct of GWOT-related missions *globally*. While the US government has made important strides building the CT capabilities and capacities of partner nations elsewhere (most notably, in the Philippines), the overall level of effort has been relatively modest. A sixty-country problem cannot be addressed with what is essentially a two-country solution. As discussed in Chapter IV, to prevail in this war, the United States and its partners will need to:

- Sustain a global "smother campaign" on radical Islamic terrorists;
- Employ UW and covert action against state sponsors of terrorism and transnational terrorist groups globally;
- Defend and hold the "key terrain" of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan;
- Maintain a significant "surge" capability for responding to protracted COIN and state-failure contingencies;
- Create and exploit divisions within and among jihadi groups;

- Discredit Salafi-Jihadi and Khomeinist ideology and covertly promote credible, alternative Islamic voices; and

- Isolate Islamic extremists from mainline, conservative Muslims and avoid legitimizing the call to defensive jihad.

With respect to these seven strategic pillars, the effectiveness of current US efforts appears to be mixed. Thanks in large measure to the efforts of the CIA, the global "smother campaign" has been relatively successful over the past six years based upon metrics such as the number of leaders/operatives killed or captured, plots disrupted, funds seized, communication links severed, and so forth. However, much more can and should be done. To increase global pressure on terrorist groups and sustain it over time, the US Army and Marine Corps need to take on the mission of training, equipping, and advising foreign security services as a core competence; and the Air Force and Navy need to invest in the capabilities needed to generate persistent air and maritime surveillance and strike coverage over "under-governed" areas and littoral zones. It will likely also be necessary to ramp up clandestine and covert operations, including in politically sensitive and denied areas. While the "key terrain" of Saudi Arabia appears secure for the time being, the prospect of large-scale civil unrest and political instability in Pakistan, which would almost certainly be exploited by various jihadi groups, is uncomfortably high. Preventing the take-over of Pakistan by violent Islamic radicals and eliminating the expanding jihadi sanctuary in its "wild west" is of paramount importance. Although the US Army and Marine Corps are expanding numerically, the idea of creating new institutions and possibly standing military units dedicated to COIN and irregular warfare more broadly has met strong bureaucratic resistance.

By far the gravest strategic lapse, however, has been the US government's anemic—if not, self-destructive—efforts to create and exploit divisions within and among jihadi groups, discredit their ideology, promote alternative Islamic voices, and isolate Islamic extremists. Over the past six years, the United States has failed to counter effectively the portrayal of America as an aggressive, predatory force that poses a threat to Islam. Indeed, the United States has reinforced this jihadi narrative through continued military "occupation" of Iraq, repeated missteps such as Abu Ghraib debacle and incidents at the Guantanamo detention facility, and frequent public statements by senior US government officials about promoting democracy, secularism, and other Western concepts that are considered anti-Islamic by many conservative Muslims. In short, the

United States is losing the "long war" in the madrassas, on the air waves, on jihadi websites and countless Internet chat rooms, and during Friday prayers in mosques around the world. To regain lost ground in what is likely to be an indirect, protracted "war of ideas," the US government should stand up an independent agency to plan and orchestrate a coherent, national-level strategic communication strategy.

While President Bush is right to say that "we are at war—and we cannot win this war by wishing it away or pretending it does not exist," we must also take care not to pretend that this very- different-kind of war can be won with a business-as-usual approach.[703] This war requires the US government to develop new capabilities and institutions to implement effectively the seven strategic pillars summarized above. Above all, it is imperative to remember that, as Zawahiri put it back in back in 2001, this war is "a battle of ideologies, a struggle for survival, and a war with no truce."[704]

[703] Ibid.
[704] Zawahiri, *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*, English Translation, Part VI.

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