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Terrorism

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Terror News

Terror News

The Evolution of Terrorism in the Western Hemisphere
By Sylvia Longmire
Source: http://www.hstoday.us/briefings/correspondents-watch/single-article/the-evolution-of-terrorism-in-the-western-hemisphere/947abd941abecb032463ac62d879d6a3.html

As America recently reflected on the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, one can't help but ponder how daily life has changed, how threats have been addressed by US homeland security and law enforcement agencies, and how terrorist groups have adapted to US security measures during the past ten years.

What many people don't realize is that terrorism was alive and well in the Americas well before 9/11. In some places, it currently has the same face it did in the middle of the century. In other locations, criminal activity is evolving into something likened to terrorism, but defying definition altogether.

Terrorism in Latin America has almost always been a domestic problem, meaning particular groups involved in killing innocents have limited their activities to the countries they primarily operate in, and their goals have been to the overthrow their respective governments.

Marxist/Leninist guerrilla insurgencies were the norm in the 1960s, largely due to the inspiration of Cuban icon Ché Guevara. Many of these groups, like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (the FARC) and the Shining Path in Peru, eventually turned to the manufacture and distribution of cocaine to fund their illegal activities.

But this hasn't been the only face of terrorism in Latin America. For almost six decades, the more well-known Middle East terrorist groups Hezbollah and Hamas have had a presence in the Western Hemisphere -- mostly in the tri-border area where Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay meet. Their activities have been mostly limited to fundraising through the sale of pirated and counterfeit items.

Then, in the 1990s, Argentina experienced its own—albeit smaller—version of 9/11, and it happened twice.

Many Americans don't know that a sizable portion of Argentina's population is of European—particularly German—ancestry, and that there is a huge Jewish community in the capital of Buenos Aires. During World War II, both Germans and Jews fled to Argentina to escape the horrors of the conflict.

In March 1992, a pickup truck loaded with explosives was driven by a suicide bomber—presumed to be a Hezbollah member—into the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires. The blast destroyed the embassy, a Catholic church and a nearby school. Four Israelis died, but the attack claimed 29 lives and wounded 242 people, most of whom were Argentine civilians and many of whom were children.

In July 1994, attackers also presumed to be members of Hezbollah parked a van filled with 610 pounds of ammonium nitrate and fuel oil in front of a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires. The location of the explosive was designed to collapse the building, and it succeeded, killing 85 people and injuring more than 300.

Of course, the numbers of people killed and injured in the attacks don't come close to the roughly 3,000 killed in the 9/11 attacks. And while thousands are killed every year in Colombia as a direct result of narco-terrorism, most Americans aren't aware of the violence there because it doesn't directly affect US security.

But now the United States is witnessing a transformation of violent activity in Mexico that could be the next evolution in terrorism in our hemisphere. While Mexican transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) are only interested in maximizing their profits from the illegal drug trade, there is an extremely fine line that separates them from groups like the FARC, which wants a communist government in Colombia, and Al Qaeda, which wants the worldwide expansion of the Islamic caliphate.

Yet, they are increasingly targeting innocent bystanders for kidnapping and becoming less and less concerned about the deaths of people who have nothing to do with the drug business. For example, early last September, the Zetas cartel threatened a high school football team in Monterrey, Mexico, telling the school they needed to pay a $30,000 fee to be allowed to cross

the US-Mexico border safely in order to participate in a routine game against a Texas team. The team declined to travel and canceled the game. One can only imagine what the punishment would have been had they ignored the warning.

The Italian and Russian mobs in the United States never engaged in the kind of terrorist-type behavior that Mexico-based TCOs now routinely employ. These groups have evolved well beyond traditional organized crime; yet neither the US or Mexican governments have an existing—or convenient—category under which to classify them.

The US government has declared that the number one terrorist threat to the homeland is the "lone wolf" attacker and homegrown groups inspired by Al Qaeda that are made up partly or entirely of US citizens or legal residents. Both pose a huge challenge to US agencies that rely heavily on actionable intelligence from confidential informants to prevent attacks.

But threats to US security in our hemisphere are evolving and don't necessarily fit the mold of "traditional" terrorist threats from Islamist groups. We know Hezbollah and Hamas have thousands of members living in the United States, but they lay low and quiet in order to

raise money and send it back to their cause in the Middle East. There has to be a number of either members of Al Qaeda Central or those inspired by the group in different parts of the country, waiting for the right moment to make a violent statement.

Currently, Mexican TCOs have a presence in over 270 US cities, and hundreds -- if not thousands -- of small communities. Every year, over 11,000 Americans die from using illegal drugs sold in the United States that are smuggled into the country by Mexican TCO members or their proxies -- US-based gangs. Their brand of death and destruction in Mexico thankfully has not spread across the border. However, their method of infiltration into the United States -- and the death they bring via illegal drugs -- is even more insidious and as dangerous as anything an Islamist group can bring into America.

As non-Islamist terrorism and violent activity evolves in the Western Hemisphere, US homeland security and law enforcement agencies would be wise to remember that not all threats to the American people come in the form so tragically observed ten years ago on 9/11.

Sylvia Longmire is a retired Air Force captain and former special agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Homeland Security Today correspondent Sylvia Longmire worked as the Latin America desk officer analyzing issues in the US Southern Command area of responsibilty that might affect the security of deployed Air Force personnel. From December 2005 through July 2009, she worked as an intelligence analyst for the California state fusion center and the California Emergency Management Agency's situational awareness unit, where she focused almost exclusively on Mexican drug trafficking organizations and Southwest border violence issues. Her book, "Cartel: The Coming Invasion of Mexico's Drug Wars," was published last September.

Two Bibles 'containing terror codes' found hidden in Bin Laden compound as it is demolished

Source: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2108055/Two-Bibles-containing-terror-codes-hidden-Bin-Laden-compound-demolished.html#ixzz1nltYVySJ

Pakistani security officials have found two copies of the Bible at the house where Al-Qaeda chief Osama Bin Laden was killed.

The Christian holy books were discovered this week when demolition crews were sent in to tear down the compound in Abbottabad.

They were so well hidden that security personnel had previously overlooked them.

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Coded? The English-language Bibles contain pages that are folded-over and highlighted texts

It is thought the English-print editions contain coded clues to future terror attacks, The Sun reported.

Pakistan's ISI security service also found two radio sets in a final sweep of the compound before demolition.
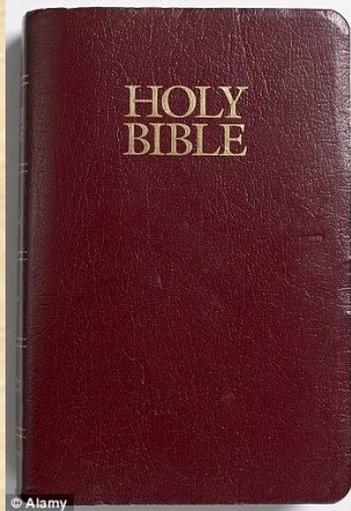
The English-language Bibles - a bizarre find in the home of the world's most famous Islamic fundamentalist - contained pages that are folded-over and highlighted texts.

An ISI commanding officer told The Sun: 'The Bibles were in English and we cannot be sure why they were there. These copies were found as we checked the rooms for the final time before demolishing the building.

'The radios are in working condition and will be given with the Bibles to the investigators. Some

military that has marked one of the most difficult periods in U.S.-Pakistan ties.

The Pakistani military was angry it had not been consulted by U.S. officials before the raid took place - a decision the U.S. explained was driven by concerns that someone in the government might tip off Bin Laden.

While much of the world cheered the death, Pakistan fumed over what it called a violation of its sovereignty.

Why Pakistani authorities decided to demolish the structure last week is unclear.

Residents of the normally sleepy town of Abbottabad were divided on what the government should do with the compound in the aftermath of the raid.

Some thought it should be destroyed, but others believed it should be turned into a tourist attraction to help the town earn money.

There was always the danger, however, that it could also draw Al Qaeda supporters.

pages were folded and we will see later what was of most interest to Bin Laden.

'Maybe he was looking for teachings of jihad.'

Bin Laden was killed at the compound by U.S. Navy SEALs last May after the biggest manhunt in history.

Its demolition was completed on Sunday, erasing a symbol of humiliation for Pakistan's

American officials said they buried Bin Laden's body at sea to avoid giving his followers a burial place that could become a makeshift shrine.

Many U.S. officials expressed disbelief that Bin Laden could have lived in Abbottabad for around six
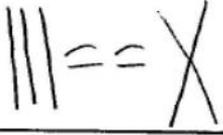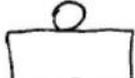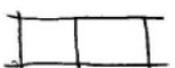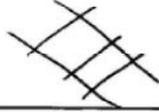
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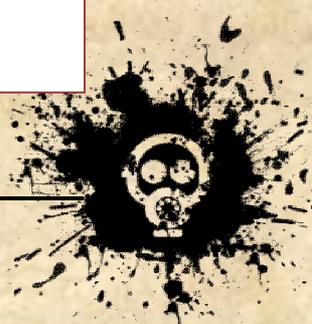
years without the Pakistani government knowing.

Now demolished: Bin Laden was killed at the three-storey compound by U.S. Navy SEALs last May after the biggest manhunt in history
But the U.S. has not found any evidence that senior Pakistani officials knew of the Al Qaeda chief's whereabouts.
The U.S. Navy SEALs who attacked bin Laden's compound infiltrated by helicopter from neighbouring Afghanistan.

Pakistan responded by kicking out more than 100 U.S. troops training Pakistanis in counter-terrorism operations and reduced the level of intelligence cooperation.
Some members of Congress called on the U.S. to cut of the billions of dollars of military and civilian aid to Pakistan unless Islamabad explained Bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad and boosted cooperation on the Afghan war. The aid has continued, although at a somewhat lower level.

Worry if you see these symbols in your door or wall

Symbol	Meaning	Meaning	Symbol
ΛΛΛΛ	MEAN DOG	# OF CHILDREN/MEN WOMEN	||| ⊂ ⊂ X
X	PLANNING TO ROB	MONEY IN HOUSE	⊙ ⊙
	ALREADY VISITED	WATCH FOR NEIGHBORS	
◇	UNOCCUPIED	ALL CLEAR	
△	SINGLE WOMAN	USELESS TO ENTER	
⊙ ⊙ ⊙	# OF ROOMS	ALARM SYSTEM	
	TO BE AVOIDED DANGER	ALREADY ROBBED	///
		NOTHING TO TAKE	
	WATCHED BY POLICE		
	HOUSE OF AN OFFICIAL PERSON	HIGH CHANCE OF BEING CAUGHT	
⊗	NOTHING INTERESTING	WATCH FOR DOG — SAME AS ABOVE	

Shoulder-Fired Defense Missile Systems to Be Installed on All Israeli Passenger Planes

Source: http://www.israeldefense.com/?CategoryID=483&ArticleID=943

Arkia and Israir Airlines are furious, as the system is unsuitable for their newly purchased ATR-class aircraft.

Defense officials have decided that systems against shoulder-fired missiles will be installed onboard all Israeli passenger planes, due to increased terror threats. Prior to this decision, discussions proposed the installation of the system on some of the aircraft, primarily those routinely traveling to "problematic" destinations. El Al, Arkia, and Israir will all install the C-MUSIC system onboard all aircraft. The C-MUSIC system was designed and developed by Elbit System's EIOP division. Elbit Systems

that began nearly a decade ago. On November 2002, terrorists attempted to shoot down an Arkia passenger plane departing from Mombasa airport.

The missiles were launched and missed, and a disaster was narrowly avoided.

El Al is readying for the installation of the initial systems. The company will serve as an installation contractor for Arkia and Israir as well. The system has generated tremendous interest throughout the world, and professional delegations from numerous aircraft companies interested in protecting their aircraft from the threat posed by shoulder-fired missiles are

is presently completing the production of the initial systems, and several aircraft will be equipped with the system before the middle of the year.

The installation of the systems will conclude one of the largest failures in the history of the Israeli defense establishment. Several warnings which were brought up in the past year concerning the threat posed by shoulder-fired missiles have accelerated the process

expected to arrive to Israel after the installation of the first system.

Meanwhile, a new problem has emerged. The Israeli Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) informed Arkia and Israir that they must install the system onboard all of their aircraft. The system is not suitable for installation onboard the smaller ATR-class aircraft that both companies operate for internal flights, primarily to and from Eilat.

Both companies have refused to comment on the issue. However, it was learned that they are both furious over the decision, as it will force them to sell their ATR aircraft, some of which were procured in the past year.
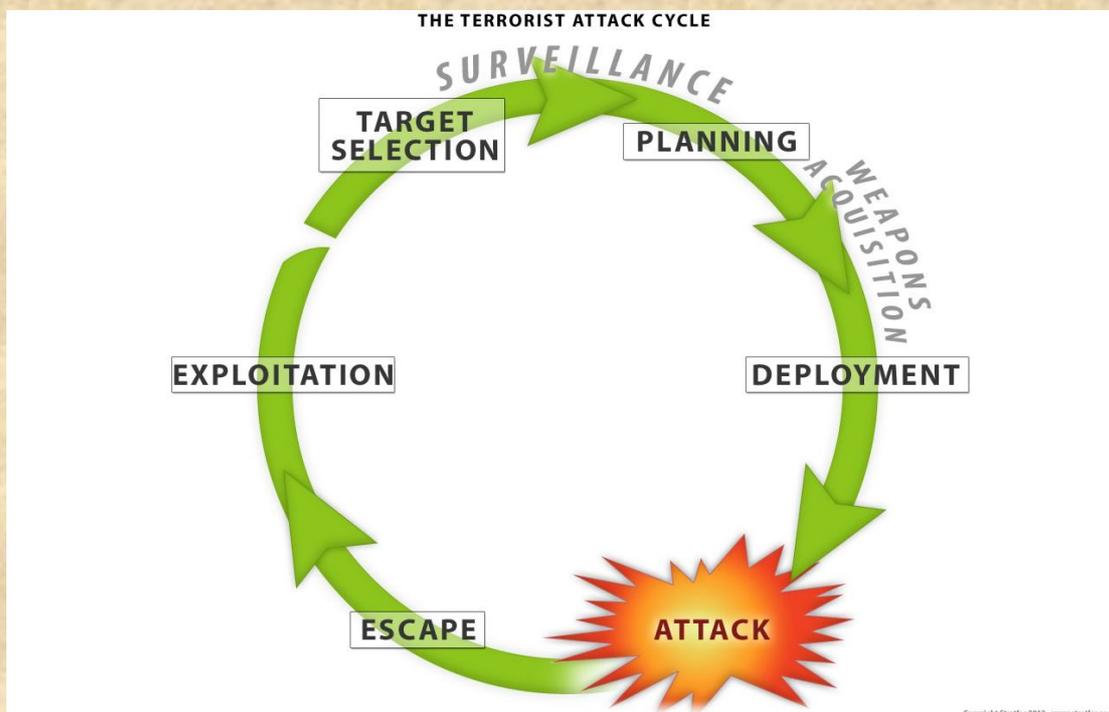
Detection Points in the Terrorist Attack Cycle
By Scott Stewart
Source:http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/detection-points-terrorist-attack-cycle?utm_source=freelist-f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20120301&utm_term=sweekly&utm_content=readmore&elq=f7b 202a8c93f4f129df355bc013bd59b

Last week's Security Weekly discussed the fact that terrorism is a tactic used by many different classes of actors and that, while the perpetrators and tactics of terrorism may nowhere. Individuals planning a terrorist attack follow a discernable cycle -- and that cycle and the behaviors associated with it can be observed if they are being looked for. We refer

THE TERRORIST ATTACK CYCLE

change in response to shifts in larger geopolitical cycles, these changes will never result in the end of terrorism. Since that analysis was written, there have been jihadist-related attacks in Afghanistan, Nigeria, Yemen and Pakistan, an assassination attempt against the president of Abkhazia, and a failed timed-incendiary attack against the Athens subway. (The latter incident, which militant anarchists claimed, reinforces that jihadists are not the only ones who practice terrorism.)

But while terrorism is a continuing concern, it can be understood, and measures can be taken to thwart terrorist plots and mitigate the effects of attacks. Perhaps the most important and fundamental point to understand about terrorism is that attacks do not appear out of

to these points where terrorism-related behavior can be most readily observed as vulnerabilities in the terrorist attack cycle.

The Attack Cycle
Many different actors can commit terrorist attacks, including sophisticated transnational terrorist groups like al Qaeda; regional militant groups like India's Maoist Naxalites; small, independent cells like the anarchists in Greece; and lone wolves like Oslo attacker Anders Breivik. There can be great variance in attack motives and in the time and process required to radicalize these different actors to the point that they decide to conduct a terrorist attack. But once any of these actors decides to launch an

attack, there is remarkable similarity in the planning process.

First, there is the process of selecting or identifying a target. Often an actor will come up with a list of potential targets and then select one to focus on. In some cases, the actor has preselected a method of attack, such as a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, and wants to find a target that would be vulnerable to that specific type of attack. In other cases, the actor will pick a target and then devise a method of attack based on that target's characteristics and vulnerabilities. Simply put, the execution of these steps can be somewhat fluid; some degree of planning or preparation can come before target selection, and sometimes target selection will be altered during the planning process. The time required to execute these steps can also vary considerably. Some attacks can be planned and executed within hours or days, while more complex plans, such as those used in the 9/11 or Mumbai attacks, may take months or even years to complete.

Frequently, those planning an attack will conduct detailed surveillance of potential targets to determine what security measures are in place around the target and to gauge whether they have the ability to successfully attack it. If the target is too difficult to attack -- commonly known as a hard target -- the attack planners will typically move on to their next target, which may prove easier to attack. (When they do continue with attacks against targets whose security measures exceed the attackers' capabilities, those attacks fail.) We refer to this stage as preoperational surveillance, which means surveillance that is conducted before the operation is fully planned. After the target has been selected, a second round of surveillance is conducted. This round will be far more detailed and is intended to provide all the details necessary for planning the attack. For example, if the attack is being planned against a static facility, this round of surveillance will generally try to obtain a detailed description of the target's physical security features and security force procedures. It will also focus on establishing a baseline understanding of the activity that can be expected around the facility at the time of day the attack is anticipated.

If the target of the attack is an individual, the individual's residence, office and other places the individual frequents will be surveilled.

Additionally, the surveillance team will look for patterns and routines that the target follows between these known locations. The team will often analyze the target's usual routes looking for choke points, or places the target must pass to get from one point to another. If the surveillance team identifies a choke point that the target passes through predictably, it will then try to determine whether that point will allow the attackers to deploy in secret, permit them to spot and control the target, and provide them with good escape routes. If it does, this point will frequently be chosen as the attack site.

In the case of large organizations, different groups or individuals may conduct different phases of the surveillance. Many organizations use specialized operatives for surveillance, though the operational planner will often attempt to get eyes on the target to help with the planning process. For instance, it is known from court testimony in the Mumbai case that David Headley made five extended trips to Mumbai as those attacks were being planned. The repeated trips were required because the operational commanders in Pakistan considered India a hostile environment and the operational planners could not go there to conduct the surveillance themselves. As a result, Headley was sent to observe and report on specific things as planning for the attacks progressed.

During the planning phase, the personnel to be used in the attacks are identified and trained in any special skills they may require for the mission, including languages, marksmanship, hand-to-hand combat, small-boat handling or land navigation. To protect operational security, the operatives may not be briefed in any great detail about the target of their operation until they are very close to being deployed.

Many times the planning phase will end with a dry run, as the preparation did for the 9/11 attacks, when some of the hijackers took their assigned flights in August 2001. While conducting a dry run, the attackers will generally be unarmed to ensure they do not needlessly bring law enforcement attention to themselves.

Sometimes an attacker will have acquired weapons for the attack before the planning phase. Other times the concept of the operation will be constrained by the weapons and money available. But quite frequently, the weapons for the

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attack will be acquired during the planning phase, after the target has been selected and the means of attack have been established.

Once planning, training and weapons acquisition are complete, the attack team can be deployed. The attack team frequently will again conduct surveillance of the target, especially if the target is mobile and the attack team is deployed and waiting at a predetermined attack site.

If it was properly planned, an attack is very likely to succeed once it has moved to the operational phase. Sometimes attacks do fail because of mistakes or bad luck, but by and large there is no way to stop an attack once it has been set in motion.

At the attack's conclusion, the attackers will seek to escape the scene. The exception is suicide attacks or when, like Breivik, the attacker intends to be captured as part of the media exploitation phase, the final step in the cycle.

Regardless of whether the attack is a suicide attack against a church in Nigeria or a timed-incendiary attack against a subway in Athens, the same attack cycle is followed. With an eye toward averting future attacks, a thoughtful observer can use the attack cycle model to understand how an attack was planned and executed.

Vulnerabilities

While plots are occasionally thwarted at the last second, for the most part law enforcement and security personnel must detect and interdict the plot before it gets to the attack phase to have any chance of stopping it. Once the bullets fly or the explosive device is detonated, there is little security forces can do but initiate their immediate action drills in an effort to reduce the body count. This means that an emphasis must be placed on identifying attackers earlier in the process, well before they are in a position to strike.

Unless security forces have a source inside the group that is planning the attack or manage to intercept the group's communications, the only way to identify attack planners is by noting their actions. This is especially true of a lone wolf attack, where no external communication occurs. The earliest point in the attack cycle that the attackers can be identified by their actions is during the preoperational surveillance required for target identification.

There is a widely held conception that terrorist surveillance is generally sophisticated and almost invisible, but when viewed in hindsight, it is frequently discovered that individuals who conduct terrorist surveillance tend to be quite sloppy and even amateurish in their surveillance tradecraft. We will discuss what bad surveillance looks like, and how to recognize it, in more detail next week, but for now it is sufficient to say that poor surveillance tradecraft is a significant vulnerability in the terrorist attack cycle.

As noted above, additional surveillance is often conducted at later stages of the attack cycle, such as in the planning stage and even sometimes in the attack stage, as the attackers track the target from a known location to the attack site. Each instance of surveillance provides an additional opportunity for the assailants to be identified and the attack to be prevented.

During the planning phase and as the operatives prepare to deploy, communication between and movement of group members often increases. Additionally, group members may engage in outside training that can attract attention, such as playing paintball, visiting the firing range or, as was the case with the 9/11 pilots, attending flight schools. This increase in activity, which also might include money transfers, leaves signs that could tip off the authorities.

Another significant vulnerability during the attack cycle is weapons acquisition. This vulnerability is especially pronounced when dealing with inexperienced grassroots operatives, who tend to aspire to conduct spectacular attacks that are far beyond their capabilities. For example, they may decide they want to conduct a bombing attack even though they do not know how to make improvised explosive devices. It is also not uncommon for such individuals to try to acquire Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, automatic firearms or hand grenades. When confronted by this gap between their capability and their aspirations, grassroots operatives will often reach out to someone for help with their attack instead of settling on an attack that is within their ability. Increasingly, the people such would-be attackers are encountering when they reach out are police or domestic security agency informants.

As far back as 2010, jihadist leaders such as Nasir al-Wahayshi of al

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Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula recognized this problem and began to encourage grassroots jihadists to focus on conducting simple attacks against soft targets. Nevertheless, grassroots jihadists are consistently drawn toward spectacular attacks, as seen in the Feb. 17 arrest near the U.S. Capitol of a Moroccan man who thought his handler, who was in fact an FBI informant, had equipped him for a suicide attack. Unlike most jihadists, other types of grassroots militants, such as anarchists, are far more comfortable conducting simple attacks with readily available items.

Personality traits and psychological profiles aside, anyone desiring to plan a terrorist attack must follow the attack planning cycle, which at certain stages will necessarily open them up to detection.

Athens – Unknown group claims metro bomb

Source: http://www.athensnews.gr/portal/1/53625

An unknown group called the Urban Guerrilla (*Antartiko Poleon*) claimed responsibility on Monday for an explosive device that was left on an empty Athens metro train at Egaleo on Saturday evening, but

police said the call could be a hoax.

"A man placed calls with two Greek TV stations [Skai and Mega], saying the device was the work of the Urban Guerrilla group and that other hits would follow," a police official said.

"There has been no such group in the past. It may be a credible threat or a hoax."

The anti-terrorist unit is investigating the incident.

A train driver found the device in a backpack on a seat on Saturday night.

The device, which was not activated, contained two small gas canisters with about 1.5l of petrol, a timer, wires and batteries, police said on Sunday.

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Editor's comment: The IED was "ready" but the ignition mechanism did not respond. One more proof that "it can happen to us as well!". Something that "authorities" are always forgetting resulting in mass media surprise and ridiculous analyses of various experts who have never been in the field. It might be a warning demo. It might be a preparatory operation for a new bombing in a different soft target. Remember when strengthen the door you weaken the windows! Now everybody is looking for suspicious parcels in the metro. **But, what about before?**

Ship Cargo Containers – Finding Out What's In Them Before There's Trouble

Source: http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/st-snapshots-ship-cargo-containers.shtm

Every day, thousands of cargo containers from around the world pass through our nation's sea ports carrying items we need, and possibly some that are not so welcome: drugs,

explosives, chemical, biological, or radiological weapons – even human cargo. The possible concealment of such items in containers led lawmakers to call for the screening of *all* ocean cargo containers—thousands per port per day.

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is charged with the critical task of securing the country from terrorists and their weapons while facilitating legitimate trade and travel, including the monitoring of what's in thousands of sea cargo containers as they pass through CBP screening. These containers must be inspected quickly and accurately, and without the business at each port grinding to a halt when they do so.

The DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) and its Transportation Security Laboratory (TSL) in Atlantic City, NJ, have developed a way to test technical solutions to this need: the **Container Security Test Bed (CSTB)** – an outdoor "laboratory" allowing researchers and developers

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from government, academia, and industry to explore novel ways to detect threats in a cargo container.

The CSTB is run by TSL engineers and simulates exactly the cantilever cranes used to

unload container ships. The CSTB allows a container to be picked up, moved, and put down in minutes, mimicking both the way and the timeframe in which each container is taken off a ship and put onto the dock.

"Give me the right tools – a gas chromatograph, a mass spectrometer, and an hour's time – and I can tell you what's in a 40-foot container," said Dave Masters, the S&T Program Manager who oversaw the creation of the Test Bed. "But a maritime container terminal can't spare an hour. It needs its cranes to move goods, not run experiments. The CSTB gives any new sensor system a real-world workout that replicates both screening the items in a shipping container, as well as the standard loading/unloading operations at a seaport. Sensors must survive the container being hoisted up, moved quickly, and slammed down – they cannot be so delicate that they cannot survive gritty port conditions."

S&T researchers are encouraging technology developers to test any kind of sensor at the CSTB. Detection technologies constantly undergo improvements in order to detect trace amounts of substances — and do so very quickly. Chemical-based sensors, currently in use for aviation security, may find trace amounts of explosives, drugs, or other illicit

substances, while laser-based methods that can "read" the physical properties of target molecules detection methods are also in development.

What is the specific challenge? S&T researchers are collaborating on techniques to get a representative sample of the air *inside* the container to the sensor itself. Representative samples of air inside a cargo container must be captured through an air vent standard containers have, and then that sample will pass through several variations of detection sensors. This technology was demonstrated to S&T by a joint effort between MIT and Lincoln Labs in 2010.

Alternatively, sensors may be built into the cargo container and programmed to send information on any illicit content to the receiving seaport while the container is still en route. In October 2011, ConSearch, LLC conducted a feasibility demonstration of their in-situ chemical and radiological detection capability. The demonstration consisted of simulating a trans-oceanic voyage of a 40-foot container that contained several threat types and employed a method of using multiple sensors to obtain a comprehensive view of the chemical/radiological content.

To evaluate explosive detection methods, TSL scientists are also are testing methods to present samples to sensors more quickly and accurately.

"We're exploring the art of the possible. The things we're doing, you can't do on paper. You need to get your hands dirty," says Masters.

The S&T Container Security Test Bed provides a unique opportunity for public and private sector partners to research and collaborate on novel ways to detect threats in a cargo containers—working together to make our shipping industry more safe, secure and resilient.

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Inside the RAF's airborne command centre that will guard Britain against terror threat during 2012 Games

By Tom Gardner
Source: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2108671/Our-Olympic-eye-sky-Inside-RAFs-airborne-command-centre-guard-Britain-terror-threat-2012-Games.html#ixzz1nyTvrTsv

This is the aircraft that will be on the frontline in the mission to protect spectators and athletes from terrorism during the Olympics.

The Boeing E-3 Sentry has helped the military carry out thousands of missions in war zones across the globe, including Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

But now, this state-of-the art aircraft, is set for a crucial role closer to home, guarding against threats during this summer's London Games.

The £179m plane, which features an all-seeing radar housed in the distinctive dome, enables armed forces to find, target and neutralise threats from land, sea or air from hundreds of miles.

Defence chiefs have drafted the fearsome aircraft in to help orchestrate the enormous task of keeping the public safe from all form of attack.

© AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Keeping a watch: A British Royal Air Force E-3D Sentry AEW aircraft has the distinctive dome. The unpressurized dome is 30 feet in diameter, six feet thick at the center, and is held 11 feet above the fuselage by two struts. It tilts down at an agle of 6° at the front to reduce its air drag during take-offs, and while flying endurance speed. The dome uses both bleed-air and cooling doors to remove the heat generated by electronic and mechanical equipment. The hydraulically-rotated antenna system spins six times per minute above the fuselage and houses pulse-Doppler detector enabling it to pick up dozens of air and land threats from hundreds of miles

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© PA

Control centre: The normal 18 man crew comprises four flight-deck crew, three technicians and an 11-man mission crew. The mission crew comprises a tactical director, a fighter allocator, three weapons controllers, a surveillance controller, two surveillance operators, a data-link manager, a communications operator and an electronic-support- measures operator

E-3D SENTRY AEW1 SPECIFICATIONS

Engines: Four CFM 56 2A-3 turbofans
Thrust: 24,000lbs each
Max speed: 460kts
Length: 46.68m
Max altitude: 35,000ft
Span: 44.98m
Aircrew: 18

The RAF operates seven E-3D Sentry aircraft in the airborne surveillance and command-and-control role. The aircraft are based at RAF Waddington, in Lincolnshire, where they are operated by number 8 and 23 Squadrons.

E- 3D has been extensively employed in the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) role.

The E-3D Sentry, known to the RAF as the AEW1, is based on the commercial Boeing 707-320B aircraft, which has been extensively modified and updated to accommodate modern mission systems.

Mission endurance is approximately 11 hours or more than 5,000 nautical miles without the need to refuel.

But the E-3D is the only aircraft in the RAF's inventory capable of air-to-air refuelling by both the American 'flying-boom' system and the RAF's 'probe-and-drogue' method.

Yesterday, Defence Secretary Philip Hammond visited the base to observe an air security training exercise and meet members of the armed forces who will be providing airborne security throughout the summer.

During the visit he stressed that security plans have been put in place for the Olympic Games to make sure the UK is 'prepared in every respect' to deal with any threats.

Philip Hammond said the potential of any outside threat or danger at this summer's Games was 'hopefully very unlikely' but said a huge operation was ready to deal with anything that might go wrong.

He said: 'Part of this exercise is making anyone with ill intention aware of the layered air defence that will be in place.

'We've got no specific threat to the Olympics at all and certainly no specific threat of any kind of airborne threat, but we want the world to know we will be prepared in every respect so that we will be able to ensure that the London Olympics are safe and secure.'

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He added: 'Ever since 9/11 we've had a routine plan in place to deal with the possibility of a rogue airliner.

'What we're doing for the Olympics is lifting the profile of that and adding additional layers of defence to the routine air defence strategy that we have in place 365 days a year.'
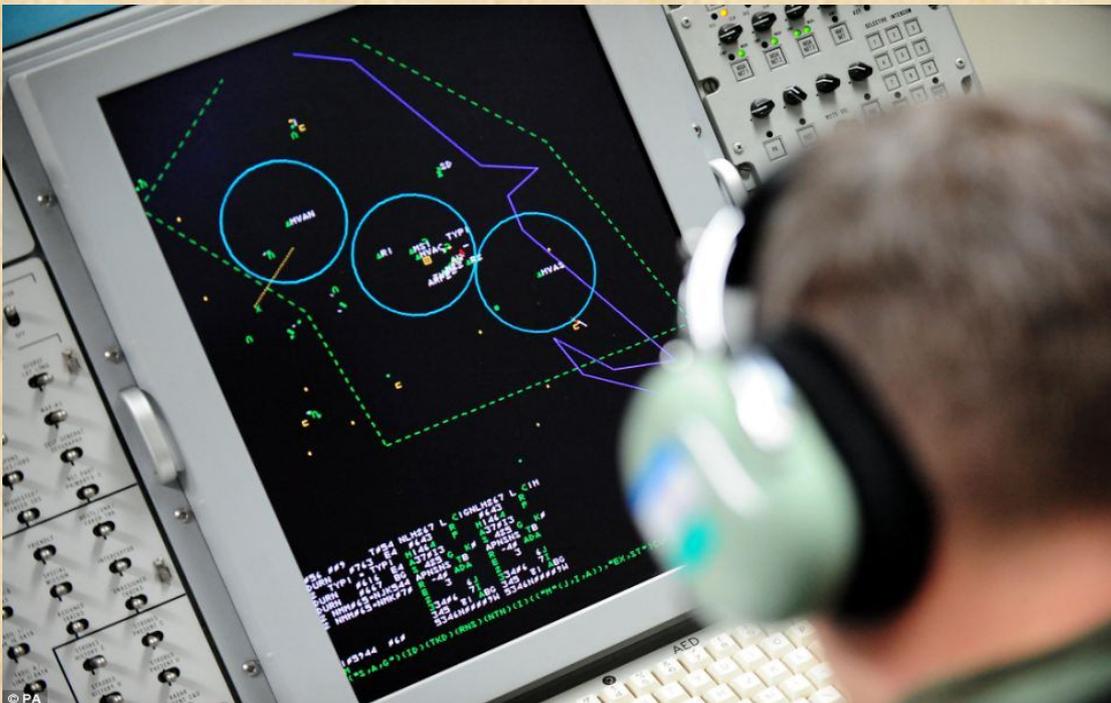
Mr Hammond sat with General Sir Nick Parker and E-3D Sentry personnel in the mission crew area and viewed a scenario in which a rogue aircraft headed towards a target area and RAF Typhoons were scrambled from Coningsby in Lincolnshire, as well as a helicopter and sniper who could either 'take out' the pilot or the rogue aircraft's engine.

Mr Hammond said a 'number of ministers' would be involved in the decision-making process if such action was needed and was confident military personnel could deal effectively with all scenarios.

Yesterday's exercise was also to provide reassurance to 'friends and allies' who were sending teams to the Games, he added.

Eye in the sky: The aircraft's mission systems can separate, manage and display targets individually on situation displays within the aircraft, or it can transmit the information to ground-based and ship-based units using a wide variety of digital data link. This data can be displayed, interpreted and acted upon within seconds

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Friend or foe: The plane is equipped with six colour display screens displaying radar and Identified Friend or Foe ground and aircraft, in real time, to the crew. This is processed and overlaid onto geographical maps to provide crew with a 3-D layout of the battle field and where the enemy and friendly troops and aircraft are operating

Briefing: Defence Secretary Philip Hammond, front left, gets talked through the two-hour test run of the exercise, codenamed Taurus Mountain, over Leamington, Dishforth, by crew members on the E-3D Sentry aircraft

Crucial role: The highly trained 18 man crew, seen leaving the one of seven E-3D Sentry aircraft at RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire, have carried out countless hours of training in preparation for their vital job during the Games this summer

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The E-3D Sentry carried out a two-hour test run of the exercise, codenamed Taurus Mountain, over Leamington, Dishforth and the east coast of the UK yesterday morning.

Flight Lieutenant Craige Curry said the plane and crew acted as the 'eyes in the sky' for areas where low-level radars could not reach and fed data back to the ground so a full security picture could be seen. He said: 'We've been involved in supporting numerous Olympics events over the years,' he said. 'We call them 'high visibility events', which the Olympics is this year.
'We're reasonably well-practised in terms of this kind of operation.'
Flt Lt Curry said the crew would be looking for anything and everything in the air during the Games.

THE ALL-SEEING RADAR

The plane's Northrop Grumman AN/APY-2 high-performance, multimode lookdown radar is able to separate airborne and maritime targets from ground and sea clutter.
One E-3D flying at 30,000ft can scan at distances of over 300 nautical miles.
It can detect low-flying targets or maritime surface contacts within 215 nautical miles and it can detect medium-level airborne targets at ranges in excess of 280 nautical miles.
The multi-mode radar provides lookdown surveillance to the radar horizon and an electronic vertical scan of the radar beam provides target elevation and beyond-the-horizon operation for long-range surveillance of medium and high-altitude aircraft.
These attributes allow it to determine the location, altitude, course and speed of large numbers of airborne targets.

'Anything that flies we'll be trying to build a picture of,' he said.
Aircraft and ground units will be part of the multi-layered air defences for the Games, including RAF Typhoon interceptors, RAF E-3D Sentry and Royal Navy Sea King surveillance aircraft.
Sniper-carrying RAF Puma and Navy Lynx helicopters, as well as RAF radar systems and air defence missile systems, will all be in place.
Once the flight had finished and landed back at RAF Waddington Mr Hammond viewed a number of military aircraft and met personnel.
Air Vice Marshal Stuart Atha said the principles that underpin air security plans for the Olympics meant extra assets were able to be brought in, and 'rapid and appropriate' decision making was the same as on any other day of the year.
Asked if he was confident air crews could manage and maintain security, he said: 'That's what today's about - it's about exercising.
'It's just like Olympic athletes are preparing for the Games - well so are we.
'We're preparing for the Games to bring all these different assets together so that we can be prepared to deliver a safe and secure Olympics, but also doing it from the air in a way that preserves the spirit and the culture of the Games.
'Hopefully you won't see us, we will be above and beyond your awareness.'

Making bus transportation more secure: Learning from Israel's experience
Source: http://transweb.sjsu.edu/project/2978.html

A new report on ground transportation security draws on the experience of Israel with Palestinian terrorists' attacks on buses; the report helps increase understanding of what can happen and of what can deter, prevent, and mitigate terrorist attacks against bus transit The Mineta Transportation Institute has published a report that discusses sixteen case studies of attacks against Israeli bus targets between 2000 and 2005, along with detailed statistical data. The institute says that
the 104-page report, *Security Awareness for Public Bus Security: Case Studies of Suicide Attacks*

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Against the Israeli Public Bus System, could help increase understanding of what can devices and methods for delivering them, and it raises questions for further discussion.
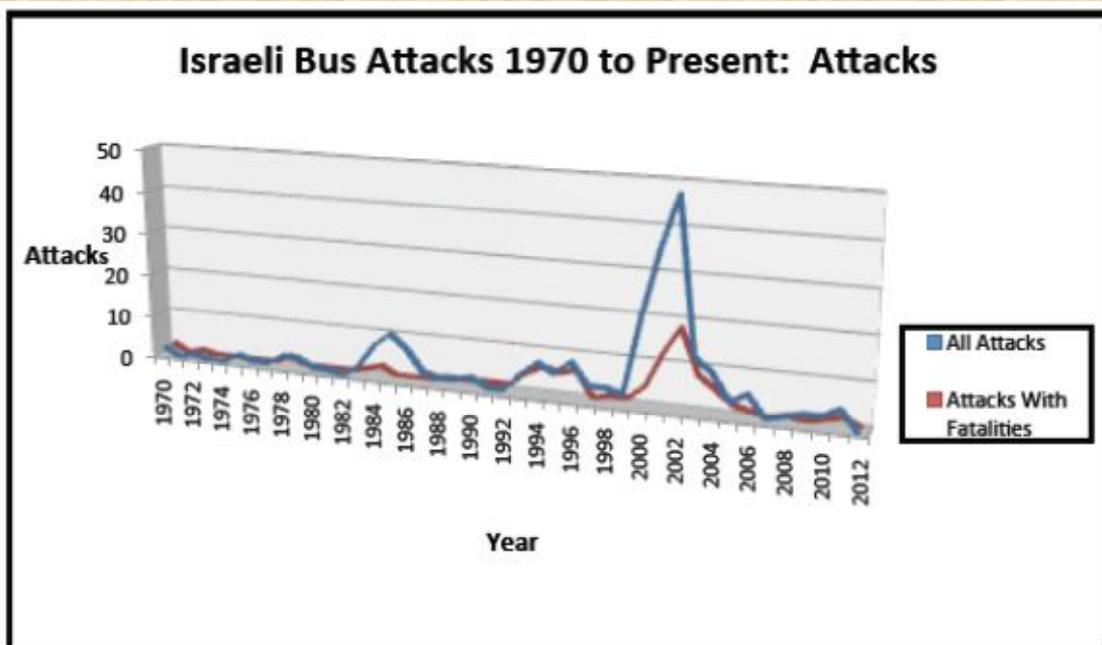
Israeli Bus Attacks 1970 to Present: Attacks

Figure 1: Number of Bus Attacks in Israel Since 1970
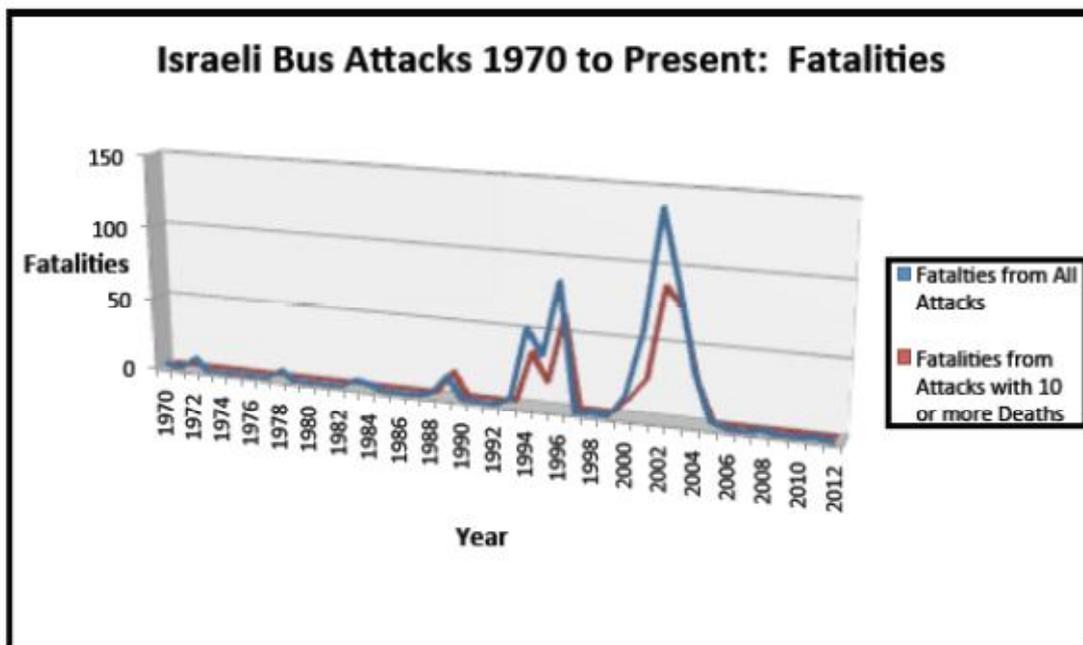
Israeli Bus Attacks 1970 to Present: Fatalities

Figure 2. Number of Fatalities from Bus Attacks in Israel Since 1970

happen and of what can deter, prevent, and mitigate terrorist attacks against bus transit. Principal investigators were Bruce Robert Butterworth, Shalom Dolev, and Brian Michael Jenkins.

The statistical data come from Mineta's (MTI) proprietary Database on Terrorist and Serious Criminal Attacks against Public Surface Transportation. The report also analyzes the effectiveness of different improvised explosive

"Public surface transportation has been and remains a primary target for terrorists throughout the world," said Butterworth. "MTI's database records 2,287 attacks against public surface transportation between January 1, 1970 and November 1, 2011, in which 7,581 people were killed and 29,212 were injured. Of these attacks, 65 percent were against buses, bus stations, and bus stops. They accounted for 51
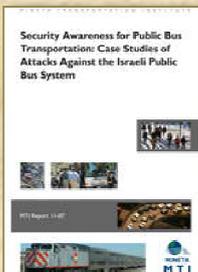
percent of the fatalities and 41 percent of the injuries resulting from terrorist attacks during this period."

Some key findings include:

- Suicide delivery was the dominant method of attack. In 12 cases, devices were worn by or carried by the attacker. In one case, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) was detonated by a suicide driver alongside a bus. In three cases, bombs were concealed in bags or other items left behind.
- The two most lethal and successful attacks, one of which was the suicide VBIED attack, each killed 17 people. Among the other successful attacks, one killed 16 people, one killed 15, and one killed 14. Six of the attacks were considered unsuccessful, and four were considered partially successful. One case involved only pre-attack surveillance, with no attack.

- In eight of the attacks that were considered failures or only partial successes, security measures and awareness played a role in stopping the attack or mitigating its consequences. In seven of those cases, poor attacker techniques and bomb-making were also factors.

All sixteen cases raise questions, which are purposely left for further discussion. Two questions are especially important, particularly for security officials and transportation operators in the United States: How applicable are these cases to the current environment in the United States? And how does Israel's experience compare with that of India, Pakistan, or Sri Lanka?

"While one might conclude that Western nations are not likely to experience the kinds of intense terrorist campaigns against public surface transportation experienced in Israel or in other developing countries," said Butterworth, "these targets remain attractive and must be considered in security planning."

NOTE: The complete 104-page report includes 64 maps, photographs, and other figures that illustrate each case study and can be downloaded from the Newsletter's website – "CBRNE-CT Papers" section.

Al Qaeda in Iraq mounts comeback

Al Qaeda in Iraq, the Osama bin Laden-inspired terrorist group that sank the country into sectarian violence five years ago, is trying to make a comeback in post-U.S.-occupied Iraq, analysts and intelligence officials say.

Washington is closely watching whether AQI, as it is called, in the next year can reassemble networks smashed by the U.S. counterterrorism campaign. American commandos and intelligence officers killed AQI leader Abu Musab Zarqawi in 2006 and then scores of other chieftains until, by 2011, the group was decimated.

But right after the last U.S. troops left Iraq in mid-December, the Sunni Muslim AQI claimed

responsibility for a string of deadly attacks, primarily against Shiites, whose sect dominates Iraq's government. Last week, an AQI spokesman claimed that it had carried out multiple bombings that killed 55.

A U.S. official told The Washington Times that AQI is carrying out more attacks this year than it did in the second half of 2011, when the U.S. military was pulling out. But the increased violence does not mean AQI is back to its old strength, the official said.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite, provided AQI and the minority Sunnis a recruiting mantra when he ordered the arrest of the country's highest-ranking Sunni leader the day after U.S. troops exited.

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"I think AQI, which had been severely battered by the U.S.-led counterinsurgency campaign, has regained strength," said James Phillips, a Middle East analyst at the Heritage Foundation think tank. "The Iraqi government, dominated by Shia political parties, has greatly contributed to AQI's revival by undercutting and persecuting Sunni politicians and tribal leaders. "This has strengthened AQI's limited appeal inside Iraq and allowed it to position itself more convincingly as the champion of Sunni Arabs against the Maliki regime, which is aligned with Shia Iran."

Expanding influence

A sign of al Qaeda in Iraq's resilience is that it

has had the manpower to send operatives inside Syria to target President Bashar Assad's regime. Al Qaeda thrives in power vacuums, something a deposed Mr. Assad might create.

"AQI, which always included many Syrians, Saudis, Jordanians and Yemenis, also is increasingly active inside Syria, where it seeks to pose as the champion of Sunnis against the Alawite-dominated Assad regime," Mr. Phillips said. "AQI had developed smuggling routes that brought jihadists, money and supplies into Iraq through Syria.

"Now it is moving men, weapons and supplies across the border in the other direction, supported by Sunni tribes that straddle the border."

The Assad family belongs to Syria's minority Alawite Muslim sect, while the country is majority Sunni.

CIA Director David H. Petraeus told Congress last month that "al Qaeda in Iraq has been a bit more active than it was for quite some period."

Army Lt. Gen. Ronald Burgess, who heads the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency, testified that Iraq's counterterrorism ability still needs U.S. help because AQI "is a capable and formidable foe."

"While the Iraqis have some capability, there are certainly some things that we are still looking at doing to help them from an intelligence standpoint," he said.

Sen. John McCain, Arizona Republican, who criticized President Obama for not negotiating a longer stay for U.S. troops, said AQI is quickly getting stronger.

"Violence is up significantly since the departure of U.S. troops," said Mr. McCain, the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "Al Qaeda in Iraq and violent Shia extremist groups are still very much active and threatening to Iraq's stability. It is increasingly difficult to argue that Iraq, to use the president's words, is, quote, 'stable and self-reliant.' "

"Just consider the scale and scope of these risks," the senator said. "Despite the remarkable damage inflicted on al Qaeda's core leadership by our military and intelligence professionals, al Qaeda officials - affiliates in Iraq, the Horn of Africa and the Maghreb - are growing stronger, more independent, more diffuse and more willing to attack American interests."

Ramzy Mardini, an analyst at the Institute for the Study of War who tracks Iraq's post-U.S. crisis, notes that AQI is not bombing just Shiites. It also has stepped up its assassinations of members of the Awakening Movement begun by Sunni local leaders to combat insurgents.

Mr. Mardini said four were killed during one week in January. They included Mullah Nadim al Jubouri, who defected from al Qaeda in Iraq and helped U.S. troops target AQI.

Abu Bakr

The killings are doing what AQI wants: creating more distrust between Sunnis and the Shiite-led government, Mr. Mardini said.

"Some Awakening members have argued that Baghdad is allowing the attacks to occur as it lags to find employment for the Sunni fighters," Mr. Mardini wrote in an analysis.

AQI has been able to find a new leader each time U.S. and Iraqi raids kill its chiefs.

The current leader is Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, whom the State Department in October added to its list of designated global terrorists and put up a $10 million reward for information leading to his killing or capture. After Navy SEALs killed bin Laden in May, Abu Bakr vowed to launch more than 100 attacks in Iraq, which continue to this day.

With the State Department's designation, Abu Bakr has reached the terrorist status of al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahri and Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar.

The Obama administration, however, is downplaying the chances that Abu Bakr can return AQI to its high rate of killings in 2006 and 2007.

"There are very few indications that AQI has taken advantage of the withdrawal of U.S. forces to make major improvements to its organization," said the U.S. official, who provided the assessment to The Times anonymously because of the subject's sensitivity. "Although AQI terrorist activity is higher this year than it was in the last six months of 2011, it is well within the normal levels of violence that we have seen since 2010."

Kenneth Katzman, a Middle East analyst at the Congressional Research Service, said there is not enough evidence to show AQI is back on top.

"We had these attacks even when we were there," Mr. Katzman told The Times. "To say they are making a comeback, I think, is not that accurate a way of describing it.

"They never were completely defeated and now they're acting. And they did act when we were there. I think what it is, is they may see more freedom of action now that we're not there. They may feel they have more political support from the Sunnis to go after the government now."

More former GITMO detainees back on the battlefield

Source:http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/03/06/report-more-former-gitmo-detainees-back-on-the-battlefield/

The number of former Guantanamo Bay detainees who have re-engaged in terrorist activities since their release has increased slightly according to a new report made public Monday by the director of national intelligence.

The congressionally-mandated summary shows that 167 out of 599 detainees who were transferred to other countries as of December 2011 are either confirmed or suspected of returning to the battlefield, fighting Western interests. That represents nearly 28% of those released.

But the report also indicates 14 of those people are dead and 54 are in custody. Most of the releases occurred during the Bush administration, and the increased recidivism rate applied mostly to those released detainees.

A similar study released in late 2010 indicated 150 of the former Guantanamo Bay inmates - 25% of the total - were either confirmed or suspected of engaging in terrorism after their release.

A Pentagon spokesman took exception to characterizing the current recidivism rate at 28%. Lt. Col. Todd Breasseale said the intelligence bar for someone confirmed of returning to terrorism is much higher. "Someone on the "suspected" list could very possibly

not be engaged in activities that are counter to our national security interests," Breasseale said.

There are currently 171 individuals still in custody at Guantanamo Bay. Approximately 60 detainees have been cleared for transfer to another country if the proper security arrangements can be made. And 30 Yemeni nationals are in conditional detention because of the current security situation in Yemen.

At a congressional hearing last year, Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence Michael Vickers said, much like the criminal justice system, there are inherently some repeat offenders among those detainees transferred to other countries.

He added the United States is dependent on those nations to carry through on their obligations. "But countries are sovereign, and we do our best to ensure that these conditions are met," Vickers said. "They are not always met 100% in some of these areas, so that is part of the challenge."

In the new report, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper acknowledged the possibility of problems with future transfers. "We assess that if additional detainees are

transferred without conditions from (Guantanamo Bay), some will reengage in terrorist or insurgent activities. Posing a particular problem are transfers to countries with ongoing conflicts and internal instability as well as active recruitment by insurgent and terrorist organizations."

That fear of detainees returning to the battlefield prompted Congress last year to place restrictions on the Obama administration's ability to transfer individuals from Guantanamo Bay.

Some members of Congress are particularly concerned about the possibility that the the administration is considering a proposal to transfer five Afghan detainees from Guantanamo Bay in an effort to open up discussions with the Taliban to bring about an end to the war in Afghanistan.

At a Senate Intelligence Committee world threats hearing last month, Sen. Saxby Chambliss, R-Georgia, worried that the detainees were too dangerous to be released from U.S. custody.

Clapper told Chambliss any proposed transfer had not been decided and would be part of ongoing consultations with Congress.

New cargo screening unveiled

Source: http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20120306-new-cargo-screening-unveiled

Smiths Detection's new HCVMe uses the power of a 4MeV X-ray accelerator and can scan loaded cargo containers with a steel

penetration of 200 mm

Smiths Detection has unveiled a next-generation X-ray cargo scanner which the company says is smaller, more cost effective,

and designed for easier operation in the field than traditional mobile systems.

The HCVMe, unlike standard radioactive source-based systems, uses the power of a 4MeV X-ray accelerator and can scan loaded cargo containers with a steel penetration of 200 mm (eight inches). HCVMe is also fuel-efficient, maneuverable, and light enough to be driven without any need for a U.S. Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

Mal Maginnis, president of Smiths Detection, said: "With budgets cut and screening environments for customs and border police increasingly complex and limited in space, this system sets a new

standard in every respect. It is the only one of its kind with no CDL required to drive or operate in the United States and its small footprint makes it the ideal for screening in city and other confined environments."

Feature Highlights
- Only 4MeV mobile screening system in the market with a gross weight starting from below 11.8t (26,000lbs)
- Compact footprint and ergonomic architecture for easy use
- Steel penetration up to 200mm (7.9in)
- Smaller than usual mobile scanners for an easy operation in city environment

Additional Highlights
- High throughput of up to 25 trucks per hour in mobile mode and up to 80 in pass through mode
- Economical fuel consumption
- Meets all US Federal Bridge Law regulations; no commercial driver's license required in North America

Optional
- Automatic radioactive material detection

Detecting Terrorist Surveillance
By Scott Stewart
Source: http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/detecting-terrorist-surveillance

As we noted last week, terrorist attacks do not materialize out of thin air. In fact, quite the opposite is true. Those planning terrorist attacks follow a discernable process referred to as the terrorist attack cycle. We also discussed last week how terrorism planners are vulnerable to detection at specific points during their attack cycle and how their poor surveillance tradecraft is one of these vulnerable junctures.

While surveillance is a necessary part of the planning process, the fact that it is a requirement does not necessarily mean that terrorist planners are very good at it. With this in mind, let's take a closer look at surveillance and discuss what bad surveillance looks like.

Eyes on a Potential Target
As noted above, surveillance is an integral part of the terrorist planning process for almost any type of attack, although there are a few exceptions to this rule, like letter-bomb attacks. The primary objective of surveillance is to assess a potential target for value, security measures and vulnerabilities. Some have argued that physical surveillance has been rendered obsolete by the Internet, but from an operational standpoint, there simply is no substitute for having eyes on the potential target -- even more so if a target is mobile. A planner is able to see the location of a building and its general shape on Google Earth, but Google Earth does not provide the planner with

the ability to see what the building's access controls are like, the internal layout of the building or where the guards are located and what procedures they follow.

The amount of time devoted to the surveillance process will vary depending on the type of operation. A complex operation involving several targets and multiple teams, such as the 9/11 operation or 2008 Mumbai attacks, will obviously require more planning (and more surveillance) than a rudimentary pipe-bomb attack against a stationary soft target. Such complex operations

may require weeks or even months of surveillance, while a very simple operation may require only a few minutes. The amount of surveillance required for most attacks will fall somewhere between these two extremes. Regardless of the amount of time spent observing the target, almost all terrorist planners will conduct surveillance and they are vulnerable to detection during this time.

Given that surveillance is so widely practiced, it is amazing that, in general, those conducting surveillance as part of a terrorist plot are usually terrible at it. There are some exceptions, of course. Many of the European Marxist terrorist groups trained by the KGB and Stasi practiced very good surveillance tradecraft, but such sophisticated surveillance is the exception rather than the rule.

The term "tradecraft" is often used in describing surveillance technique. Tradecraft is an espionage term that refers to techniques and procedures used in the field, but the term also implies that effectively practicing these techniques and procedures requires a bit of finesse. Tradecraft skills tend to be as much art as they are science, and surveillance tradecraft is no exception. As with any other art, you can be taught the fundamentals, but it takes time and practice to become a skilled surveillance practitioner. Most individuals involved in terrorist planning simply do not devote the time necessary to master the art of surveillance, and because of this, they display terrible technique, use sloppy procedures and generally lack finesse when they are conducting surveillance.

The main reason that people planning terrorist attacks are able to get by with such a poor level of surveillance tradecraft is because most victims simply are not looking for them. Most people do not practice situational awareness, something we are going to discuss in more detail next week. For those who do practice good situational awareness, the poor surveillance tradecraft exhibited by those planning terrorist attacks is good news. It provides them time to avoid an immediate threat and contact the authorities.

Keying on Demeanor

The behavior a person displays to those watching him or her is called demeanor. In order to master the art of surveillance tradecraft, one needs to master the ability to display appropriate demeanor for whatever situation one is in. Practicing good demeanor is

not intuitive. In fact, the things one has to do to maintain good demeanor while conducting surveillance frequently run counter to human nature. Because of this, intelligence, law enforcement and security professionals assigned to work surveillance operations receive extensive training that includes many hours of heavily critiqued practical exercises, often followed by field training with a team of experienced surveillance professionals. This training teaches and reinforces good demeanor. Terrorist operatives typically do not receive this type of training -- especially those who are grassroots or lone wolf militants.

At its heart, surveillance is watching someone while attempting not to be caught doing so. As such, it is an unnatural activity, and a person doing it must deal with strong feelings of self-consciousness and of being out of place. People conducting surveillance frequently suffer from what is called "burn syndrome," the belief that the people they are watching have spotted them. Feeling "burned" will cause surveillants to do unnatural things, such as hiding their faces or suddenly ducking back into a doorway or turning around abruptly when they unexpectedly come face to face with the person they are watching.

People inexperienced in the art of surveillance find it difficult to control this natural reaction. A video that recently went viral on the Internet shows the husband of the president of Finland getting caught staring down the blouse of a Danish princess. The man's reaction to being caught by the princess was a textbook example of the burn syndrome. Even experienced surveillance operatives occasionally have the feeling of being burned; the difference is they have received a lot of training and they are better able to control their reaction and behave normally despite the feeling of being burned. They are able to maintain a normal-looking demeanor while their insides are screaming that the person they are watching has seen them.

In addition to doing something unnatural or stupid when feeling burned, another very common mistake made by amateurs when conducting surveillance is the failure to get into proper "character" for the job or, when in character, appearing in places or carrying out activities that are incongruent with the character's "costume." The terms used to describe these role-playing aspects of surveillance are "cover for

status" and "cover for action." Cover for status is a person's purported identity -- his costume. A person can pretend to be a student, a businessman, a repairman, etc. Cover for action explains why the person is doing what he or she is doing -- why that guy has been standing on that street corner for half an hour.

The purpose of using good cover for action and cover for status is to make the presence of the person conducting the surveillance look routine and normal. When done right, the surveillance operative fits in with the mental snapshot subconsciously taken by the target as the target goes about his or her business. Inexperienced people who conduct surveillance frequently do not use proper (if any) cover for action or cover for status, and they can be easily detected.

An example of bad cover for status would be someone dressed as "a businessman" walking in the woods or at the beach. An example of bad cover for action is someone pretending to be sitting at a bus stop who remains at that bus stop even after several buses have passed. For the most part, however, inexperienced operatives conducting surveillance practice little or no cover for action or cover for status. They just lurk and look totally out of place. There is no apparent reason for them to be where they are or doing what they are doing.

In addition to plain old lurking, other giveaways include a person moving when the target moves, communicating when the target moves, avoiding eye contact with the target, making sudden turns or stops, or even using hand signals to communicate with other members of a surveillance team or criminal gang. Surveillants also can tip off the person they are watching by entering or leaving a building immediately after the person they are watching or simply by running in street clothes.

Sometimes, people who are experiencing the burn syndrome exhibit almost imperceptible behaviors that the target can sense more than observe. It may not be something that can be articulated, but the target just gets the gut feeling that there is something wrong or odd about the way a certain person is behaving toward them. Innocent bystanders who are not watching someone usually do not exhibit this behavior or trigger these feelings.

Principles of Surveillance Detection
The U.S. government often uses the acronym "TEDD" to illustrate the principles that can be used to identify surveillance conducted by counterintelligence agencies, but these same principles also can be used to identify terrorist surveillance. TEDD stands for time, environment, distance and demeanor. In other words, if a person sees someone repeatedly over time, in different environments and at a distance, or someone who displays poor surveillance demeanor, then that person can assume he or she is under surveillance.

However, for an individual, TEDD is really only relevant if you are being specifically targeted for an attack. In such an instance, you will likely be exposed to the time, environment and distance elements. However, if the target of the attack is a subway car or a building you work in rather than you as an individual, you likely will not have an opportunity to make environment and distance correlations, and perhaps not even time. You will likely only have the demeanor of the surveillant to key on. Therefore, when we are talking about recognizing surveillance, demeanor is the most critical of the four elements. Demeanor also works in tandem with all the other elements, and poor demeanor will often help the target spot the surveillant at a different time and place or in a different environment.

Time, environment and distance also have little bearing in an instance like the Fort Hood shooting, where the assailant is an insider, works at a facility and has solid cover for action and cover for status. In such instances, demeanor is also critical in identifying bad intent.

The fact that operatives conducting surveillance over an extended period can change their clothing and wear hats, wigs or other light disguises -- and use different vehicles or license plates -- also demonstrates why watching for mistakes in demeanor is critical. Because of a surveillant's ability to make superficial changes in appearance, it is important to focus on the things that cannot be changed as easily as clothing or hair, such as a person's facial features, build, mannerisms and gait. Additionally, while a surveillant can change the license plate on a car, it is not as easy to alter other aspects of the vehicle such as body damage (scratches and dents). Paying attention to small details can be the difference between a potential attacker being identified and the attacker going unnoticed.

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One technique that can be helpful in looking for people conducting long-term surveillance is to identify places that provide optimal visibility of a critical place the surveillant would want to watch (for example, the front door of a potential target's residence or office, or a choke point on a route the potential target frequently travels). It is also important to look for places that provide optimal visibility, or "perches" in surveillance jargon. Elevated perches tend to be especially effective since surveillance targets rarely look up. Perches should be watched for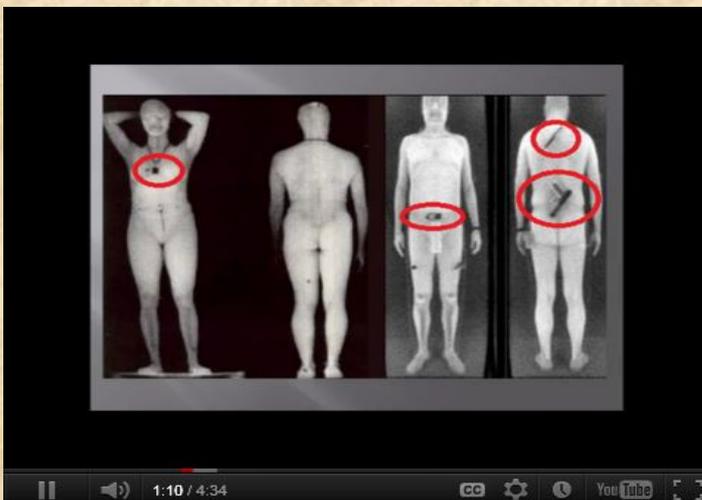 signs of hostile surveillance, such as people who don't belong there, people lurking, or people making more subtle demeanor mistakes.

Paying attention to the details of what is happening around you (what we call practicing good situational awareness) does not mean being paranoid or obsessively concerned about security. Living in a state of paranoia and looking for a terrorist behind every bush not only is dangerous to one's physical and mental health but also results in poor security. We are going to talk more about practicing a healthy and sustainable level of situational awareness next week.

Blogger claims to have found major flaw in TSA screening process
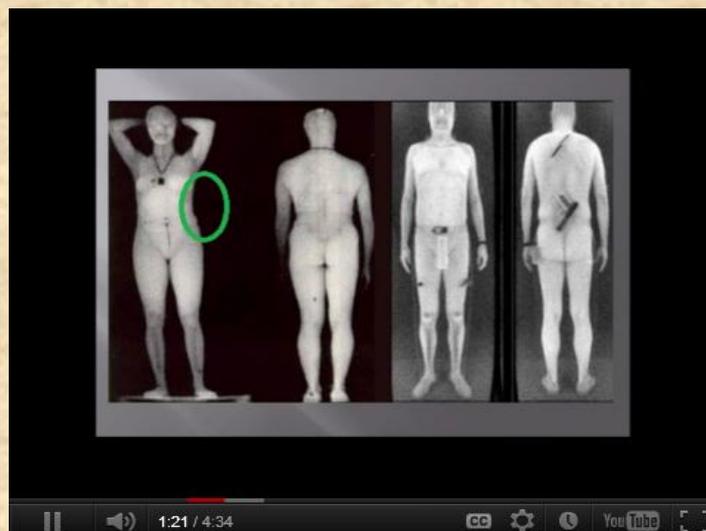Source: http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/320803#ixzz1oXTlc8zb

A major flaw in the TSA's screening process has been unmasked by a blogger. As shown in the video

below, a person could get a metal object through the TSA body scanners by placing the item to the side of the body, rather than the front or back.

The host of this video is blogger Jonathan Corbett, who runs the site TSA Out of Our Pants! According to Mashable, Corbett was one of the first people to sue the TSA over the implementation of the full body scanners. Corbett argues that they violate Fourth Amendment rights, as they could be classified as an unwarranted search or seizure.

This is not the first time the full body scanners used by the TSA have come under fire. The units are in use at 39 airports in the US, and do deliver small amounts of radiation when in use. The amount of radiation has been deemed safe, but critics are pushing for further studies.

The New American reported on a recent study of the TSA late last year, which argued that despite the agency's $60 billion budget, the screening program is based on mere "theatrics."

Vanity Fair also came to a similar conclusion, with their own Charles C. Mann able to create a fake boarding

pass that got him through security. He concluded that "all those [TSA] security measures accomplish nothing, at enormous cost."

Iran and al Qaeda's Shadowy Relationship Could Firm Up This Spring

Source: http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/02/17/iran-and-al-qaeda-s-shadowy-relationship-could-firm-up-this-spring.html

Sunni al Qaeda and Shia Iran despise each other, but in a scenario where 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend,' they could ally against the U.S. and Britain.

The British press is awash in reports of a secret al Qaeda alliance with Iran to stage a spectacular attack in Europe this summer, perhaps at the London Olympics. Al Qaeda's new leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, is said to be orchestrating the plot with Tehran to avenge his predecessor Osama bin Laden's death.

The relationship between al Qaeda and the Islamic Republic of Iran has been shrouded in mystery and secrecy for years. Al Qaeda operatives traveled through Iran for years before and after 9/11, and some found sanctuary there after fleeing Afghanistan in late 2001, although the circumstances of their status in Iran were always unclear. But the hints of occasional operational cooperation between al Qaeda and Tehran are mostly outweighed by the very considerable and public evidence of the deep animosity between Sunni extremist al Qaeda and Shia extremist Iran. Antipathy for each other is at the root of their ideologies and narratives and has been most visible in their competition for influence in Iraq and now in Syria.

The 9/11 plot is a good place to start to understand the mystery. The 9/11 Commission report concluded that there was evidence of contacts between bin Laden and Iran and its Lebanese Hizbullah ally dating back to his years in Khartoum in the mid-'90s. Bin Laden may even have met with the infamous Hizbullah terrorist Imad Mughniyah back then to share terror tricks. Three of the 9/11 hijackers reportedly traveled from Saudi Arabia to Beirut, then on to Iran and into Afghanistan on a flight with an associate of a senior Hizbullah official, according to the commission's report. Khalid

Sheikh Mohammad and Ramzi Binalshibh (two captured al Qaeda operatives who masterminded the 9/11 attack) confirmed that eight or 10 of the 9/11 hijackers at one time or another between October 2000 and February 2001 traveled through Iran on their way to or from Afghanistan for training purposes, taking advantage of the Iranian practice of not stamping Saudi passports.

Despite their animosity, al Qaeda, Iran, and Hizbullah can probably find new places to quietly cooperate, if only passively.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad speaking at Azadi Square in Tehran during a ceremony marking the 33rd anniversary of the 1979 revolution on Feb. 11, Abedin Taherkenareh, EPA / Landov

The bottom line of the 9/11 report is unequivocal, however, and it reports that both Mohammad and Binalshibh categorically denied any relationship between the hijackers and Hizbullah. On Iran the commission concludes, "We have found no

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evidence that Iran or Hezbollah was aware of the planning for what later became the 9/11 attack." So passive assistance not actual co-plotting.

On the other side of the ledger, the animosity between Iran and al Qaeda is public and abundantly clear. For al Qaeda and its allies like the Afghan Taliban, all Shia are not true Muslims and should be treated at best as outcasts if not apostates. Al Qaeda's first leader in Iraq, Abu Musaib al Zarqawi, was notoriously vicious in his hatred for the Shia, even earning a private reproach from Zawahiri for his indiscriminate attacks on Shia leaders, mosques, and processions six years ago. Al Qaeda in Iraq still regularly targets Shia innocents. At the same time, however, al Qaeda operatives regularly go through Iran to travel between Iraq and Pakistan.

Now in Syria, al Qaeda is backing the Sunni majority in its civil war with the Alawite-Christian minority alliance that backs President Bashar al-Assad. This week Zawahiri urged al Qaeda operatives from all over the region to rush to Syria to fight Assad's "pernicious, cancerous regime." Al Qaeda has been linked to car-bomb attacks on Assad's thugs in Aleppo and Damascus. Iran and Hizbullah, of course, are fully behind Assad.

So despite their animosity, al Qaeda, Iran, and Hizbullah can probably also find new places to quietly cooperate, if only passively. America and its allies are on a collision course with Tehran over Iran's determination to develop a nuclear-weapons capability. From Tehran's perspective, the war has already begun. Iran's nuclear scientists are being assassinated, its nuclear and missile facilities blown up, and its computers hacked into. Now its economic lifeline—oil exports—is being threatened. As the confrontation worsens, Iran is clearly looking for ways to fight back. The attempted bomb attacks on Israeli diplomats in India, Georgia, and Thailand this week, probably by Hizbullah teams, are one manifestation of Iran's efforts at retaliation.

Allowing al Qaeda greater use of Iranian territory for travel or for safe haven would be another. Such cooperation will be very hard to detect by Western intelligence agencies, and even harder to prove. As the U.S. puts pressure on al Qaeda's safe haven in Pakistan, Zawahiri and his terrorists are likely to start looking for an alternative sanctuary. Iran is right next door, and if it opens the door, al Qaeda might find the change of venue attractive, at least for parts of its infrastructure. In short, al Qaeda and Iran still hate each other, but they could find common cause to fight America and Britain.

Bruce Riedel, a former longtime CIA officer, is a senior fellow in the Saban Center at the Brookings Institution. At President Obama's request, he chaired the strategic review of policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2009. He is author of the book Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America and the Future of the Global Jihad and The Search for Al Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology and Future.

Ten Years Later: Insights on al-Qaeda's Past & Future through Captured Records: A Conference Report

By Joseph J. Simons, Adjunct, CRRC
Source: http://www.ndu.edu/inss/docUploaded/Event%20Report%209-11%20Conference.pdf

On 13-14 September 2011, the Conflict Records Research Center (CRRC) at the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS), National Defense University (NDU), and the Johns Hopkins University Center for Advanced Governmental Studies, hosted a conference to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Entitled "Ten Years Later: Insights on al-Qaeda's Past & Future through Captured Records," the conference explored what scholars and policymakers knew about al-Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) before 9/11 and what they have learned since, offering thoughts about the future of AQAM as well as directions for future research and policy.

The CRRC released 12 records from its AQAM collection in conjunction with the conference, providing primary-source material to scholars and researchers worldwide and helping show how captured records can contribute to

understanding America's adversaries on both the academic and policy-making levels. The conference featured addresses by government officials involved in counterterrorism policy-making and panel presentations by some of the world's foremost scholars and academics studying AQAM.   Key findings from the conference and the analysis of the captured records include:

1) Even though al-Qaeda has grown significantly weaker over the past ten years, it is becoming an increasingly innovative adversary demanding a more dynamic and nuanced American approach to counter-terrorism;

2) Al-Qaeda affiliated, "lone wolf" and rightwing terrorism is on the rise;

3) Winning the war of ideas, rather than just a military victory, remains paramount in defeating extremism and terrorism;

4) Government officials and scholars must continue to work together to fully understand AQAM and other threats to the United States;

5) The United States must continue to adapt in order to meet challenges from terrorism in the future;

6) Academics and other researchers must continue to ask hard questions in order to help policy-makers come to the best conclusions about how to deal with America's adversaries.

The CRRC will continue to provide primary source materials on AQAM, as well as on the Saddam Hussein regime, for academics and other researchers to employ in their historical and political studies of terrorism, authoritarian regimes, and other challenges facing the United States in the future.

NOTE: You can read the full report at the Newsletter's website – "CBRNE-CT Papers" section

Nigeria's militant Islamists adopting a disturbing change of tactics

Hostage killings suggest Boko Haram and other groups see themselves as offshoots of al-Qaida and model on Taliban

Source: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/08/nigerial-hostage-killings-boko-haram

A video grab showing Chris McManus surrounded by suspected terrorists in Nigeria. It has been confirmed now that he has been killed.

The kidnap and killing of a British and Italian hostage in northern Nigeria marks a worrying new development in the violence wreaked by the country's militant Islamists.

Responsibility for the abduction was initially claimed by a previously unheard-of group called al-Qaida in the Land Beyond the Sahel, but Nigerian security sources believe that the kidnappers came from a faction of Boko Haram, an Islamist sect responsible for almost 1,000 deaths since it launched an uprising in 2009.

According to Nigerian security sources, the hostages were being kept in the remote northern city of Sokoto at the time of the attempted rescue. The centuries-old Muslim trading hub has until now escaped the brunt of violence by Boko Haram, which means "western education is sinful" in the Hausa language of northern Nigeria. But several

hundred miles of porous and poorly policed borders with Niger makes Sokoto a haven for kidnappers from Boko Haram or al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, known as Aqim.

Both groups see themselves as offshoots of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida and loosely model themselves on the Taliban. But neither is a single, coordinated organisation, and each is divided into various factions more or less willing to

use violence to achieve their aims, analysts say.

Vast geographies and weak central governments mean that Nigeria and its northern neighbours have struggled to prevent ordinary citizens or criminal-minded terrorists from slipping across borders.

Roaming the vast deserts that span Niger, Mauritania, Mali, Chad and Western Sahara, Aqim operates largely unchecked by these under-resourced governments. But the Algerian-founded movement has yet to implant itself in Nigeria where militancy, to date, has been a localised phenomenon.

Officials say factions within each of the groups have been in contact with each other. According to Nigerian intelligence officials, members of the more radical Boko Haram factions have received training from Aqim in Algeria and possibly Afghanistan. Aqim is thought to have given Boko Haram advice on urban terrorist tactics and suicide bombings.

Aqim has perfected what analysts call a "kidnap economy", thriving off the abduction and ransom of westerners and Africans. It often snatches hostages in one country and moves them across one or more borders, ending up in Aqim bases in Mali. Reports suggest Chris McManus and Franco Lamolinara were moved around but remained within Nigerian borders, which makes it unlikely that Aqim was behind the atrocity.

To date, Boko Haram has shunned kidnapping as a cash cow or ideology. The group generally favours untargeted mass bomb attacks. But it has shown increasing sophistication in its campaign, graduating from crude bombs to more sophisticated improvised explosive devices. Is targets have also become more ambitious: an attack on the UN office in Abuja last year signalled that foreigners were considered legitimate targets.

The diversity of methods suggests, observers say, that the group is increasingly splintered. That raises the frightening possibility that the kidnappers are most likely an offshoot of Boko Haram mimicking Aqim's tactics. This could spell a new chapter of terror in the north of the country, mirroring the decade of kidnappings that plagued Nigeria's southern oil creeks until a 2009 amnesty. Most hostages taken by oil militants were held for ransom and released safely – but the jihadi ideology that fuels Islamist militancy would make such outcomes far less likely in the north.

PERSPECTIVES ON TERRORISM
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Perception Challenges Faced by Al-Qaeda on the Battlefield of Influence Warfare

By James J.F. Forest

Abstract

Many kinds of entities—including terrorists and insurgents—seek to influence perceptions and behavior among various target audiences, and have become increasingly reliant on the Internet in their efforts, incorporating social media, blogging, public video sharing and other online tools. This article is focused on the ideological messages that terrorist groups use to convey with these tools. Drawing from a study of Al-Qaeda, this discussion illustrates how ideologies of violence have certain vulnerabilities that can be exploited in order to degrade a terrorist group's ability to achieve its objectives. While crafting and disseminating counter-narratives can be a critical part of a counterterrorism strategy, it is also important to identify ways in which terrorists undermine their own central narratives and exacerbate pre-existing "influence warfare" challenges.

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Introduction

On any given day, we are inundated with a flood of attempts to influence our thoughts and behaviors. A wide range of entities—including governments, charities, neighbors, and companies trying to sell us products and services—compete against each other for our attention, support, loyalty and money. They use a wide variety of narratives, concepts, themes, images, sounds and so forth in their efforts to elicit cognitive and emotional responses that help their messages resonate among members of their target audiences, with a goal of influencing different kinds of behavior. Political parties try to secure your vote for their candidate or platform, while civic organizations try to rally communities to come together over locally important issues, like education, health awareness, or voter participation. Religions have probably the longest history of any organized entity in terms of trying to influence our values, beliefs and behaviors. In the world of commercial marketing, the financial stakes are high: Coca Cola battles for market share against Pepsi Cola; Nike tries to convince consumers that its products are better than Reebok; in the skies, Delta competes against United and American Airlines for a larger percentage of the traveling public.

Radical extremists are also competing for our attention and influence. They use indiscriminate violence, fear and intimidation to influence the policies and actions of societies and their governments. Beyond the violence, modern terrorist groups also spend considerable effort trying to influence us using conventional means of communication—especially via the Internet. Bruce Hoffman notes that "virtually every terrorist group in the world today has its own Internet website and, in many instances, multiple sites in different languages with different messages tailored to specific audiences."[1] Gabriel Weimann has described how these websites provide an online forum for indoctrination as well as the distribution of terrorist manuals, instructions and data [2]—evolving into what Evan Kohlmann calls a "MySpace-like social-networking hub for [extremists] intent on becoming the next generation of terrorists, hijackers and even suicide bombers."[3] In short, the Internet offers a variety of tools that terrorists and other violent non-state actors use to participate in the competition for influence.

All actors engaged in the competition for influence must, however, overcome a variety of challenges. To begin with, messages and messengers must be perceived by their target audiences as credible and legitimate. In order to influence our perceptions and behaviors, they must first get us to listen. Yet so many streams of information converging on our consciousness can be overwhelming and cause us to tune out: newspapers, radio, television, and even the Internet are basically channels that we can turn on or off. To preserve our sanity and avoid information overload/overwhelm, many of us have become selective of the communication channels we tolerate, especially when those channels make demands of us. Meanwhile, the goal of all these competing influencers is to keep us from turning to a different stream of information.

In this era of increasingly intense competition for limited attention span and limited time, the truth (which can be bland and unexciting) may be easily drowned out by a cacophony of fiction, conspiracies or mere entertainment, creating a distinct disadvantage for governments or educators. For example, a data-rich study will always get less attention among the general public than a dramatic scandal or a Hollywood star's sordid exploits. When our lives become more complicated (through recession, unemployment, war, natural disaster, etc.), our patience and attention span suffers further. Many of us are drawn toward narratives that offer simplification of complex realities. In many cases, the "us versus them" narrative common among terrorist and insurgent groups resonates among individuals, especially those who are grasping for someone to blame for complex difficulties they face.

Today, these narratives can be offered by anyone via the Internet, using websites, blogs, *YouTube* videos, *Facebook* pages, e-mail distribution newsletters and various other forms of social media.[4] In essence, anyone can be a potentially powerful "influencer" of perceptions and behavior; this greatly expands and complicates the competitive landscape. Further, the globalization of communication technology provides opportunities for one influencer to weaken or discredit another. One way of doing so is to draw attention to an adversary's counterproductive mistakes, things that are said or done on their behalf

that can undermine their legitimacy and credibility. Another is to offer a more compelling narrative, drawing potential supporters away. These are the kinds of things that take place in the arena of "influence warfare"—the struggle to shape perceptions in a war of ideas.[5]

For the counterterrorism community, the question becomes one of identifying the aspects of a terrorist group's challenges in this arena that can be made more difficult for them. Dell Dailey, until recently the State Department's counterterrorism chief, once commented that "terrorists' center of gravity lies in the information domain, and it is there that we must engage it."[6] A terrorist group must promote a compelling narrative that resonates among their target audiences, and must be perceived as more legitimate and credible than other competing forces within the same milieu. Their failure to do so dramatically reduces their chances of success or longevity; as Audrey Cronin and other scholars have noted, a loss of credibility is one of the key ways in which a terrorist group meets its demise.[7] In essence, combating a terrorist group should include an attempt to see the world through the eyes of the organization's leaders and see what they fear most, particularly in terms of their ideological vulnerabilities.

The Case of Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda offers an interesting case study of vulnerabilities and challenges that a terrorist organization faces in on the battlefield of influence warfare. Previous research has described how Al-Qaeda has pioneered new online efforts for strategic influence, from distributing its propaganda in dozens of languages to creating a central clearinghouse (*as-Sahab* or "the clouds") in order to coordinate the global effort.[8] Al-Qaeda leaders, supporters and what Jarret Brachman calls "jihobbyists"[9] all utilize multiple channels of communication to disseminate and reinforce one of its core messages: "think globally and act locally." Clerics have played a prominent role as well in this influence effort, e.g. Anwar al-Awlaki, whose online lectures and *Inspire* magazine articles promoted Al-Qaeda's ideology to a broad, English-speaking audience. Other so-called Internet imams of infamy include Abdullah el-Faisal, who was deported from Britain in 2007 for inciting racial

hatred, but still preaches online, urging his followers to kill Hindus, Christians, Jews and Americans; Sheikh Khalid bin Adbul Rahman al-Husainan of Kuwait, who encourages his followers to pursue martyrdom; and Abu Yahya al-Libi, a Libyan cleric who escaped from prison in Afghanistan in 2005, and is considered a key inspirational leader among Al-Qaeda members.[10]

These and other prominent voices of Al-Qaeda consider managing perceptions to be a vitally important effort, as Ayman al-Zawahiri explained in a July 2005 letter to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi: "We are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. We are in a race for hearts and minds of our *ummah*."[11] Al-Qaeda attempts to manipulate perceptions of legitimacy and the way people think and talk about it. Its leaders have different messaging strategies to support recruitment, coalition or affiliate relationships and, of course, trying to demoralize the enemy. Al-Qaeda also spends a great deal of time trying to deflect attention away from its own shortcomings (and as a terrorist organization that kills innocent people, the organization certainly does have a few shortcomings). Further, as a decentralized network organization, Al-Qaeda sometimes has to engage in "damage control" to protect its image from ill-conceived activities and mistakes caused by individuals acting in its name. The actions of al-Zarqawi in Iraq are one of several examples in recent years. Not only were the videotaped beheadings deemed repulsive throughout the Muslim world; his group's attack on three hotels in Amman, Jordan on November 9, 2005—which killed 54 people including many who were attending a wedding party—was particularly damaging to Al-Qaeda's image and provoked a massive public demonstration. In his statement responding to the public outcry, a defensive al-Zarqawi argued that Muslims should not have been at the hotels, which he called "centers of immorality."[12]

Because Al-Qaeda is decentralized, bin Laden, al-Zawahiri and others in the Afghanistan/Pakistan border region had and have little if any control over the violence carried out in its name elsewhere around the world.[13] Thus, the risks of counterproductive violence are greater than for other, more hierarchical terrorist groups. The

same is even more true for challenges in the non-violence influence warfare arena. Anyone can promote the Al-Qaeda image online in his or her own way, but this reduces Al-Qaeda's ability to ensure message consistency and cohesion of effort. Although its leaders want to exercise control, they cannot control what people say and think about them. Further, the Internet allows other voices to be heard, including those whose messages pose a direct challenge to Al-Qaeda's credibility and ideological resonance.

The remainder of this article explores a relatively simple premise: What kinds of things do Al-Qaeda's leaders want people – especially potential supporters – NOT to hear, think or believe? If we could read its leaders' minds, or hear their thoughts, what would we find them worrying most about? From a review of Al-Qaeda-affiliated websites, discussion forums, videos and other online resources, this analysis identifies 6 themes that reflect major concerns of the network's senior leaders and propagandists: (1) religious authority; (2) strategic authority; (3) group integrity and cohesion; (4) competing voices; (5) operational capacity; and (6) relevance. I shall discuss them in this order.

1. Religious Authority or Apostasy?

For Al-Qaeda's leaders, perceptions associated with religious legitimacy are absolutely critical. They must constantly convince themselves, their supporters, and those they are trying to recruit that Al-Qaeda serves God's will. In order to project an aura of pious and pure holy warriors, holding true to authentic Islam, they rely heavily on *fatwas*—religious rulings and decrees—issued in support of salafi-jihad ideological tenets. They often select specific passages from the Koran and try to use them (out of context) to justify their ideology.[14] Further, like all religiously-oriented violent groups, they make every effort to convince others that this is an epic struggle between good and evil, with God on their side (and of course, there can be no compromise allowed when it comes to doing what God demands). In their propaganda, they draw on a sense of crisis within the Muslim world, and argue that Islam is under siege—one that can only be lifted by true believers willing to join a global violent jihad.

Monitoring salafi-jihadist web forums reveals a wide range of religiously-oriented debates among the members. There is a huge issue of clerical credibility here; with so many self-declared religious "authorities" in the mix, we see a multidimensional competition for legitimacy. This competition leads to arguments and attempts to discredit others. Often, questions of legitimate interpretations of the Koran are raised. At the core of this is the reality that Al-Qaeda suffers tremendously when its members or supporters—not to mention prospective recruits—begin to doubt that God wants them to do the things that Al-Qaeda does.

In essence, Al-Qaeda's survival requires gaining and maintaining legitimacy within the Muslim world; failure to do so will inevitably doom their cause and the future of the movement. Thus, Al-Qaeda's leaders became noticeably defensive when Saudi Arabia's top cleric, Grand Mufti Shaykh Abdul Aziz al-Asheik, gave a speech in October 2007 warning Saudi citizens not to join unauthorized jihadist activities [15] - a statement directed mainly at those considering going to Iraq to fight U.S.-led forces. In May 2010, Saudi Arabia's top religious leadership, known as the council of Senior Ulema, issued a *fatwa* that denounced terrorism, including the financing of terrorist acts.[16] Also in Saudi Arabia, a government-supported program has enlisted hundreds of Islamic scholars-turned-bloggers to fight online radicalization by challenging the jihadist interpretations of the Koran on extremist social-network forums.[17]

Similarly, Sayyid Imam al-Sharif, a top leader of the armed Egyptian movement Islamic Jihad and a longtime associate of Ayman al-Zawahiri, published a book that renounces violent jihad on legal and religious grounds.[18] In his heated rebuttal, Zawahiri questions the timing of the book (as its author was in an Egyptian prison at the time), and claims that "it serves the Crusaders, Zionists and infidel Arab leaders by attempting to anesthetize the mujahideen and force them out of the jihadi field."[19] Abu Yahya al-Libi issed a statement indicating that Muslims ought to just dismiss this as a result of torture, brainwashing and blackmail.[20] As Abdul Hameed Bakier noted, this kind of response "demonstrates that al-Qaeda is seriously alarmed by the possible negative consequences the document might inflict on their ideology and the jihadi movement."[21]

In Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, Mufti Zainul Abidin issued a *fatwa* that declared the Taliban to be "out of Islam" as a result of its violence, its failure to follow Islamic teachings, and its pursuance of a *takfiri* ideology (the latter referring to the Salafi-jihadi practice of declaring fellow Muslims "infidels" if they oppose jihadist dogma).[22] These and other instances cause far greater problems for Al-Qaeda's leaders than any U.S. or Western leader's condemnation of their violent attacks. It also explains why several clerics in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and other countries have been murdered by Al-Qaeda members over the past decade. In essence, Al-Qaeda's leaders and fellow jihadists fear *fatwas* more than bullets.

2. Strategic Authority or Ineptitude?

 Al-Qaeda's core leaders also want to project (to their supporters and their enemies) an image that they are the competent vanguard of a powerful movement, with tentacles and cells all around the world. An occasional terrorist attack in some corner of the world—whether it kills dozens, hundreds or thousands—feeds this perception. For Al-Qaeda to remain viable, the group is not required to conduct a steady drumbeat of attacks against the United States or other Western countries; it just needs to conduct—or convince a small group of individuals to conduct—a terrorist attack at some location in the world that can be claimed as an Al-Qaeda initiative. At the same time, well-publicized failed attempts and disrupted plots (e.g. recent plots in Denver, Dallas, New York, Chicago, Detroit, Washington, DC and major cities in Europe) also feed this perception of a vibrant enemy with global reach. Encouraging this perception aids them by generating fear and causing governments to overextend and overspend on homeland security and counter-terrorism efforts, reflecting a core Al-Qaeda strategy that draws from Paul Kennedy's theories on how empires decline.[23] As Bruce Hoffman recently noted, "A key dimension of Al-Qaeda's strategy is economic warfare . . . it seeks to undermine our economy" through a prolonged war of attrition.[24]

This strategy is reflected in various kinds of Al-Qaeda propaganda, suggesting strategic agreement. However, analysis of Al-Qaeda documents captured in safe houses throughout Pakistan, Yemen, Iraq and in a number of other countries (and now stored in the Department of Defense's "Harmony" database) have brought to light a number of ideological and strategic debates among Al-Qaeda's top leaders.[25] These debates are mirrored by thousands of participants on jihadi-salafist web forums, whose doubts about strategy and tactics also lead to questions about leadership and integrity. In one captured document, the author, 'Abd al-Halim Adl, expresses concern that Al-Qaeda is "experiencing one setback after another," and placed the blame for this squarely on the shoulders of Osama bin Laden.[26] In a recent analysis of Al-Qaeda web forums, Gabriel Weimann noted that in 2007, members of the password-protected Al-Qaeda–affiliated forum *al-Boraq* began discussing why Al-Qaeda does not strike Iran, believing that doing so would fit within the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites.[27] There have also been debates between various Salafi Islamist ideologues, using websites and discussion forums as a means for airing their strategic disagreements. In one example, described by Weimann, prominent Sheiks Hamed al-Ali and Abu Basir al-Tartusi had an open disagreement about the strategic utility of attacking Arab regimes.[28]

Perhaps the most well-known example of strategic disagreements within Al-Qaeda is over the question whether the 9/11 attacks might have been a big mistake. Before 9/11, bin Laden and his close colleagues had convinced themselves and supporters that the U.S. was a paper tiger; that because the U.S. had pulled of Beirut in the 1980s and pulled out of Somalia in the 1990s, we would just be beside ourselves with grief and anarchy after a major attack on our homeland. That, of course, was a huge miscalculation. But instead of admitting their mistake, Al-Qaeda's leaders have to continue this false narrative that the enemy is weak, and that the Jihadists will eventually win this struggle, again in part because God is on the side of the true believers. The truth, of course, is that the West has proven far more resilient and far less vulnerable than Al-Qaeda wants to admit. And this suggests that Al-Qaeda really does not understand Americans as much as its leaders sometimes think they do. If that is the case, the strategy it pursues against the U.S. is based on incomplete intelligence, at best.

Another strategic mistake that Al-Qaeda does not want to admit is that promoting terrorist activity in Muslim countries has not been a way to mobilize the Muslim world. On the contrary, it has created coalitions between governments, and in some cases with other Muslim networks, who want to stop the jihadists. Al-Qaeda is trying to build a populist movement, and yet their terrorist attacks kill or alienate potential supporters throughout the Muslim world. Further, some Al-Qaeda members and supporters are troubled by the rather inconvenient truth that they have killed eight Muslims for every one non-Muslim infidel they have killed, as noted in a study by the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point.[29] The last thing that a Muslim radical group wants people to believe is that they don't really value Muslim life. A litany of prominent jihadist spokesmen, including Adam Gadahn, Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, Shaykh Atiyatallah, Tariq Azzam, and Hakimullah Mahsud, have all issued statements specifically addressing the issue of Muslim civilian casualties, often incorporating arguments about strategic and operational necessity. One of the most prolific Al-Qaeda ideologues, Abu Yahya al-Libi, offered a theological justification known as "Hukm al-Tatarrus" in his book *Human Shields and Modern Jihad.* Yet as Jack Barclay has noted, "the deployment of obscure religious concepts to explain the slaughter of large numbers of their co-religionists is unlikely to convince the wider Muslim public, particularly at the local level where communities are forced to continue their daily lives amid a climate of repeated bloodshed."[30]

On December 16, 2007, al-Zawahiri posted an open invitation for journalists and jihadists to ask him questions via the primary jihadist web forums. Thousands of questions were posted to popular password-protected websites like *Al-Eklass* and *Al-Hesbah*. On April 2, 2008, *As-Sahab* Media released the first part of Zawahiri's response in the form of a one hour, forty-three minute audio statement, which was accompanied by Arabic and English transcripts. Al-Zawahiri was very selective about the questions he chose to respond to. He also seemed to be particularly defensive in response to questions about killing fellow Muslims, arguing "We haven't killed the innocents; not in Baghdad, nor in Morocco, nor in Algeria, nor anywhere else."[31] The inconvenient truth for Al-Qaeda, however, is

that its members routinely promote, orchestrate and celebrate the murder of hundreds of innocent Muslim men, women and children each year. As President Obama noted in his June 2009 speech in Cairo, "more than any other, they have killed Muslims."[32] When debates erupt about this issue, the response from Al-Qaeda's leaders has been to try and discredit the source as illegitimate, a conspiracy promoted by the infidel enemies. They also routinely blame others for the killing. But the reality is that through its actions, Al-Qaeda has generated and strengthened an anti-jihadist response from Muslim populations worldwide.

3. Group Integrity and Cohesion or Self-Interested Criminals?

Al-Qaeda documents and web forum debates also reveal that there are individuals within the network who get preferential treatment—like better salaries and leadership promotions—for reasons that have nothing to do with merit. For example, there has for a long time been an undercurrent of resentment among Pakistani, Indonesian and other Southeast Asian members of Al-Qaeda who feel that the Arab members (especially the Saudis, Egyptians and Yemenis) are treated differently than the rest. In his recent testimony before Congress, Evan Kohlman notes that "As early as 1990, at Al-Qaeda's own guesthouses in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, mujahideen fighters began to loudly grumble that too many Egyptians—primarily al-Zawahiri's cronies—were being appointed to senior positions in Al-Qaeda."[33] Former Al-Qaeda lieutenant Jamal al-Fadl also noted during testimony in a U.S. federal court how Egyptians were viewed as receiving preferential treatment.[34] This sentiment was echoed by an angry Libyan fighter named Abu Tamin, who posted on a jihadist web forum "why [is] everything run by Egyptians?"[35] By the same token, some observers have noted that family members of Al-Qaeda's leaders have rarely been chosen to become martyrs or sent out on dangerous operations. These things challenge the notion of Al-Qaeda as an inclusive network representing the interests of all Muslims, and undermine the perceptions of fairness and integrity that the network's leaders want to convey.

And on a related note about perceptions of integrity, we know from court records, interrogation interviews

and captured documents that there are various levels of corruption and malfeasance within Al-Qaeda's rank and file. These information sources have revealed numerous cases of embezzlement, counter-productive violence, insubordination, criminal activity (including drug running) and other activities that undermine the desperately promoted perception of Al-Qaeda members being devout Muslim "holy warriors." The aforementioned Jamal Ahmed Al Fadl stole money from Al-Qaeda, got caught, went on the run, and approached the U.S. government in an attempt to save himself and his family. Khalid Shaykh Muhammad—the mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks—was a flamboyant, globe-trotting womanizer and drinker who spent lavishly and stayed in plush hotels until his 2003 capture in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.[36] A Saudi militant captured in Iraq complained that he had been falsely promised there would be long lines of Iraqi women willing to service him,[37] inadvertently suggesting that his motivations for joining the jihad may have been self-interest rather than defense of the *ummah.*

In order for Al-Qaeda to convince its intended audiences of its status as a vanguard of jihadists defending the global Muslim community, it must establish and sustain a perception of integrity, worthy of trust and respect. The words and actions of those who have answered the call to jihad have, at times, created difficulties in shaping these kinds of perceptions. As many of us will recognize in our personal experiences, trust is much easier to break than to build. On an organizational level, Al-Qaeda has a significant challenge with regard to building and maintaining trust within the Muslim community.

4. Righteous Confidence or Fear of other Prominent Muslim Voices?

 Further complicating its relationship with the Muslim community is Al-Qaeda's apparent superiority complex, which is manifest in the many ways that its leaders are constantly criticizing other radical Islamist groups, like Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, calling them stupid and ineffective. Ayman al-Zawahiri in particular has repeatedly criticized Hamas for its embrace of democratic politics, among other things.[38] As a result, many extreme Islamists—including Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood—have a deep animosity toward Al-Qaeda. Pundits and politicians too often

lump all "radical Islamists" into a single category, implying that they are all of the same mindset. This is dangerously misleading. It is a fact that Hamas has consistently rejected even the suggestion that they align with Al-Qaeda, while leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood in several countries have consistently condemned Al-Qaeda's actions and leadership.

Indeed, attacks carried out by Al-Qaeda affiliates in Pakistan, Indonesia, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and elsewhere have not mobilized a unified Muslim *ummah* to the cause. Instead terrorist attacks have driven wedges of ideological disagreement that only serve to benefit nations prosecuting the global war against them. Moreover, Al-Qaeda has failed to gain traction in Syria, Lebanon, or the Palestinian Territories, and it has lost its tenuous footholds in Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. For years, Al-Qaeda leaders have courted the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) as an attempt to gain another affiliate group in the Maghreb, but leaders of the LIFG have consistently rejected such overtures. In 2009, the group even released its own doctrinal statement, a "New Jihad Code," which challenged several core tenets of Al-Qaeda's religious ideology. According to the 417-page document, "Jihad has ethics and morals because it is for God. That means it is forbidden to kill women, children, elderly people, priests, messengers, traders and the like. Betrayal is prohibited and it is vital to keep promises and treat prisoners of war in a good way. Standing by those ethics is what distinguishes Muslims' jihad from the wars of other nations."[39] As CNN's Nick Robertson and Paul Cruickshank reported, the code was circulated among some of the most respected religious scholars in the Middle East and has been given widespread backing.[40]

A superiority complex is usually a symptom of deep fears and insecurities. This also appears to be the case with regard to Al-Qaeda's leaders. They fear the power of competing voices in the Muslim world, particularly those whose credibility exceeds their own. Al-Qaeda's leaders despise the Muslim Brotherhood and other major organizations in the Islamist milieu precisely because they are listened to by—and have influence over—millions of Muslims throughout the world. These organizations compete against Al-Qaeda on the battlefield of influence warfare and can make it

more difficult for Al-Qaeda to achieve the level of global support in the Muslim community that is necessary before its strategic objectives can be achieved.

Counterterrorism policymakers in the West have recognized the importance of drawing potential support and attention away from Al-Qaeda and its messages of violent extremism. As a consequence, we have seen in recent years increasing support for grassroots efforts to promote alternative narratives. Prominent examples include the *Alliance of Youth Movements, Sisters Against Violent Extremism, Global Survivors Network,* and the *Quilliam Foundation*.[41] Another notable effort is the *Radical Middle Way* - an organization of young British Muslims who have rejected the Salafi-jihadist interpretation of the Qur'an and are trying to consolidate a mainstream response to fundamentalist Islam. Their public events and Internet activities are funded by the sale of music videos, and are being touted as an example of how to weaken the resonance of al-Qaeda's ideology among youth.[42] Similarly, in Indonesia, Ahmad Dhani—the leader of the immensely popular rock band Dewa—has used music to influence millions of fans, encouraging them to resist the tide of religious extremism. As Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid—former president of Indonesia—observed, "Dhani and his group are on the front lines of a global conflict, defending Islam from its fanatical hijackers [and helping] to rescue an entire generation from Wahhabi-financed extremists whose goal is to transform Muslim youth into holy warriors and suicide bombers."[43] In sum, many Muslim political and grassroots organizations challenge Al-Qaeda's ability to dominate the influence arena, and Al-Qaeda despises them for it.

5. Operational Capacity or Amateur Hour?

Similar to the challenge of promoting perceptions of strategic competence and personal integrity, Al-Qaeda is also constantly struggling to project an image of robust operational capabilities. In order for Al-Qaeda's leaders to get people to believe in them, they have to project an air of confidence and competence. They really do not want anyone to think that they are amateurs, not warriors. Hence, when newspapers report on amateurish tactics and failed plots, this is worrisome to Al-Qaeda. Further, there are already widespread concerns about potential ineptitude (or

perceptions thereof) among Al-Qaeda's rank-and-file. To be sure, the Arab mujahidin had little to do with Soviet troops leaving Afghanistan in 1989, but they did acquire useful skills in conducting irregular warfare against a superior enemy. Many of these veterans formed the core of Al-Qaeda at the turn of the century, and have been the focus of various post-9/11 intelligence and military actions. But since then, the consistent call "come join the global jihad" has rarely yielded recruits with practical skills, military training or experience, or specialized knowledge of value to the organization. Most often, these new recruits do not even bring money or useful intelligence—all they offer is a desire to join the cause and do something. This is why many of them were put into the pipeline for training as suicide bombers, particularly in Iraq. Some jihadists can avail themselves of opportunities to learn in rudimentary training camps in Pakistan, but more often it appears that events in Iraq and Afghanistan have provided much-needed "on the job training" for these recruits.

Another concern about Al-Qaeda's operational capabilities stems from a lack of knowledge about their declared principal enemy, the United States. This lack of knowledge is reflected in several publications, such as the Al-Qaeda training manual *The Encyclopedia of Jihad.* Under the "Assassination Training" section, the author advises that a good way to suffocate an American in public is through a pretend pie fight where instead of using a pie, the attacker uses quick-drying foam, which can then be thrown "at the opponent's face as if [he] is having a food fight." Nobody will notice, the author writes, "because [Americans] will be laughing at what they think is a pie throwing food fight game, which is a scene they are accustomed to." Even some of the most ambitious efforts to analyze the United States have fallen short. For example, in 2006 Muhammed Khalil al-Hakaima published a 152-page study of how the U.S. intelligence system works, and what the intelligence community can and cannot do legally under U.S. law.[44] However, he relied mainly on information gained from conspiracy websites and other dubious sources. As a result his report contained bogus information—e.g. how South Korean intelligence allegedly influences America's national security agencies through the *Washington Times,* a newspaper controlled by the

Unification Church.[45]
Similar to the challenges of manipulating perceptions of capabilities, Al-Qaeda's leaders ask for money *all the time* because they are desperate for cash; none of them have jobs, after all. Al-Qaeda's central organization is becoming increasingly reliant on local and regional affiliate groups, like Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, not only to conduct operations, but also to collect and transfer money. A recent story in *Forbes* magazine highlighted how these affiliate groups mainly engage in criminal activity, from trafficking to kidnapping, in order to raise money for the cause.[46] At the same time, Al-Qaeda's leadership needs people to believe that it's all about pursuing God's will; they do not want people to believe that a *primary objective* of the organization is to acquire money and political power, without which the organization is likely to decay and fall apart, just like most terrorist groups throughout history.

Overall, a key challenge for Al-Qaeda involves trying to advance the organization's objectives with constrained financial resources and a restricted knowledge base among its personnel. At the same time, they need to project an image of competence and capability, in order to attract new recruits. Doing so in the midst of evidence to the contrary is a major challenge for Al-Qaeda's propagandists.

6) Relevance

Finally, at a core level, Al-Qaeda's leaders fear that the Muslim world will someday view them as incapable of doing anything relevant. As Brian Jenkins recently observed, "these virtual jihadists are locked into a closed-loop discourse on the Internet that is increasingly irrelevant" and their biggest fear is that one day, no one will really be listening.[47] A catalyst for the attacks on 9/11 was that Al-Qaeda's leaders felt a need to prove themselves to the Muslim world that they could support their words with deeds. Having captured center stage, they reaped the whirlwind of military-led responses and intelligence gathering that has seriously degraded Al-Qaeda's operational capabilities. Since then, Al-Qaeda's leaders have tried mightily to keep a spotlight on themselves and their self-appointed vanguard group of "knights" by issuing periodic audio and video statements and encouraging a viral marketing campaign to

support the global spread of their ideology. They clearly recognized the risk that, having been unable to orchestrate a follow-on attack equivalent (or greater) in scope and scale as 9/11, perceptions of their prominence and capabilities within the Muslim world are likely to diminish. Combined with the concerns described earlier about organizational ineptitude and opportunities squandered, this impatience among its followers may pressure Al-Qaeda's leaders into hasty, desperate and sloppy decision-making, or even to a rapid downward spiral toward atrophy and disintegration.

The perception of increasing irrelevance has become more pronounced following events in the Arab World this past year, the so-called "Arab Spring." A core argument of Al-Qaeda has been that corrupt, Western-backed regimes can only be changed through the use of terrorist attacks to mobilize the *ummah*. But in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, change has taken place without any meaningful involvement whatsoever by Al-Qaeda. This, in essence, discredits Al-Qaeda's ideology, as John Brennan has noted.[48] As Eric Schmitt and Thomas Shanker have highlighted in their recent book *Counterstrike,* the U.S. counterterrorism effort has tried to seize the opportunity this provides to engage in the influence warfare arena. The Department of State's new Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications produced an online video, posted to *YouTube* in February 2011, which spliced together scenes of jubilant protesters celebrating the resignation of president Hosni Mubarak with a videotaped statement in 2008 from Ayman al-Zawahiri insisting that "there is no hope to remove the corrupt regimes in Muslim countries except by force." When Zawahiri asked "Let anyone who disagrees give me a single example," the video clip shifted to the jubilant throng in Cairo's Tahrir Square. Forty-eight hours after the video was posted, it had garnered 42,000 hits.[49]

Individual doubts and fears within any organization undermine confidence. Within Al-Qaeda, there are already a wide variety of faults and ideological contradictions that make it difficult to attract new recruit or financial support – let alone achieve their aspiration for an Islamic caliphate. When major events serve to further undermine the credibility and resonance of the professed ideology, such difficulties

are exacerbated. And when such difficulties become insurmountable, the propagandists will have nowhere to go, no capacity for influencing the Muslim world in any way beneficial to Al-Qaeda. It will cease to be relevant, like so many terrorist groups before them who lost contact with their purported constituencies.

Conclusion

To sum up, terrorists compete for attention and support against all other entities (including other terrorists) that seek to influence their target audiences. While it is critical to appreciate the central tenets of a terrorist organization's ideology and strategy (and the ways in which their leaders try to manipulate perceptions in support of it), it is also important to understand how the organization's leaders try hard to protect their image, and control what people say and think about them.

The case of Al-Qaeda represents an example of influence warfare. Counterterrorism efforts should seek to understand what terrorist groups do to try and shape perceptions, and what the group appears to be most defensive or concerned about. The goal should then be to exploit ideological vulnerabilities, reducing potential for ideological resonance, diminish the group's influence capabilities, and drive wedges in the solidarity of the movement that can help undermine and discredit its mobilizing ideology.

The Internet provides new opportunities to exacerbate a terrorist group's influence warfare challenges. Al-Qaeda strategists like Abu Musab al-Suri have consistently encouraged the followers of the movement to use the Internet for mobilizing the *ummah*, arguing that communications via open source channels empowers the movement by distributing the ideology as well as strategically or tactically useful knowledge. However, the ability for virtually anyone to communicate on behalf of the movement introduces a potential struggle for the power to shape the message and the direction of the movement. This has emboldened some individuals from within the community of radical muslims to voice their disagreements with Al-Qaeda tactics or strategy.

Overall, we should keep in mind the benefits that can be derived by influencing the "street perception" of a terrorist organization. A counterterrorism communication strategy could include damaging perceptions of the organization's strategic authority, religious credibility, operational competence, financial integrity, and so forth. In many cases, the truth is what the terrorist groups should fear most. And the truth is that throughout the history of terrorism, across the entire spectrum of violent ideologies, it has been extremely rare for an organization to successfully achieve its strategic objectives through the use of terrorist violence. By effectively engaging Al-Qaeda in the influence warfare arena, we can diminish its ability to survive, and thus help them more rapidly to meet its inevitable demise.

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Did jealous wife and deputy betray bin Laden?

Source: http://news.yahoo.com/did-jealous-wife-deputy-betray-bin-laden-104200779.html

Osama bin Laden spent his last days sidelined by Al-Qaeda and slipping into dementia, possibly betrayed to the Americans by a jealous wife and his own deputy, a Pakistani investigator says.

Retired brigadier Shaukat Qadir says he spent eight months investigating the Al-Qaeda chief's life in Pakistan, using his army connections to visit the villa where he lived and died, and securing access to confidential documents.

He says he spoke to Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agents who interrogated bin Laden's wives and saw their interview transcripts, all thanks to a close relationship with Pakistan's army chief, General Ashfaq Kayani.

He has no evidence, but offers a tantalising image of a frail man resigned to death and betrayed through one of his wives in an Al-Qaeda plot -- which if true would shed new light on the demise of the world's most-wanted man. "Al-Qaeda decided to retire him in 2003. He was going mentally senile. From 2001, he had some kind of degenerative disease and was coming up with fantasies," Qadir said.

He says his theories are his alone, but admits he may have been manipulated by the army and acknowledges that his account suits the ISI, which is still fending off suspicions of incompetence or complicity in sheltering bin Laden.

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Pakistan was humiliated by the covert American operation that killed the Al-Qaeda leader in the early hours of May 2, practically on the doorstep of the country's elite military academy in Abbottabad where he lived for five years.

Bulldozers moved in to demolish the compound under the cover of darkness on February 25, which observers took as a sign that Pakistani authorities want to consign the physical evidence of their embarrassment to oblivion.

Qadir says his investigation took him to the lawless tribal belt on the Afghan border, Al- Qaeda's chief sanctuary for the past 10 years, where he served during his time in the army before his retirement in 1998.

Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Egyptian doctor often considered the real brains behind Al-Qaeda, "got fed up and decided to sideline" bin Laden when the leader started losing his mental faculties after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Qadir says bin Laden moved frequently between hiding places in northwest Pakistan before Al-Qaeda decided Abbottabad was the perfect spot and built a home shielded by a towering wall for him, two of his wives and their children.

Bin Laden moved into a bedroom on the third floor with his youngest and reputedly favourite wife, Amal Abdulfattah, the Yemeni he married in 1999 and who gave birth to two children in Abbottabad.

For years, Qadir believes, the family got on well, but things changed in March 2011 when bin Laden's older Saudi wife, Khairia, suddenly turned up for the first time since the family was separated in late 2001.

At that time, she had fled Afghanistan into Iran, rather than into Pakistan with the rest of the family.

Qadir says the Iranians released her in late 2010 and she returned to her husband, but first, spent several months in an Al-Qaeda camp in Afghanistan.

The five-times married and twice divorced bin Laden shared a room with his youngest wife, Amal Ahmed Abdel-Fatah al-Sada, seen left in an undated passport photo

Two months after she arrived, the Americans raided the house. Qadir is convinced that Khairia betrayed her husband.

"Everything began to happen when Khairia arrived," he said. "Everybody had a problem with her. Before, the two other wives were living comfortably."

Bin Laden's grown-up son, Khalid, born to another Saudi wife, was also suspicious, Qadir said.

"He kept on asking her 'why have you come? What do you want from him?' She just responded 'I have one more duty to perform for my husband'.

"Khalid told his dad: 'I suspect she's going to betray you.' Bin Laden answered 'so be it'."

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Bin Laden tried to persuade the other wives to leave for their own safety, but they refused, Qadir said.

The United States says it was tipped off much earlier by an Al-Qaeda courier. But Qadir contradicts that, stating that Zawahiri may have used Khairia as bait for the Americans.

The Americans managed to intercept one of Khairia's phone calls, leading them to believe bin Laden was in the compound, he thinks, adding that Bin Laden's long-serving Egyptian deputy was consumed by personal ambition.

Are Jihadists Crazy?
By Teri Blumenfeld
Source: http://www.meforum.org/3190/are-jihadists-crazy

Muslims who kill in the name of their religion frequently evade punishment in Western courts

The absurdity of the current approach to jihadist trials can be seen in the case of Carlos Bledsoe. On trial for killing U.S. Army recruiter William Long, Bledsoe complained of undue pressure to plead insanity: "I wasn't insane or post-traumatic." The killing was "justified according to Islamic laws and the Islamic religion," Bledsoe wrote.

by pleading insanity or mental incompetence. Jurors, judges, and forensic psychiatrists are prone to accept the claim that some form of mental incapacity, not religious belief, accounts for "homegrown" jihadist terrorism in North America and Europe.

This state of affairs results from the failure by prosecutors to frame acts of jihadist violence as expressions of faith. This failure to prosecute jihadists vigorously stems from several sources: a deep-rooted, Western reluctance to impugn religion; a cult of political correctness; and culturally naïve wishful thinking. Viewing jihadists as crazy offers a comfortable conceit that ignores the stark reality that disaffected but sane Muslims are seduced by an ideology that espouses violent hatred of Western civilization.

Lone Wolf Jihadists

Jihadism is a supremacist ideology that seeks to bring about the establishment of a global Islamic state and the application of Islamic law, the Shari'a. It relies both on political efforts and on acts of violence against "infidels." According to terrorism specialist Steve Emerson's review of Justice Department statistics,[1] radical Islamists account for more than 80 percent of all terrorist convictions in the United States since the 9/11 attacks.[2]

In the past, most jihadist violence was carried out by organized terror networks. Today, however, the most effective means of striking the United States is to convert and radicalize U.S. citizens and residents into carrying out terrorist attacks on their own. So-called "lone wolf" jihadists are typically radicalized through local, Islamic institutions and the Internet (chat rooms, blogs, social networking sites, etc.) where religious teaching, propaganda videos, and bomb-making directions are disseminated widely. Some go abroad for further instruction; others simply download a "how-to" manual.

Perhaps the most influential source of contemporary jihadist indoctrination was the late Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen whose sermons have been directly linked to more than a dozen terrorist plots.[3] His message, which lives on in cyberspace, is simple:

We will implement the rule of Allah on earth by the tip of the sword. We need men who are willing to go all the way and not hold back anything from Allah. The religion of Allah cannot be given

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victory by part-time service. This is not a weekend religion. The contract is to sell our souls to Allah. The compensation is paradise.[4]

While the lone wolf jihadist usually acts alone from an operational standpoint, he is part of a well-defined, Internet-based pack whose killings are often meticulously premeditated. He may plan the attacks on his own, but he does so with the instruction, support, and direction of a greater community of radicalized Islamists—and with the tacit approval of a significant percentage of Muslims (well over ten percent by most estimates)[5] who admire Islamic terrorists. The Internet enables lone wolf jihadists to acquire the "networks of support and ideologies of validation"[6] that fuel their transformation into killers. The November 2009 massacre at Fort Hood by U.S. Army Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, which left thirteen people dead and twenty-nine wounded, was apparently inspired by the defendant's correspondence with Awlaki. Los Angeles-born al-Qaeda propagandist Adam Gadahn, known to have a powerful influence on converts, later stated:

The mujahid brother Nidal Hasan has shown us what one righteous Muslim with an assault rifle can do for his religion and brothers in faith and has reminded us of how much pride and joy a single act of resistance and courage can instill in the hearts of Muslims everywhere.[7]

In this, Hasan and his co-jihadists have succeeded, judging from the multitude of homegrown attacks on American soil that were foiled in 2011. Two American converts to Islam, Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif and Walli Mujahidh, were charged with "conspiracy to murder officers and agents of the United States." Marine reservist Yonathan Melaku was indicted on charges of firing weapons at the Pentagon and other military sites in northern Virginia.[8] Army private Nasser Abdo was in the final stages of preparing another attack at Fort Hood when he was arrested.[9] Emerson Begolly was arrested for posting bomb-making instructions on the Internet and attacking federal agents while his house was being searched.[10] Khalid Aldawsari, a Saudi chemical engineering student, was arrested on charges of researching targets for attack, including the home of former president George W. Bush, and attempting to build a bomb.[11] Rezwan Ferdaus nearly succeeded in his plot to bomb the Pentagon and Capitol building.[12]

Legal Insanity and Mental Incompetence

There are two ways that a defendant who has undeniably killed or maimed someone without provocation can avoid prison—either win a verdict of not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) or be continuously judged mentally incompetent to stand trial, both of which have the practical effect of landing him in a psychiatric facility. Psychiatric facilities have obvious advantages over prison; besides the day-to-day relative comfort, these facilities offer the defendant the opportunity for periodic appeals to assess his sanity. In the case of Omeed Aziz Popal, who ran down sixteen pedestrians in San Francisco, he is entitled to a release hearing every two years. Popal seems to prefer life at a psychiatric facility: When he was transferred to Fremont prison pending separate charges for the murder of a local resident, he asked, "Is there any way possible I can go back to the Napa hospital."[13] Yusef DeJarnette, who wounded two people in separate shootings, has been living in a psychiatric facility since he was deemed not guilty by reason of insanity. At a hearing, Northcoast Behavioral Healthcare recommended DeJarnette be placed in a group home: "If he is released, the judge would be able to monitor him and set the conditions of his freedom."[14] Patrick Gott, a student of Islam whose actions briefly evoked fears of terrorism eight months after the 9/11 attacks, remains in state custody at the Feliciana Forensic Facility at Jackson. Doctors evaluate him regularly, and should they ever declare him sane and no longer a danger to himself and others, the law allows a judge to release him. Whether the jihadist appeals periodically to determine if he has recovered his "sanity" and hence tries for release, or the insanity plea results in superior living conditions, the salient issue is that jihadists are perceived as insane rather than driven by religious obligation in both the case law and public perception. This misperception is self-perpetuating, because as jihadists continue to be labeled insane there is consequently a lack of preventive action as a result of misidentification of the actual motive.

A diminished capacity or "partial insanity" defense can be used to argue that the defendant's mental condition at the time of the crime merits a less serious charge or reduced sentence though it does not constitute grounds for acquittal. Hammad Samana in 2008

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plotted to attack U.S. military, Israeli, and Jewish facilities in California. The lone Muslim-born member of his cell, his sentence was shorter than his three fellow cell members because he had a smaller role in the plot and suffered from mental health issues.[15] Samana was declared unfit to stand trial and was placed in psychiatric care. He was eventually sentenced to seventy months in 2009 but received less than half the sentence of the other cell members because of his mental condition. "In light of Samana's mental health issues at the time of the offense, such a disparity is warranted and justified," Judge Carney said.[16] Nadim Haque was declared not guilty of murder because he suffered from an abnormal condition of the mind. He was found guilty of manslaughter instead of murder because he acted "while under the influence of extreme anger… The theory behind these defenses was that Haque's traditional Muslim Indian upbringing, immigrant experience, and psychological condition strongly influenced his perception."[17]

Although definitions of legal insanity vary from country to country (and, in the United States, from state to state), virtually all require that a person be unable to distinguish between legal right and wrong. Under U.S. federal law, an insanity defense requires that "at the time of the commission of the acts constituting the offense, the defendant, as a result of a severe mental disease or defect, was unable to appreciate the nature and quality or the wrongfulness of his acts."[18] Under federal legislation passed after John Hinckley, Jr.'s acquittal for shooting President Ronald Reagan, the burden of proof lies on the defense, which must show "clear and convincing" evidence of insanity. Hinckley enjoys unsupervised weekend furloughs as a result of his status hearings.[19] The living conditions within the facility's pleasant grounds are eminently more desirable than a life in prison. As Hinckley described in a *Penthouse* magazine interview shortly after his arrival, on a typical day at St. Elizabeth's [Hospital]: "I see a therapist, answer mail, play my guitar, listen to music, play pool, watch television, eat lousy food, and take delicious medication."[20]

According to the U.S. Supreme Court, a defendant is competent to stand trial if he has "sufficient present ability to consult with his lawyer with a reasonable degree of rational understanding" and a "rational as well as factual understanding of the proceedings against him."[21] Such determinations are made by court-appointed psychiatrists, not by juries.

While the late Supreme Court justice Benjamin N. Cardozo famously maintained that someone who sincerely believes that God instructed him to kill is ipso facto suffering from an insane delusion,[22] this so-called "deific decree" standard is not widely accepted. Although a case can be made that "someone who genuinely believes he has heard God's voice command him to kill another… lacks the ability to reason about the moral quality of his action,"[23] this does not imply that he is unaware of its illegality or its consequences. Absent compelling corroborating evidence of schizophrenia or other severe hallucinatory disorders, claiming to have received divine or other supernatural instructions is not ordinarily sufficient to convince a jury to acquit.

It is also important to bear in mind that the horrific nature of a crime alone is not sufficient evidence of a "severe mental disease or defect" (otherwise, cannibalistic killer Jeffrey Dahmer would have been acquitted). Because of these constrictions, the insanity defense is employed in less than one percent of felony murder cases in the United States and is successful in only a quarter of those.[24]

Insanity Defenses by Jihadists

While there is little reason to believe that recognized terror group operatives are any less maladjusted than lone wolves, insanity defenses by the former are rare (and rarely succeed). This may be due to the political component ascribed to an acknowledged terror group member, whose actions can be understood as political in nature. Recognized terror groups are generally considered to be in political rather than religious conflict with the West, and there is, therefore, a disassociation when this "war" is waged by a lone "soldier of God." Thus, it is the solitary, Muslim extremist taking it upon himself to carry out God's will who tends to strike Western jurors, judges, and even forensic psychiatrists as crazy.

Most jihadists are too committed to their creed to plead insanity as this would be a rejection of the teachings that led them to commit murder. Zacarias Moussaoui, the convicted terrorist linked to the September 11 attacks, testified that he "rejects his court-appointed

defense team's theory that he is mentally ill." Asked if he was crazy, Moussaoui said, "Thank God, I am not." [25] Mohammed Bouyeri, Theo Van Gogh's murderer, said at his trial in the Netherlands, "What moved me to do what I did was purely my faith. Islam compels me to cut off the head of anyone who insults Allah and the Prophet."[26] Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad warned: "Brace yourselves, because the war with Muslims has just begun. Consider me only a first droplet of the blood that will follow me." The 31-year-old Pakistani immigrant justified his plot in the name of Islam, saying that "the Koran gives us the right to defend, and that's all I'm doing."[27]

Defense attorneys are eager to magnify any history of mental illness, no matter how tenuous, in seeking to gain acquittals, avoid trial, or win reduced sentences for their jihadist clients. They will cite mental instability,[28] depression,[29] lack of medication,[30] post-traumatic stress disorder, hearing voices,[31] and delusions of persecution[32] to name a few.

Not guilty by reason of insanity: Although jihadists who plead insanity may have some history of mental illness, or at least a host of relatives testifying to it, this alone is not sufficient evidence of innocence. Even when a radical Islamist who goes on a murderous rampage happens to be a diagnosed schizophrenic, it does not necessarily follow that he was legally insane in commission of the act—it could be that his ideology drove him to it even if his illness initially facilitated the underlying radicalization.

In principle, evidence of jihadist indoctrination should render an insanity plea untenable because it puts forth a compelling, presumed motive that the defense is obliged to disprove with "clear and convincing" evidence. This is very difficult to do even if the defendant has a history of mental illness. A crack addict with schizophrenia who kills someone in the course of a robbery will have a hard time disproving that crack addiction was the motivational driver unless the prosecution omits or downplays the fact that the defendant is a crack addict.

In practice, jihadists have repeatedly fared well[33] and won acquittals even when there is substantial evidence of ideological motivation.

- In 2002, Nabil Ouldeddine was found not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) for stabbing an Orthodox Jew twenty times on a London bus. Although he later told psychiatrists that the voice of a woman named Jennifer commanded him to kill, the reason he gave to the police officers who arrested him was far more prosaic: "Israel are [*sic*] the murderers. They kill women and children, so I stabbed him."[34]

- In 2003, Yusef DeJarnette was found NGRI for wounding two people in a series of random shootings from his bicycle in Shaker Heights, Ohio. In his home, police found writings conveying his hatred of white people, a poster of Osama bin Laden, and books about making gun silencers. He was clear-headed enough to avoid capture until police traced the bullets back to him.[35]

- In 2008, Omeed Aziz Popal was found NGRI for injuring sixteen pedestrians with his SUV in a long rampage that ended outside the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco. Mike Mahoney, the police inspector who investigated the case, scoffed at the acquittal: "He knew exactly what he did. He told me exactly what he did."[36]

- In 2005, Muslim convert Patrick Gott was found NGRI for opening fire inside a New Orleans airport, killing one woman. Gott, who carried a Qur'an and chanted "Allah!" during the shooting, later told police he was enraged when someone made fun of his turban.[37] Although the defense produced evidence of severe mental illness, their argument that this illness led him to commit the crime was weak. Two forensic psychiatrists testified only that "it is more likely than not" that Gott was "psychotic, delusionally paranoid, and experiencing auditory hallucinations at the time of the shooting,"[38] hardly meeting the burden of proof normally required of the defense.

The insanity defense is not always allowed by judges. In 2009, Muzzammil S. "Mo" Hassan beheaded his wife after she filed for divorce. He later claimed that he was emotionally "out of control" when he killed her. He requested and underwent psychiatric examination, but the judge in the case ruled that his lawyers could not use

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an insanity defense due to the delay by the defense in presenting their case.[39]

The Fort Hood killer's civilian defense lawyer, John P. Galligan, initially said that an insanity defense was under consideration although it was never clear whether Hasan himself was willing to make such a plea.[40] However, Galligan backed off after a three-member military mental-health panel evaluated Hasan and details of his methodical preparations in the months before the massacre came to light. "That much planning implies he had a clear understanding of his actions and he understood the consequences," said Anthony Ng, former president of the American Association of Emergency Psychiatry. "It's possible to be mentally ill [and] still be held liable for your actions if you're aware of the consequences."[41]

Incompetent to stand trial: Winning a ruling of incompetence to stand trial has the same practical result as an NGRI verdict—the defendant is confined to a psychiatric facility. The facts of the case are not relevant—the defendant's mental state at the time of evaluation is at issue.

- In 2009, Hammad Samana was declared unfit to stand trial on charges of plotting to attack U.S. military, Israeli, and Jewish facilities in California. He is now in psychiatric care.[42]
- In 2010, a Paris court ruled for the second time that Adel Amastaibou is a paranoid schizophrenic and unfit to stand trial for sadistically stabbing his neighbor to death in 2003.[43] "I have killed my Jew. I will go to paradise,"[44] Amastaibou declared to police after the murder.

Diminished capacity defenses: Diminished capacity or responsibility defenses are typically used to cast doubt on whether the defendant acted with premeditation and intent to kill. Such defenses can result in conviction on lesser charges.

- In October 2010, a judge sentenced Hosam Smadi to twenty-four years in prison for attempting to blow up a downtown Dallas skyscraper—less than the thirty years allowable under his plea agreement with prosecutors—after hearing defense testimony that he suffered from schizophrenia.[45]

- In 2007, Bosnian war veteran Asim Cejanovic attempted to smuggle a bag filled with explosives into the U.S. embassy in Vienna. Under interrogation, he fingered Mehmed Djudjic, who had long-standing ties to Wahhabi, jihadist circles in Bosnia, for giving him the backpack.[46] On the first day of his trial, Cejvanovic declared that he had important information about Wahhabi extremists that he wished to "offer" the United States.[47] However, taking note of Cejvanovic's psychiatric treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder, the judge ruled that there was insufficient evidence to convict him of plotting to bomb anyone as his frequent telephone and e-mail contact with the embassy prior to the incident was "not a typical strategy for somebody who tries to enter the U.S. embassy to detonate a bomb."[48] The court sentenced him to fifteen months in prison for illegal possession of explosives.

- In 2008, Khalid Alzghoul brutally beat nine people with a hammer at a Vancouver gay-pride march while screaming, "This is judgment day!"[49] After his history of mental illness was raised in court, Alzghoul was acquitted of hate-crime charges and sentenced to two and half years in jail for simple assault.

- In 2005, Jordanian-born Ali Warrayat drove his car into a Home Depot, blasting Arabic music with a Qur'an and a Palestinian flag in the trunk, hoping to set fire to the flammable goods department. After a court-appointed doctor diagnosed Warrayat with schizophrenia, he was sentenced to just five years in prison.[50]

The insanity plea strategy does not appear to work as well if the defendant is uncooperative. In 2006, Mohammed Reza Taheri-Azar said that the Qur'an gave him permission to drive a jeep into a crowd of people at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, injuring nine, so as "to punish the U.S. government, the enemy of my brothers and sisters in religion."[51] Taheri-Azar's lawyer pleaded for leniency on the grounds that "a severe mental illness" affected

his actions,[52] but the defendant's lack of remorse led the judge to give him the maximum possible sentence.

Overzealous Defense, Under-zealous Prosecution

Although each of the above legal strategies hinges on different judicial actors (juries, forensic psychiatrists, and judges, respectively), all three have proven successful for jihadist defendants. So much so, in fact, that jihadists have a legitimate gripe about the U.S. judicial system—they are coming under undue pressure from public defenders to plead insanity.

This was evident in the case of Carlos Bledsoe, a convert to Islam who now calls himself Abdulhakim Muhammad.[53] Bledsoe opened fire on a military recruiting station in Arkansas, killing one soldier and wounding another. After his capture, he promptly confessed to carrying out what he called a "jihadi operation" and later offered to plead guilty to murder charges.

Astonishingly, his lawyers refused his request, and the judge ruled that he was not mentally competent to make the decision himself. Legal pundits explained that it would not "make sense" for a mentally competent defendant to plead guilty to capital murder charges.[54] Interestingly, he was not ruled mentally unfit to stand trial—he was considered legally competent except for his desire to claim responsibility for murder in the name of God. Bledsoe's lawyers decided to mount an insanity defense over his objections and called to the witness stand forensic psychiatrist Shawn Agharkar, who testified that the defendant suffered from delusions of grandeur and persecution.[55]

Bledsoe protested vehemently, insisting that the shooting was an act of war and claiming loyalty to al-Qaeda. "I wasn't insane or posttraumatic, nor was I forced to do this act," Bledsoe wrote to the judge, adding that it was "justified according to Islamic laws and the Islamic religion."[56] While Bledsoe was ultimately allowed to plead guilty in exchange for prosecutors dropping their demand for the death penalty, the spectacle of a defendant being forced to disown his ideological convictions and mount an insanity defense is striking.

While the proclivity of lawyers for jihadists to mount mental-illness defenses is troubling, this in itself is not the problem. Criminal defendants are entitled to a vigorous defense under U.S. law, and this is exactly what their lawyers have striven to do. More troubling is why lawyers are succeeding. There is little particularly new or imaginative about their arguments—they have been effective because jihadists have not been subjected to spirited prosecution as a recognized group of offenders.

Time and again, prosecutors have failed to position jihadist defendants within a larger community of like-minded extremists carrying out similar acts around the world even though defendants frequently affirm their jihadist motivations during their attacks (particularly with the trademark phrase "Allahu Akbar!" or "God is great!"), upon arrest, while incarcerated, or in the course of court proceedings. In addition, they often have Islamist indoctrination material in their on-line presence or among their possessions. These identifying elements constitute the characteristics of the syndrome.

The two trials of Naveed Haq underscore how important this can be to the jury's verdict. In July 2006, Haq gunned down six people at the offices of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, killing one. In prison telephone calls to relatives, he later said he was "proud" of the murderous rampage, calling himself "a soldier of Islam" and "a martyr" who is "going to go to heaven."[57] When Haq's lawyers put forth an insanity defense in his first trial, prosecutors chose not to present the recorded calls as evidence, apparently fearing that they would make Haq sound crazy and support the insanity plea. The jury deadlocked, and a mistrial was declared. However, when this evidence was presented in his second trial, Haq was convicted.[58] When jurors are informed of the context in which a jihadist attack is perpetrated, they are more likely to reject an insanity plea. "The jury held that holding extremist views does not make you insane, but it does make you dangerous," victim Carol Goldman stated at a news conference after the verdict.[59]

Public Misperceptions

Deprived of relevant information about the acquired radicalization and virtual socialization underlying jihadism, jurors and judges alike are more prone to accept insanity pleas. The brutality of these crimes and the pursuit of heavenly rewards that motivate them seem crazy. Who

in his right mind would kill people indiscriminately? Juries are rarely asked to consider whether the behavior they are evaluating fits a pattern exhibited by thousands of others in the same on-line community. Likewise, prosecutors and judges are reluctant to dwell on the religious beliefs of defendants. The First Amendment protects the free exercise of religion and implies that courts are not allowed to consider whether a person's religious beliefs are false.[60] However, the architects of the U.S. Constitution likely never envisioned that religion would one day be used by an identifiable segment of a population to attack Americans. While aggressive prosecution of jihadists can hardly be considered a threat to the free exercise of religion, it, nevertheless, is at odds with how some policymakers in Washington choose publicly to frame the Islamist threat.

In its zeal to avoid the appearance of impugning Islam, the Obama administration adopted a new national security policy, two years in the making, which uses the general term "violent extremists" to avoid emphasis on the threat posed by radical Islam.[61] The Department of Homeland Security's secretary Janet Napolitano replaced "terrorism" with "man-caused" disasters[62] while the administration's national security strategy replaced the term "Islamic terrorism" with "violent extremism."[63] In May 2010, Attorney General Eric Holder's acrobatic refusal to concede during a congressional hearing that radical Islam might be a factor fueling homegrown terrorism became a minor YouTube hit.[64]

This reframing is reflective of a broader trend in the mainstream media. The official guidelines of the American Society of Professional Journalists recommend "avoid[ing] using word combinations such as 'Islamic terrorist' or 'Muslim extremist'" and suggest defining jihad as the desire "to exert oneself for the good of Islam and to better oneself."[65] The effect of such guidelines is to scrub public discussion of the jihadist threat.

Fearful of reinforcing the "Muslim terrorist" stereotype, reporters often minimize the religious component of violent actions by Muslims and ignore evidence of Islamist indoctrination. This was particularly evident after the Fort Hood massacre. "I cringe that he's a Muslim… I think he's probably just a nut case," *Newsweek*'s Evan Thomas said of Hasan.[66] Joe Klein of *Time* magazine decried attempts to argue that the massacre "was somehow a direct consequence of his Islamic beliefs."[67] In the words of Warren Richey, a *Christian Science Monitor* staff writer, the "only apparent connection between Abdo and Hasan is that they are both Muslim-Americans who served in the U.S. army."[68] This attitude makes it ever more challenging to identify cases.

Such commentaries display a strong subtext of wishful thinking. No one wants to believe that any sane Muslim serving in the U.S. army was radicalized through on-line socialization with al-Qaeda into massacring his comrades. Many refuse to accept that "a true American, [who] plays football, helps his grandmother and mows the lawns of his neighbors," as Bledsoe was described by his lawyer,[69] could radicalize to the point of murdering U.S. servicemen without being crazy.

Law enforcement, hampered by bad policies and fear of profiling, assumes (or at least publicly maintains) that religion is incidental to crime. As a Seattle FBI agent explains, "Ideology is less important than action… it does not matter if it is Christian identity or radical Islam. We have to focus on these guys committing crimes."[70] Of course, Christian extremists are not carrying out terror attacks the world over. Despite concerns about antiabortion violence by Christian fundamentalists in the United States, such attacks accounted for only nine deaths since 1970 (all of the perpetrators were convicted; none pled insanity).[71] In contrast, it is estimated that 51,319 people have died at the hands of Islamic terrorists in the past seven and a half years alone, and more than 84,323 have been injured.[72]

Unfortunately, juries are not asked to consider whether the behavior they are evaluating fits a pattern exhibited by thousands of others in the same worldwide community. Only when the jihadist is a member of a known terror group will this commonality be recognized and the insanity defense rejected since it is perceived as a hostile, political act rather than an expression of religious belief.

Whether stemming from ignorance, political correctness, or wishful thinking, these misperceptions effectively efface a critical element of investigating and punishing crime—motivation. If law enforcement intends to ignore the

motivation, commonalities, and shared characteristics of jihadist attacks, it cannot possibly hope to prevent them. If jurors are not informed of such things, they cannot deliver impartial justice.

Conclusion

Michael Leiter, National Counterterrorism Center director, has bemoaned al-Qaeda propaganda "designed to inspire like-minded individuals to conduct attacks in their home countries,"[73] but this begs the question of what made them "like-minded" in the first place. The vast majority of those who answer this call are not crazy; they are radicalized.

Melvin Bledsoe shed a great deal of light on the indoctrination of his son Carlos in recent testimony before the House Homeland Security Committee.[74] Carlos converted to Islam and changed his name after going off to college in Nashville (hardly a hotbed of terrorism) and frequenting local mosques in the fall of 2003. On visits home, he tried to convert members of his family, even tearing down Martin Luther King's picture from the wall. In 2005, his family visited him, only to find that he had dropped out of school and turned his dog loose in the woods, claiming that the animal was considered impure under Islamic law.[75]

Bledsoe blamed his son's radicalization on Muslim groups in Nashville that converted him and facilitated his travel abroad, as well as the culture of political correctness that allows Islamists to organize freely so long as they abide by the letter of the law. "Fear of stepping on a special minority population's toes, even as a segment of that population wants to stamp out America and everything we stand for,"[76] is what radicalized Carlos, he testified. It is this fear that drives the misguided efforts of media and politicians to rationalize jihadist acts as born of insanity.

U.S. policymakers' strenuous efforts to deny that radical Islam is a driver of jihadist violence have served only to compromise the American people's right to thorough investigation and vigorous prosecution of those who threaten their security. As homegrown terror plots continue to proliferate in the years ahead, law enforcement must be trained to recognize the telltale signs of jihadist radicalization and freely report their findings to the public while prosecutors must not shy away from putting the belief systems fueling the violence on trial. The legal definition of insanity should be changed to exclude more explicitly those who are indoctrinated to believe that God wants them to murder innocent men, women, and children.

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Nigeria: Emerging Terror Threats - Expert Calls for Proactive Measures

Source: http://allafrica.com/stories/201203160264.html

Industry security expert has proffered ways to prevent possible security attacks at nation's airports following increasing security crisis in the country.

Terrorists are ahead of government security apparatus in devising ways to get to their targets. Government learns from every major violent upheaval and destruction carried out by terrorists and invents ways to prevent such from happening again.

This is the way many security equipment were invented and security strategies and devices culminated, but there is urgent need for the security system to preempt terrorists' obnoxious and nefarious plans to enthrone fear in the society through bloodletting and destruction.

All over the world, airports are major targets for terrorists and airport managements and governments have taken measures to ensure that lives and properties are protected from terror attacks. But in Nigeria in spite of the effective job government is doing through security operatives, there is still easy, illegal access to the nation's airports.

There is poor monitoring of perimeter fencing. Some airports in Nigeria do not have perimeter fencing, or are incomplete. Most airports were built on lands where the host communities are yet to realise that the airport facilities are off limit so they device ways to still have access to the property that were formally theirs.

At the airports in Abuja, Port Harcourt, Lagos, Owerri and others, communities that live around the airport try to make use of the seemingly large empty space around the runway. This is dangerous because they provide easy access to those brigands that may want to destroy lives.

Preemptive Measures

Industry security expert and CEO of Avscon Securities Limited, Bayo Babatunde, recommends urgent and continuous training of aviation personnel, provision of high tech equipment and preemptive intelligence reports and investigation as proactive measures to ensure continued protection of Nigeria's airports.

Babatunde agrees that airport security in the country has continued to improve but he believes that more should be done to ensure that Nigeria is not taken unawares by terrorists.

"Nigeria is signatory to the Chicago Convention that produced the operating standards commonly referred to as the International Civil Aviation Organization Annexes (ICAO).

The practice of aviation security is guided by the same international principles as enshrined in ICAO annex 17. All things being equal, airport management should ensure full compliance with the operating principles which includes healthy working relationship with all security agencies at the airport, and government making the right investments in training and technology. We are more than

capable of protecting our civil aviation."

He recalled the actions taken as preventive measures after major terror attacks in the world and recommends that instead of waiting for such attacks to happen, security operatives should be proactive.

"Cast your mind back to the trend of terrorism in aviation, from the Lockheed, Scotland bombing which led to the introduction of baggage scanning and reconciliation, then to the 9/11 terror attacks in the US which led to implementation of full baggage scanning (hand held or checked in), to the chemical bombs attempts in the UK culminating in the liquids and gels ban, to the Abdulmuttallab pant bombing episode and the introduction of whole body scanners. Our airport management has responded to the trends and complied with ICAO guidelines and directives. We may however expect a more proactive treatment of the emerging trend because of their unique nature."

Security Protocols

Babatunde however allays fears of possible travelers about the protection of Nigeria's airports, saying that beyond the physical protection of airport facilities and passengers by security personnel, there are other unseen effective measures government has taken to also ensure effective monitoring of these airports.

"The security protocols implemented at any airport are not only those things you can see with your eyes or hear; a lot evolve from a well-articulated and approved national security program, which is a resultant document based on a painstakingly documented security risk assessment and safety management system."

This assessment, he said, is highly reliant on security education available to other airport users besides the proper and regular training of aviation security personnel and other security operatives.

But the security expert warned that investment in technology without corresponding training for effective operator manning, is a waste.

"The effectiveness of intelligence can also not be over emphasised. All agencies must have a system of regular sharing of information."

He also observed that terrorists are usually ahead of management, "thus there is need for constant assessment of threat and regular upgrade of technology to meet the latest threat levels."

He said that a lot of redesigning of the airports is going on "which I expect should include a change of the security architecture; I also expect an intensive re orientation and training of our operatives on the latest forms of threats. All these coupled with the acquisition of the right technologies for perimeter security, access control, explosive detection, baggage x ray screeners, and other issues as might have been thrown up in the security risk assessment would make the airports more secure."

Insider Threat

There is palpable fear about insider threat; about sympathisers to terror organisations betraying security measures at airports as it has happened variously in Nigeria's terror attacks at different parts of the country, especially in the North. So the CEO of Avscon gave advice on this, and said that aviation security and other security organisations must check their personnel and ensure that there is no fundamentalist in aviation security workforce.

So this goes even beyond the security personnel but includes the whole workforce. Head of aviation security at the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) last year introduced ways the staff could monitor themselves in their behavior, utterances and mannerisms and if anyone raises unusual curiosity his action should be reported.

The emphasis is that if an aviation workers aids terrorists, his actions could take the lives of his colleagues. So by observing themselves and reporting unusual behavior, they are also protecting their own lives.

Babatunde also stressed on training and continuous training of aviation security personnel in order to cope with the latest trend of threats, including technology intervention which requires serious funding from the government.

Carrying Guns at Airports

On whether aviation security personnel of FAAN should be allowed to carry guns at the airports, the Avscon CEO said that there is nothing wrong with the present structure if the entire articles of the FAAN Act as it relates to aviation security (AVSEC) is implemented to the letter.

"Don't forget that prior to Prof Aborishade's (former Aviation Minister) watch, AVSEC used to be a

department under the Airport Operation Division of FAAN but now it is a directorate. What is required is to re-energise the directorate, with the right incentives and encouragement to follow best practices."

In updating security measures Nigeria is expected to abide by new standards set by the advanced nations in order not to isolate itself and its traveling population which is one of the fastest growing in the world.

New Security Measures

Recently, European Union introduced new screening system for liquids and set out a deadline when it would be implemented. Babatunde explained that the new regulation, known as EU185/2010 stipulates that passengers who fly from non EU nations into EU airports for connections must screen any type of liquids on the passengers.

So airports should acquire new security machines that are endorsed by EU and the Transport Security Administration (TSA) of US has also agreed with EU by issuing amendments. This is to prevent liquid bombs and other dangerous chemicals moving into the aircraft.

The Avscon boss explained, "At the end of April 2011, passengers who fly from non-EU nations into EU airports for connections, are able to carry liquids purchased at the departure airport or in-flight in their hand luggage, as long as the item is in a Secure Tamper Evident Bag (STEB) with a receipt attached and the liquid has been screened using an EU LEDS Type C Standard 1 endorsed system. To meet this requirement, airports must deploy only approved Liquid Explosive Detection System (LEDS). The TSA has also issued amendments agreeing with the EU."

For airports to meet this new standard, these conditions must be met: there should be appropriate screening based on risk; there should be use of explosive detection system (EDS), use of dual view conventional x-ray systems and use of material specific

technologies, including EDS, dogs, trace detectors and others.

"As an illustration, the Rapiscan 620 Dual Views is an approved LEDS Type C Standard 1 system and meets these requirements. The initially planned April 2011 deadline for compliance has been postponed to April 2013, after several EU countries signaled that they were not ready to implement the new rules. The European Commission has advised EU member states to defer implementation temporarily," Babatunde further explained.

He also said that on April 29, 2013, the liquids ban will be completely lifted for all passengers with carry-on liquids at EU airports.

"As of that date, however, all liquids must be screened at checkpoint with an approved Liquid Explosive Detection System (LEDS) such as 620DV.

He disclosed that in Nigeria, the Nigeria Aviation Handling Company PLC (nacho aviance) has taken the lead in compliance through the acquisition of the Rapiscan 632 dual view cargo screening machine and also some explosive detectors.

"We expect the Ministry of Aviation will assist the airports through the 2012 budget to ensure they are compliant before deadline in April 2013."

Besides the above measures, Babatunde lamented that one of the nagging problems that militate against security operations is the damage caused by irregular power supply to advanced and modern security equipment at the airports. He lamented that poor infrastructure may continue to militate against some security measures.

"The erratic power supplies shorten the life span of the equipment. From the air conditioning to carousels, to other service equipment, power has been a major spoiler. We need to resolve the power issue and embark on an efficient maintenance regime, of course there are gaps in adequacy which government must address," Babatunde added.

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Eco-Terrorist Sentenced

Help Us Find Remaining Operation Backfire Fugitives
Source:http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2012/march/eco-terrorist_032012/eco-terrorist_032012?utm_campaign=email-Immediate&utm_medium=email&utm_source=fbi-top-stories&utm_content=80971

After he was indicted in 2006 for firebombing a University of Washington research facility, Justin Solondz became an international fugitive, beginning an odyssey that would land him in a Chinese jail—

The 1998 arson of a Colorado ski resort drew international attention to eco-terrorists—those who break the law in misguided and malicious attempts to protect the environment and animal rights.

and finally before a federal judge in Seattle, who sentenced him last week to seven years in prison.

Solondz, 32, was a member of an eco-terrorist cell known as "The Family," which committed an estimated $48 million worth of arson and vandalism across the Pacific Northwest and western U.S. between 1996 and 2001 under the names of the Animal Liberation Front and the Earth Liberation Front.

Three members of The Family are still on the run, and there is a reward for information leading to their arrest.

The cell's most notorious crime was the 1998 arson of a Vail, Colorado ski resort that caused $26 million in damages and drew international attention to eco-terrorists—those who break the law in misguided and malicious attempts to protect the environment and animal rights. We took the lead in the Vail investigation, working closely with our local, state, and federal law enforcement counterparts. In 2004, multiple eco-terror investigations were condensed into Operation Backfire.

We need your help to bring the three remaining fugitives from The Family to justice. A reward of up to $50,000 each is being offered for information leading to the arrest of Joseph Dibee, Josephine Overaker, and Rebecca Rubin, all believed to be living abroad.

Here is what we know about the trio:

Help Us Find Fugitives
If you have any information on the three fugitives from The Family, Josephine Overaker, Joseph Dibee, and Rebecca Rubin, please contact us in one the following ways:

- Local FBI field offices
- Oversees FBI offices
- Electronic tips and public leads form

- Dibee was indicted in 2006 on charges of arson, conspiracy, and animal enterprise terrorism. He is believed to be living in Syria with family members.
- Overaker was indicted in 2004 and 2006 for her involvement with the 1998 Vail arson and other crimes. She is believed to have spent time in Germany and may have settled in Spain. She speaks fluent Spanish.

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- Rubin was indicted in 2006 for the Vail arson and other acts of domestic terrorism. A Canadian citizen, she has strong family ties to Canada and may be living there.

Investigators identified Solondz as a member of The Family in the spring of 2006, said Special Agent Ted Halla in our Seattle office. "He was traveling overseas, and we started tracking him through Europe to Russia, Mongolia, and then China. He realized we were after him," Halla said. "He liquidated his bank accounts and tried to hide his tracks online. By the summer of 2006, he disappeared in China."

The ski resort in Vail, Colorado before and after the arson.

Working through our legal attaché office in Beijing, we learned that Solondz had been arrested in China for manufacturing drugs and sentenced to prison. He served nearly three years before the Chinese released him to our custody.

As part of his plea, Solondz admitted building the firebomb that was planted in the office of a University of Washington horticultural researcher. He and The Family mistakenly believed the researcher was genetically altering trees. The fire ruined the researcher's work along with the work of dozens of other students and researchers.

"The Solondz case has been a long process," Halla said. "When you are after someone for that many years, it's a big relief to see the individual finally brought to justice."

How 2 JI terrorists survived bomb attack

Source: http://www.rappler.com/nation/2765-how-2-ji-terrorists-survived-bomb-attack

BLAST SITE. Sitio Lanao Bato, Sulu. Picture taken at 12:12pm on February 2, 2012

There are conflicting reports about exactly what time the bombs dropped on Thursday, February 2. Civilian and military intelligence sources differ by an hour: some say it was 2 am; others say it was 3 am.

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Those involved in the operation told Rappler that a military asset, an Abu Sayyaf member, planted the homing device that guided the bombs before he walked out of the strike zone.
At that point, the asset told them that senior Abu Sayyaf leader Umbra Jumdail, better known as Dr Abu, was sleeping.

The asset said that near Dr Abu were the two most senior leaders of Jemaah Islamiyah or JI in the Philippines: Malaysian Zulkifli bin Hir, better known as Marwan, and Singaporean Mohammed Ali, known as Muawiyah.

That's why the Philippine military is holding steadfast to its claim: when 2 OV-10 Broncos dropped their 227-kg bombs, all 3 were killed along with 12 other terrorists.

About 45 minutes after the bombing, the military asset walked back to the area and reported that all 3 were dead. Dr. Abu was crushed by a fallen tree. Marwan's body was allegedly cut in half

ZULKIFLI BIN HIR aka MARWAN

by the impact of the bomb. The asset said Muawiyah was still breathing, but he had a big hole in his neck that was gushing blood.

Based on that, the Philippines announced the deaths of these key leaders.

It was reported globally and hailed as a great victory.

Marwan is a US-trained engineer and also heads Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia or KMM. He comes from a family of jihadists: one brother was arrested in Indonesia; another was

arrested in the United States. The US has a $5 million reward for Marwan's head.

"Marwan is the most important Malaysian terrorist," said Rohan Gunaratna, the head of the International Centre for Political Violence & Terrorism Research in Singapore and the author of *Inside al-Qaeda.* "He has worked very closely with Al-Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiyah, the Rajah Solaiman Revolutionary Movement, the Abu Sayyaf and the MNLF factions. He's on the radar of many organizations."

Muawiyah participated in the 2009 kidnapping of 3 members of the International Red Cross and is a key Singaporean target - "the only Singaporean active in terrorism," said Gunaratna. "They are the two most important international terrorists currently operating in Southeast Asia."

The story doesn't end there.

On February 22, Rappler reported that the JI leaders, Marwan and Muawiyah, are still alive.

On March 13, Malaysia's chief counterterrorism official, Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay told the New York Times that Malaysia had not taken Marwan off its "most wanted" list because it believed he was still alive.

What happened?

Based on intelligence and military sources from at least 3 different countries, Rappler has pieced together what happened on February 2.

Much has been written about drone attacks, but what the Philippine military used were precision-guided munitions or PGM.

The US delivered the PGMs and trained Philippine troops as early as November 2010, according to classified documents obtained by Rappler. While the technology came from the Americans, it was the Filipinos who carried out the attack.

Sources told Rappler that the 2 planes used to deliver the bombs, Philippine Air Force OV10 Broncos, are very noisy and will not fly directly to their target. Instead, the planes circle before dropping their payload.
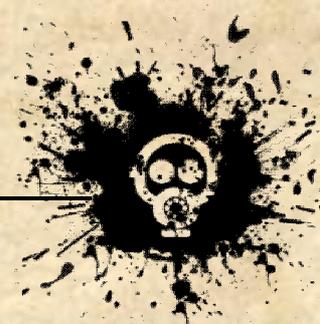
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In the past, the OV10s flew only during the day because bombs used visual line-of-sight targeting.

PAVEWAY II FAMILY

On February 2, the planes flew in the middle of the night because they carried PGMs which are guided in 2 ways: through GPS or a homing device.

According to investigators who spoke to Rappler on condition of anonymity, when Marwan and Muawiyah heard the planes, they immediately fled the area. Dr Abu was older, slower, and when the bombs dropped, he was still putting his boots on.

That's how Marwan and Muawiyah survived the bomb attack with minor injuries, investigators said.

An Abu Sayyaf member working under the group's most senior leader, Radullan Sahiron,

gave the 2 foreigners sanctuary in Patikul, Sulu.

Blaming JI

But Sahiron reportedly told his followers that he blamed JI for the death of Dr Abu and his followers and demanded that the JI leaders leave his area of command in Patikul.

On Monday, February 27, according to classified Philippine intelligence documents obtained by Rappler, Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon picked up Marwan and Muawiyah from Tanum, Patikul in Sulu and allegedly took them to an area controlled by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front or MILF.

According to intelligence assets, Sahiron was adamant about pushing the JI leaders out of Patikul, saying their presence would only bring more military attacks.

Until today, however, the Philippine military claims Marwan and Muawiyah are dead.

"The Armed Forces of the Philippines maintains its position that Marwan was killed in a recent Philippine air strike in Sulu contrary to reports that he survived said operation and is alive," said AFP spokesperson Col Arnulfo Burgos.

"These two men were not in the kill zone," said Gunaratna. "In the battlefield, such confusion can always take place, but the Philippine military is much more capable than what it was. It's a question of time until Muawiyah and Marwan will be either captured or killed."

Predators, Reapers and Ravens: The Drone Revolution in Tactics and Strategy
By Brian Glyn Williams
Source: http://www.jamestown.org

With very little discussion, the United States and as many as 50 other nations have inaugurated what amounts to a "drone revolution" that will profoundly change our very understanding of the security environment. There can be no doubt that unmanned aerial

vehicles, or drones, represent the future of counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency in remote and insecure lands such as Pakistan's tribal region, Yemen, Somalia, Libya and beyond. [1] Where U.S. boots cannot be placed

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on the ground to hunt terrorists, drones will increasingly strike at those whom America deems to be its enemies. John Brennan, the

president's top counterterrorism adviser, recently announced that, "The United States does not view our authority to use military force against al-Qaeda as being restricted solely to 'hot' battlefields like Afghanistan" (*New York Times*, September 16, 2011). This means that the Obama administration believes it can utilize drones wherever al-Qaeda or allied terrorists may be, from North Africa to the southern Philippines. All signs indicate that the U.S. military and the CIA are planning a future where drones will play an increasingly important role in warfare and anti-terrorist operations.

This of course means more strikes in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the primary focus of current drone operations. As the United States draws down its troops in Afghanistan in 2013-2014 and prepares to hand the fight against the Taliban over to the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police, its presence on the ground in this strategic country will be much diminished. It is increasingly clear that the Pentagon will transfer its anti-Taliban combat efforts to small, elite Special Forces groups, manned support aircraft and drones. These elements, which will most likely be based in so-called "Joint Facilities" in Jalalabad (eastern Afghanistan) Kandahar (southern Afghanistan) and Bagram (north of Kabul), will be used to assist the Afghan Army's defensive efforts or to carry out offensives against Taliban-held sanctuaries. They will also be engaged in "hunt and kill"

missions designed to take out local Taliban commanders and disrupt their networks.

With the coming withdrawal of most U.S. troops in Afghanistan, the need for counter-terrorism "personality strikes" (i.e. strikes on high value targets) will be greater than ever. This will certainly mean a continuation of 'signature strike' attacks (i.e. strikes based on "pattern of life" activities, such as transporting weapons to a known Taliban safe house or crossing the Afghan border with weapons) on Taliban foot soldiers as well.

The drones will also play a key role in keeping up the pressure on al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen and al-Shabaab militants in Somalia. New Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur al-Hadi appears to have condoned the recent strikes against the terrorists who have taken advantage of the recent turmoil following the 2011 downfall of

the Saleh government to carve out sanctuaries in Abyan Province. In Somalia, U.S. Special Forces and drones are increasingly being used to raid al-Shabaab militants and to monitor pirates who have seized Western captives.

In Libya there were more drone strikes in 2011 during the overthrow of Gaddafi than in Pakistan. The Global Post described this as the new model for similar campaigns in the future saying Qaddafi's death is "the latest victory for a new American approach to war: few if any troops on

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the ground and the heavy use of air power, including drones" (Global Post, May 23, 2011). By contrast, the conventional model of military intervention involving the insertion of ground forces is extremely costly and invites domestic and external criticism in a way that drones do not.

Drones and American Foreign Policy

Drone-centric alternatives to conventional warfare dovetail with the Pentagon and CIA's long term plans for counter terrorism and counter insurgency operations in the Islamic world and beyond. Former CIA official Bruce

Riedel has said the Obama administration "has made a very conscious decision that it wants to get out of large conventional warfare solutions and wants to emphasize counterterrorism and a lighter footprint on the ground" (*USA Today*, October 1, 2011). President Obama has announced the U.S. military of the future will focus on "intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, counterterrorism, countering weapons of mass destruction, and the ability to operate in environments where adversaries try to deny us access" [2] All of these missions translate to more drones.

While the recent economic crunch has led to huge cuts in the U.S. military's size and budget, the Pentagon has called for a 30% increase in the U.S. drone fleet at a time of steep military cutbacks. This represents a shift

from big bloody wars, like the invasion of Iraq which cost almost a trillion dollars and 4,500 American lives, to the model of the aerial campaign in Libya, which cost just over 1 billion dollars with no American loss of life. Other nations are following suit; British military officials have said that almost one third of the Royal Air Force will be drones in 20 years (*Guardian*, July 5, 2011).

In addition to bases in Turkey, Sicily, Afghanistan and possibly once more in Pakistan, drones will be found in forward staging areas some advisers are calling "lily pad bases," like the ones currently found in Camp Lemonier (Djibouti) or Arba Minch (Ethiopia). Such bases may also be built in Jordan and Turkey to help monitor Iraq and in the Seychelles Islands of the Indian Ocean to hunt Somali pirates (AP, December 13, 2011). President Obama has also authorized the building of a new drone base in the Arabian Peninsula to carry out strikes on al-Qaeda operatives in Yemen (YemenOnline, September 22, 2011; *Yemen Observer*, September 22). President Obama's defense budget also calls for funding for the construction of a new "Afloat Forward Staging Base" (AFSB), a launching pad for drones and Special Forces that can be sailed to potential hot spots (AFP, January 26).

The Drone Revolution

Whether one supports the drone strikes or is opposed to them there is no doubt that drones are here to stay. A few facts about drones will make this fact abundantly clear;

- More than 50 countries have built or bought drones. Even Lebanon's Hezbollah has used Iranian-built drones. Over the next decade more than $94 billion is expected to be spent globally on drone research and procurement. China unveiled 25 new drone models at an air show in 2011 and Iran claims their *Karrar* (Striker) drones are capable of long-range missions. (*Ressalat*

[Tehran], August 23, 2010; *Vatan-e Emrooz* [Tehran], August 23, 2010). Last month 13 NATO nations agreed to jointly deploy a fleet of its own Global Hawk surveillance drones after seeing how useful the American drones were in the air war against Qaddafi's forces in Libya. NATO has already begun building a €1.3 billion drone base at Sigonella in Sicily (Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, February 4). Many observers are worried that a future drone race will see other countries besides the United States hunting down their enemies with remote controlled planes.

• In 2000 the U.S. had just 50 drones. Today almost one in three U.S. warplanes is a drone. That translates to approximately 7,500 drones in the U.S. fleet. The majority (5,346) are Ravens, a small hand-launched surveillance drone heavily used by the army in Iraq and Afghanistan (Wired.com, January 9).

• Since 2005 there has been a 1200% increase in patrols by drones (*Economist*, October 8, 2011). The U.S. Air Force trained more drone pilots in 2011 than pilots for fighter and bomber aircraft combined (NPR, November 29, 2011).

• New jet-powered drones threaten to make current inventories of propeller-driven drones obsolete. The U.S Air Force has begun deploying a new jet drone known as the Predator C or Avenger that will allow it to mount attacks at a much faster speed than the propeller driven Predators and Reapers in its current fleet. The Avenger carries even more ordnance than the Reaper (Wired.com, December 13). The U.S. Navy is developing a carrier-based jet drone known as the X-47B which can fly ten times farther than manned planes and defend aircraft carriers from threats such as "carrier killer" missiles. [3] The U.S. has also launched the "Phantom Eye," a hydrogen-fuelled surveillance drone that can remain aloft for four days at 65,000 feet. [4] Meanwhile, the UK has developed a $225 million intercontinental jet propelled drone known as the Taranis after the Celtic god of thunder (*Daily Mail*, July 13, 2010). Unlike the Predator and Reaper, the stealthy Taranis has an internal bomb bay which can carry a wide array of weapons.

• The U.S. Air Force is developing nano-drones like the Wasp which way less than a pound and can fly to 1,000 feet. The Air Force has also planned Project Anubis to build killer micro-drones that weigh less than a pound. The small drones will be used to terminate "high value targets" and will one day fly in swarms against the enemy (Wired.com, January 5, 2010; *Aviation Week*, March 2, 2010).

• The U.S Army recently developed a small backpack size drone known as the Switchblade, a small kamikaze-style aircraft carrying explosives that can be launched from a tube, loiter in the sky and then dive at a target upon command. [5]

• The U.S. Army has developed a surveillance drone that can be flown by the crew of an Apache AH-64D Longbow attack helicopter to help it find its targets on the ground (Military.com, November 2, 2011).

• Predator drones are already being used to monitor the US-Mexican border. Mexico is using much smaller U.S. built drones for the same purpose (Reuters, December 27, 2011; *El Paso Times*, December 17, 2010).

• America has already experienced its first attempt by a terrorist to use a drone to carry out a terrorist act. In September 2011 Rezwan Ferdaus was arrested in the Boston area after the FBI found him plotting to use 7 foot remote control toy planes loaded with C-4 plastic explosives in them to fly into the Pentagon and other targets in Washington DC (CBS, November 4, 2011).

• In December 2010 the US Air Force announced that it had test flown the X-37B, an unmanned space vehicle modeled on the Space Shuttle. This development caused many drone critics to worry that the Air Force was involved in the development of drones for space warfare (Space.com, December 3, 2010).

While the first drone attack on al-Qaeda in Yemen in 2002 was greeted with tremendous coverage by the international media, drone strikes today have become so mundane that they are now relegated to small articles on back pages of newspapers, if they are picked up at all. Both Democrats and Republicans seem to have accepted this radical development with little real debate as have the vast majority of Americans. In fact 83% of Americans are reported to approve of President Obama's stepped up drone policy (*Washington Post*, February 7). For Americans, drone attacks in

distant locations seem to be an accepted part of the new scheme of things in the post-9/11 world.

As for the CIA, which was so reluctant to get into the drone assassination business prior to 9/11, current CIA head David Petraeus has said "We can't get enough drones" (*Business Week*, February 5, 2010). Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates has said "We are buying as many Reapers as we possibly can" (Politico.com, February 4, 2010). The Air Force's 147th Reconnaissance's Wing Commander, Colonel Ken Wisian said of drones "The demand for this kind of capacity is insatiable" (*Houston Chronicle*, June 28, 2010).

Conclusion

While America's CIA is currently the only intelligence agency that flies killer drones beyond its borders, it is perhaps only a matter of time before Russia, China, India, Israel and other countries deploy killer drones abroad in search of their foes. Israel is already deploying

its drones in the Gaza Strip, where Palestinian sources say they have killed over 800 people, mostly civilians (Press TV [Tehran], December 4, 2011). David Cortright of Notre Dame University has asked: "What kind of a future are we creating for our children? We face the prospect of a world in which every nation will have drone warfare capability, in which terror can rain down from the sky at any moment without warning" (CNN, October 19, 2011).

As rare voices like Cortright's ponder the future of remote controlled aerial killers and their impact on war and counter-terrorism, drones are increasingly coming to shape the way the United States and other countries hunt and kill those they deem to be enemies. Peter Singer, author of *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century* best sums up the future by writing "the [drone] technology is here. And it isn't going away. It will increasingly play a role in our lives…The real question is: How do we deal with it?" (*Los Angeles Times*, November 27, 2011).

Notes:

1. For an introductory survey of the CIA's drone campaign in Pakistan see: Brian Glyn Williams, "The CIA's Covert Drone War in Pakistan, 2004-2010. The History of an Assassination Campaign," *Studies in Terrorism and Conflict*. 33, 2010.

2. White House, Office of the Press Secretary; "Remarks by the President on the Defense Strategic Review," January 5, 2012.

3. http://www.as.northropgrumman.com/products/nucasx47b/index.html.

4. See video at http://dvice.com/archives/2012/03/hydrogen-fuel-p.php.

5. Innovation News Daily, September 6, 2011; see also: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dgvBb5ke-E.

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Keeping Terrorism in Perspective
By Scott Stewart
Source:http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/keeping-terrorism-perspective?utm_source=freelist-f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20120322&utm_term=sweekly&utm_content=readmore&elq=1a6669fa2398426a8b56b208665ce807

As we conclude our series on the fundamentals of terrorism, it is only fitting that we do so with a discussion of the importance of keeping terrorism in perspective.

By design, terrorist attacks are intended to have a psychological impact far outweighing the physical damage the attack causes. As their name suggests, they are meant to cause terror that amplifies the actual attack. A target population responding to a terrorist attack with panic and hysteria allows the perpetrators to

obtain a maximum return on their physical effort. Certainly, al Qaeda reaped such a maximum return from the Sept. 11 attacks, which totally altered the foreign policy and domestic security policies of the world's only superpower and resulted in the invasion of Afghanistan and military operations across the globe. Al Qaeda also maximized its return from the March 11, 2004, Madrid train bombings, which occurred three days before the 2004

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Spanish general elections that ousted the ruling party from power.

One way to mitigate the psychological impact of terrorism is to remove the mystique and hype associated with it. The first step in this demystification is recognizing that terrorism is a tactic used by a variety of actors and that it will not go away, something we discussed at length in our first analysis in this series. Terrorism and, more broadly, violence are and will remain part of the human condition. The Chinese, for example, did not build the Great Wall to attract tourists, but to keep out marauding hordes. Fortunately, today's terrorists are far less dangerous to society than the Mongols were to Ming China.

Another way to mitigate the impact of terrorism is recognizing that those who conduct terrorist attacks are not some kind of Hollywood superninja commandos who can conjure attacks out of thin air. Terrorist attacks follow a discernable, predictable planning process that can be detected if it is looked for. Indeed, by practicing relaxed, sustainable situational awareness, people can help protect themselves from terrorist attacks. When people practice situational awareness collectively, they also can help protect their communities from such attacks.

A third important component in the demystification process is recognizing and resisting the terror magnifiers terrorist planners use in their efforts to maximize the impact of their attacks. Terrorist attacks will cause tragedy and suffering, but the targeted population can separate terror from terrorism, and minimize the impact of such attacks if they maintain the proper perspective.

Propaganda of the Deed

As we begin our examination of perspective and terror magnifiers, let's first examine the objective of terrorist planners.

Nineteenth-century anarchists promoted what they called the "propaganda of the deed," or using violence as a symbolic action to make a larger point, such as inspiring the masses to undertake revolutionary action. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, modern terrorist organizations began to conduct operations designed to serve as terrorist theater, an undertaking greatly aided by the advent and spread of broadcast media. Some examples of early attacks specifically intended as made-for-television events include the September 1972

kidnapping and murder of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics and the December 1975 raid on OPEC headquarters in Vienna. Aircraft hijackings quickly followed suit, and were transformed from relatively brief endeavors to long, drawn-out and dramatic media events often spanning multiple continents. The image of TWA Flight 847 captain John Testrake in the window of his cockpit with a Hezbollah gunman behind him became an iconic image of the 1980s, embodying this trend.

Today, the proliferation of 24-hour television news networks and Internet news sites magnifies such media exposure. This increased exposure not only allows people to be informed minute-by-minute about unfolding events, it also permits them to become secondary, vicarious victims of the unfolding violence. The increased exposure ensures that the audience impacted by the propaganda of the deed becomes far larger than just those in the immediate vicinity of a terrorist attack. On Sept. 11, 2001, millions of people in the United States and around the world watched live as the second aircraft struck the south tower of the World Trade Center, people leapt to their deaths to escape the raging fires and the towers collapsed. Watching this sequence of events in real time profoundly impacted many people. Its effect was far greater than if people have merely read about the attacks in newspapers.

In the wake of 9/11, a wave of terror swept the globe as people worldwide became certain that more such spectacular attacks were inevitable. The November 2008 Mumbai attacks had a similar, albeit smaller, impact. People across India were fearful of being attacked by teams of Lashkar-e-Taiba gunmen, and concern spread around the world about Mumbai-style terrorism.

Terror Magnifiers

Such theatrical attacks exert a strange hold over the human imagination. The sense of terror they create can dwarf the reaction to natural disasters many times greater in magnitude. For example, more than 227,000 people died in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami compared to fewer than 3,000 people on 9/11. Yet the 9/11 attacks spawned a global sense of terror and a geopolitical reaction that had a profound and unparalleled impact upon world events over the past decade.

As noted, the media magnifies this anxiety and terror. Television news, whether broadcast on the airwaves or over the Internet, allows people to experience a terrorist event remotely and vicariously, and the print media reinforces this. While part of this magnification results merely from the nature of television as a medium and the 24-hour news cycle, bad reporting and misunderstanding can build hype and terror.

For example, a Mexican drug cartel on March 19 detonated a small explosive device in a vehicle in Ciudad Victoria. In the wake of this minor attack, the Mexican and U.S. media breathlessly reported that cartels had begun using "car bombs." Journalists on both sides of the border failed to appreciate the significant tactical and operational differences between a small bomb placed in a car and the far larger and more deadly vehicle-borne explosive device, a true car bomb. The Colombian Medellin cartel employed car bombs in Bogota; it is quite significant that the cartels in Mexico have not yet done so despite possessing the necessary capabilities.

The traditional news media are not alone in the role of terror magnifier. The Internet has become an increasingly effective conduit for panic and alarm. From hysterical (and false) claims in 2005 that al Qaeda had pre-positioned nuclear weapons in the United States and was preparing to attack nine U.S. cities and kill 4 million Americans in operation "American Hiroshima" to 2010 claims that Mexican drug cartels were smuggling nuclear weapons into the United States for Osama bin Laden, a great deal of fearmongering can spread rapidly over the Internet.

Website operators who earn advertising revenue based on the number of unique site visitors have an obvious financial incentive to publish outlandish and startling terrorism stories. The Internet also has produced a wide array of other startling claims, including oft-recycled e-mail chains such as the one stating that an Israeli counterterrorism expert has predicted al Qaeda will attack six, seven or eight U.S. cities simultaneously "within the next 90 days." This e-mail first circulated in 2005, and periodically has reappeared since then. Although it is an old, false prediction, it still creates fear every time it circulates.

Live tweets from attack sites, cell phone calls from people trapped by terrorist attacks to news outlets and the proliferation of cellphone videos on outlets like YouTube also have helped increase the vicarious-victim aspect of terror attacks. In some locations, state media will attempt to suppress media coverage, but these alternate media sources still get the news out to the wider world.

Sometimes even governments act as terror magnifiers. Certainly, in the early 2000s the media and the American public became fearful every time the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) raised its color-coded threat level. Politicians' statements also can scare people. Such was the case in 2007 when DHS secretary Michael Chertoff said his gut screamed that a major terrorist attack was imminent and in 2010 when the head of French internal intelligence noted that the threat of terrorism in France was never higher.

These warnings produce widespread public concern. A number of reasons exist for providing such warnings, from trying to pre-empt a terrorist attack when there is incomplete intelligence to a genuine concern for the safety of citizens in the face of a known threat to less altruistic motives such as political gain or bureaucratic maneuvering (when an agency wants to protect itself from blame in case there is an attack, for example). As seen by the public reaction to the many warnings in the wake of 9/11, including recommendations that citizens purchase plastic sheeting and duct tape to protect themselves from chemical and biological attack, such warnings can produce immediate panic, although, over time, as threats and warnings prove to be unfounded, this panic can turn into alert fatigue. This fatigue resulted in the DHS scrapping their color-coded alert system in 2011.

Those seeking to terrorize can and do use these magnifiers to produce terror without having to go to the trouble of conducting attacks. The empty threats bin Laden and his inner circle issued about preparing an attack larger than 9/11 -- threats propagated by the Internet, picked up by the media and then reacted to by governments -- are prime historical examples of this.

Stepping Back from the Spectacle

Groups such as al Qaeda clearly recognize the difference between terrorist attacks and terror. This is seen not only in the use of empty threats to sow terror but also in the way terrorist groups claim success for failed attacks. For example, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

declared the failed Christmas Day 2009 "underwear" bombing a success due to the effect it had on air travel. In a special edition of Inspire magazine published in November 2010 following the failed attack against cargo aircraft using IEDs hidden in printer cartridges, AQAP trumpeted the operation as a success, citing the fear, disruption and expense that resulted. AQAP claimed the cargo bomb plot and the Christmas Day plot were part of what it called "Operation Hemorrhage," an effort to cause economic damage and fear, not necessarily to kill large numbers of people.

As noted above, practitioners of terrorism lose a great deal of their ability to create terror if the people they are trying to terrorize place terrorism in perspective. Terrorist attacks are going to continue to happen because there are a wide variety of militant groups and individuals willing to use violence to influence either their own or another country's government.

Terrorist attacks are relatively easy to conduct, especially if the assailant is not concerned about escaping after the attack. As AQAP has noted in its Inspire magazine, a determined person can conduct attacks using a variety of simple weapons, such as a knife, axe or gun. And while the authorities in the United States and elsewhere have proved quite successful in foiling attacks over the past few years, any number of vulnerable targets exists in the open societies of the West. Western governments simply do not have the resources to protect everything; not even authoritarian police states can protect everything. This means that some terrorist attacks invariably will succeed. How the media, governments and populations respond to those successful strikes will shape the way the attackers gauge their success. Obviously, the response to 9/11 meant the attackers probably were far more successful than they could have hoped. The London bombings on July 7, 2005, after which the British public went to work as usual the next day, were seen as less successful.
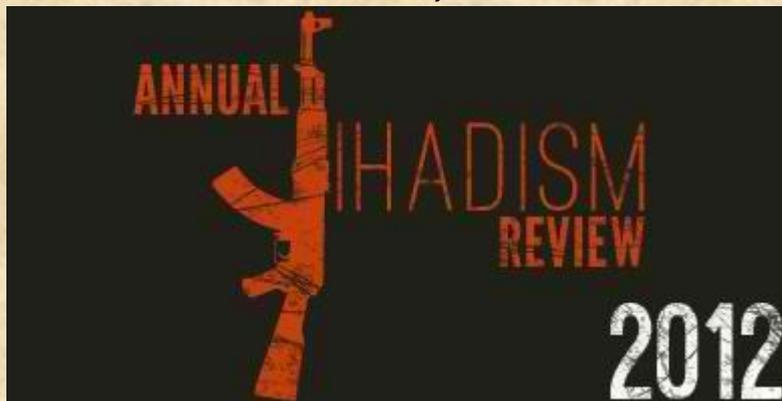
The world is a dangerous place. Everyone is going to die, and some people are certain to die in a manner that is brutal or painful. Recognizing that terrorist attacks, like car crashes and cancer and natural disasters, are part of the human condition permits people to take prudent, measured actions to prepare for such contingencies and avoid becoming victims (vicarious or otherwise). It is the resilience of the population and their perseverance that determine how much a terrorist attack is allowed to terrorize. By separating terror from terrorism, citizens can deny the practitioners of terror the ability to magnify their reach and power.

Jihadism in 2012: A Persistent, Low-Level Threat
Source: http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/jihadism-2012-persistent-low-level-threat

For the past six years, Stratfor has published an annual forecast on al Qaeda and the jihadist

movement. Since our first forecast in January 2006, we have focused heavily on examining and documenting the change of jihadism from a phenomenon involving primarily the core al Qaeda group to one based primarily on the broader, decentralized jihadist movement -- and the lesser threat the latter poses.

The central theme of last year's forecast was that the al Qaeda core would continue to be marginalized on the physical battlefield and would struggle to remain relevant on the ideological battlefield. While we did not forecast the May 2 killing of Osama bin Laden, his death certainly furthered the downward trend we predicted for the al Qaeda core organization. Due to the al Qaeda core's struggles, we forecast that regional jihadist franchise groups would continue to be at the vanguard of the physical battle and would

eclipse the al Qaeda core in the ideological realm. We also noted that grassroots operatives would remain a persistent, albeit low-level, threat for 2011.

The past year saw hundreds of attacks and thwarted plots planned by jihadist actors in places like Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. But in terms of transnational plots and attacks, activity was down considerably compared to 2010. As we forecast, almost all of these plots involved grassroots operatives or militants from regional jihadist groups rather than militants dispatched by the al Qaeda core leadership. For 2012, we anticipate that these trends will continue and, given bin Laden's death, the core al Qaeda group will not only continue to degrade but struggle to survive. Like the past two years, jihadism in 2012 will be defined by the activities of the franchise groups and the persistent grassroots threat.

Definitions

Contemporary vernacular imbues "al Qaeda" with a number of definitions, and the al Qaeda label is applied, often incorrectly, to several distinct actors. Therefore, we need to define what we refer to as jihadism, al Qaeda and the various agents in the jihadist movement to understand jihadism as a phenomenon.

Jihadism

In Arabic, "jihad" means to "struggle" or "strive for" something. The word commonly refers to an armed struggle, and one engaged in such a struggle is called a "mujahid" (mujahideen in the plural). Mainstream Muslims do not consider "jihadist" an accurate term for those who claim to fight on their behalf. In fact, those called jihadists in the Western context are considered deviants by mainstream Muslims. Therefore, the jihadist label reflects this perception of deviancy. We use the term jihadist to refer to militant Islamists who profess the violent overthrow of existing regimes in favor of global or regional Islamic polities. We use the term "jihadism" to refer to the ideology propagated by jihadists.

Al Qaeda, al Qaeda Prime or al Qaeda Core

Stratfor views what most people refer to as "al Qaeda" as a decentralized global jihadist network rather than a monolithic entity. This network consists of three distinct and quite different elements. The first is the vanguard al Qaeda organization, which we frequently refer

to as al Qaeda prime or the al Qaeda core. The al Qaeda core is the small organization founded by bin Laden and currently led by Ayman al-Zawahiri and a small circle of trusted associates.

Although al Qaeda trained thousands of militants in its camps in Afghanistan, most of those trained were either grassroots operatives or members of other militant groups who never became members of the core group. Indeed, most of the trainees received only basic guerrilla warfare instruction, and only a select few were designated to receive training in terrorist tradecraft skills, such as bombmaking. Of the few who received this advanced training, fewer still were selected to join the al Qaeda core organization.

The al Qaeda core was designed to be a small and elite organization stationed at the forefront of the physical battlefield. Since the 9/11 attacks, the United States and its allies have applied intense pressure on this core organization. This pressure has resulted in the death or capture of many al Qaeda cadres and has ensured that the group remain small due to operational security concerns. The remnants of this insular group are lying low in Pakistan near the Afghan border, and this isolation has significantly degraded the group's ability to conduct attacks. Accordingly, the al Qaeda core has been relegated to producing propaganda and providing guidance and inspiration to other jihadist elements. With the death of bin Laden, the burden of the propaganda efforts will fall to al-Zawahiri, Abu Yahya al-Libi and, to a lesser extent, native English speaker Adam Gadahn. Despite the disproportionate amount of media attention it receives, the al Qaeda core constitutes only a very small portion of the larger jihadist movement and has not conducted a successful terrorist attack for years.

Franchise Groups

The second element of jihadism associated with al Qaeda is a worldwide network of local or regional terrorist or insurgent groups. These groups have been influenced by the al Qaeda core's philosophy and guidance and have adopted a similar jihadist ideology. In many cases, members of these groups received training in al Qaeda camps in the 1980s and 1990s. Some of these groups have publicly claimed allegiance to bin Laden and the al

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Qaeda core, becoming what we refer to as franchise groups. These include such organizations as al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Notably, even though these groups adopt the al Qaeda label, they are locally owned and operated. As such, some group leaders, like Nasir al-Wahayshi of AQAP, maintain relations and are philosophically aligned with the al Qaeda core. Others, like Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the former leader of the al Qaeda franchise in Iraq, can be at odds with the al Qaeda core's leadership and philosophy. Other regional groups may adopt some or all of al Qaeda's jihadist ideology and cooperate to some degree with the core group. But for a variety of reasons, they maintain even more independence than the franchise groups. They are more akin to allies than true members of the al Qaeda movement.

Grassroots Jihadists
The third and broadest element of the global jihadist network encompasses what we refer to as grassroots jihadists. These are individuals who are inspired by the al Qaeda core -- or, increasingly, by the franchise groups -- but who may have little or no actual connection to these groups. Some grassroots operatives, such as Najibullah Zazi, who pleaded guilty to charges related to a New York City Subway bomb plot in 2009, travel to places like Pakistan, Somalia or Yemen, where they receive training from jihadist franchise groups. Other grassroots jihadists, like accused Fort Hood shooter Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, may communicate but have no physical interaction with members of a franchise group. Some grassroots militants have no direct contact with other jihadist elements. Lastly, some would-be grassroots militants seek out contact with other jihadist elements but accidentally make contact with government informants. In recent years, such cases have been occurring more frequently, resulting in sting operations and arrests.
Moving down the hierarchy from the al Qaeda core to the grassroots operatives, there is a decline in operational capability and expertise in what we refer to as terrorist tradecraft -- the skills required to effectively plan and execute a terrorist attack. The operatives belonging to the al Qaeda core generally are better trained than their regional affiliates, and both of these elements tend to be far better trained than

grassroots operatives, who must travel abroad to obtain training.
While these various elements of the jihadist network are distinct, the Internet brings them together, especially at the grassroots level. Videos, websites and online magazines indoctrinate aspiring militants in the jihadist ideology and provide a forum for like-minded individuals and groups.

2011 Forecast in Review
As noted above, the heart of our jihadist forecast for 2011 was the idea that the efforts of the U.S. government and its allies would continue to marginalize the al Qaeda core on the physical battlefield, which would in turn cause the organization to continue to struggle for relevance on the ideological battlefield. We concluded that the regional jihadist franchise groups would remain at the forefront of the physical battlefield and assume a more prominent position in the ideological battlefield. While the franchise groups have indeed subsumed the al Qaeda core, many groups, such as al Shabaab and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), are weaker than they were a year ago.
We did not see a successful attack attributed to the al Qaeda core in 2011, though there is evidence to suggest the group had never stopped planning. For example, in April German authorities arrested a Moroccan-born man, Abdeladim el-K (German privacy law prevents suspects from being fully identified), who they claim was sent to Germany by al Qaeda operational leader Atiyah Abd al-Rahman to conduct an attack. German police on Dec. 15 also arrested a man who reportedly was inspired by el-K and who was allegedly attempting to continue el-K's attack plans.
2011 differed from previous years in that there were no transnational attacks from franchise or affiliate groups. AQAP conducted an attack in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in August 2009, attempted an attack on a Detroit-bound airliner on Dec. 25, 2009, and attempted to bomb cargo planes in October 2010, but was quiet last year, as were the TTP and AQIM. The Caucasus Emirate, a jihadist group loosely affiliated with al Qaeda, was active in the Caucasus and conducted some attacks in Moscow, but those attacks were not categorically transnational. Likewise, al Shabaab carried out some attacks in northern Kenya following the

Kenyan invasion of southern Somalia, but we consider those attacks more regional than transnational despite their occurring across a national border.

In our 2011 forecast, we also noted our belief that, due to the accessibility of U.S. and European societies and the ease of conducting attacks against them, we would see more grassroots plots, if not successful attacks, there than attacks by the other jihadist elements. This forecast was accurate. Of the 12 plots against the West in 2011 that we classify as jihadist (down from 20 in 2010), one plot was connected to the al Qaeda core, 11 to grassroots elements (down from 15 in 2010) and none to franchise groups (down from 4 in 2010). The one plot connected to the al Qaeda core involved an operational planner who linked up with grassroots militants in Germany.

We also forecast that, because of the nature of the jihadist threat, soft targets would continue to be attacked in 2011 and that additional plots targeting aircraft would take place. We saw the continued focus on soft targets, but aside from the March 2 attack against U.S. Air Force personnel outside the Frankfurt airport and the Caucasus Emirate's suicide bombing attack at the arrival terminal of Moscow's Domodedovo airport in January, we did not see plots directed at aircraft. Instead, we saw aviation-related plots often focused on soft targets outside airport security.

In addition, we predicted an increase in plots and attacks involving firearms and other weapons rather than improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The shooting in Frankfurt, the thwarted knife attack against cartoonist Lars Vilks in Goteborg, Sweden, and several thwarted plots in the United States, including those in Seattle, Alabama, New York and Killeen, Texas, all evidence our prediction.

Our regional forecasts for 2011 were accurate, especially for the United States, Europe, North Africa and Indonesia. Our biggest miss was underestimating how involved AQAP would become in Yemen's internal conflict as different groups challenged President Ali Abullah Saleh's rule and how this involvement would distract the group from conducting transnational attacks.

Forecast for 2012

We anticipate that the al Qaeda core will continue to struggle in the physical and ideological arenas. The group still has prolific spokesmen in al-Zawahiri, al-Libi and Gadahn, but in 2011 the group issued remarkably few messages. The remaining leaders appear to be lying low following the deaths of bin Laden, al-Rahman and others.

Even though AQAP lost important English-speaking ideological figures when Anwar al-Awlaki and Samir Khan were killed (Khan was the editor of AQAP's English-language Inspire magazine) the group's main operational and ideological leadership remain at large. Among this leadership are the group's emir, Nasir al-Wahayshi, operational commander Qasim al-Raymi, and innovative bombmaker Ibrahim Hassan al-Asiri.

The remaining ideological leaders include the group's mufti, or religious leader, Saudi-born Ibrahim Suleiman al-Rubaish. With a degree in Islamic law, fighting experience with bin Laden at Tora Bora and time served in Guantanamo Bay, al-Rubaish has impeccable jihadist credentials. The influential head of AQAP's Shariah Council, a Yemeni imam named Adel bin Abdullah al-Abab, is among AQAP's ideologues. While AQAP is unlikely to ever recreate what Samir Khan accomplished with Inspire magazine, the group's al-Malaheim Media is still active, and its Arabic-language offerings continue. Those messages frequently are translated into English on such websites as the Ansar Al-Mujahideen English forum.

Moreover, the English-language statements of al-Awlaki and the editions of Inspire magazine remain on the Internet with a readership that numbers in the thousands. Indeed, an article from the first edition of Inspire, "How to Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom," was linked to thwarted grassroots plots in Texas and New York in 2011. We believe that the threat from grassroots jihadists will persist for the foreseeable future.

We disagree with those who claim that the unrest in the Arab world will end jihadism. The overthrow of the Gadhafi regime in Libya and the democratic movements in Tunisia and Egypt will provide alternative outlets to jihadism for dissent, and other Islamist movements, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, will undercut jihadism ideologically. But the small core of hard-line jihadists will remain undeterred; this group will continue to propagate its ideology and recruit new adherents.

Recruitment will be more difficult in the current environment, and while this may hasten the eventual decline

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of jihadism, it will not kill the ideology this year. In addition to persisting in such lawless places as Yemen, Somalia and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, jihadism will maintain its niche in the West, and grassroots jihadists will continue to be radicalized and mobilized in the United States, Europe, Australia and elsewhere.

Regional Forecasts

The United States and Europe
The al Qaeda core and franchise groups will continue to struggle attacking the United States and Europe directly and will continue to reach out to grassroots operatives who have the ability to travel to the West. Otherwise, they will attempt to recruit aspiring jihadists living in the West. This means we will likely see more thwarted or botched plots involving poorly trained operatives and simple attacks like the shooting in Frankfurt. While such attacks can and do kill people, they are not spectacular events as 9/11 and the 2008 Mumbai attacks were. This trend also means that travel to places like Pakistan, Yemen or Somalia, or contact with jihadist planners there, will continue to be an operational weakness that Western intelligence agencies can exploit. Such was the case in Birmingham, England, where 12 suspected plotters were arrested in September and November. Individuals seeking to acquire weapons and explosives will also remain vulnerable to detection.

While Nasir al-Wahayshi's appeal for aspiring jihadists to avoid contacting franchise groups and traveling overseas in search of training is sound, it has been difficult for jihadists to follow. This is evidenced by the fact that we have seen very few plots or attacks in which the planners were true lone wolves who had absolutely no contact with outside jihadists -- or with government agents they believed to be jihadists. While the leaderless resistance model can be difficult for law enforcement to guard against, its downside for jihadists is that it takes a unique type of individual to be a true and effective lone wolf.

Since we believe most plots in the United States and Europe in 2012 will involve grassroots jihadists, we also believe that soft targets -- public gatherings and mass transportation hubs, for example -- will continue to be the most popular target set. In places like Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan and Somalia,

we believe hotels and housing compounds will be more attractive targets than U.S. embassies or consulates, which are much more difficult to successfully attack. With a thwarted plot against a cartoonist involved in the Mohammed cartoon controversy taking place as recently as September, we do not see any end to that threat.

We predict that al-Wahayshi's advice will go unheeded but that grassroots jihadists in the United States will continue to plan and conduct simple attacks using firearms and other weapons. We do not foresee difficult and elaborate attacks employing explosives.

Pakistan
The government of Pakistan has been busily trying to divide the TTP and channel the group's efforts toward other targets in the region, such as foreign forces in Afghanistan and India. Islamabad has had some success in that regard, but we anticipate that some factions of the TTP will continue to target the Pakistani state. In any case, we expect to see fewer and smaller attacks in Pakistan in 2012 than in 2011.

Afghanistan
We will need to keep a close eye on the leadership of the Afghan Taliban and their dialogue with the Karzai government. The current conflict between the Taliban and Afghan and NATO forces will lessen somewhat if the Taliban become more involved in the political process, but we do not anticipate the militant group renouncing violence altogether. With some Pakistani jihadist groups vowing to target foreign forces in Afghanistan, acts of terrorism may increase against foreigners in Kabul and Kandahar. Given the intensity of foreign counterterrorism operations and the ongoing insurgency, jihadist groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan will have little opportunity to set their sights on targets beyond the immediate region.

India
India continues to face the threat of Kashmir-based militant groups as well as transnational jihadist groups supported by state and non-state elements within Pakistan. These groups include the Haqqani network and residual elements of Lashkar-e-Taiba, all of which will continue to plan attacks inside India and against

Indian interests in nearby countries, such as Afghanistan. India also faces a persistent but smaller threat from domestic jihadist groups like Indian Mujahideen.

Central Asia

For the first time in modern history, Kazakhstan in 2011 was the site of multiple suspected jihadist attacks, including three suicide attacks. Jund al-Khalifa, a Kazakh al Qaeda franchise group, emerged last summer, and we anticipate that it will continue its activities in 2012. Other groups, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, are active in the region, but because these groups are weak and disorganized and operate largely from the area along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, they do not pose a major threat to the region's governments.

Caucasus

The Russians have hit the Caucasus Emirate very hard, arresting or killing several key leaders. The group was already suffering from internal divisions at the beginning of 2011; consequently, it did not pose a strategic threat to Russia last year. However, the jihadist group will continue to attack Russian and local government security forces in the Caucasus and will continue its attempts to take the fight to the heart of Moscow -- especially since Caucasus Emirate leader Doku Umarov and dissenting Chechen insurgent leaders resolved their differences last summer. Low-level attacks against soft targets can be expected in the coming year. With the 2014 Winter Olympics being held in Sochi, we anticipate the Russians will focus a great deal of effort on weakening the jihadist groups in the region.

Yemen

As noted above, AQAP has lost some important English-speaking ideologues, yet the group maintains much of its militant capability. Yemen, where AQAP is based, increasingly is seen as a destination to which foreign jihadists travel to fight and receive training. With the government in Sanaa struggling to retain power in 2011, AQAP was able to take advantage of the instability of the Saleh regime, which was cracking down on protests and fighting throughout the country, and seized portions of southern Yemen. The group also has become very adept at using ambushes, roadside IEDs and sticky bombs to assassinate government

officials and military officers. AQAP's experience could later be applied elsewhere if the group is able to again expand its focus beyond Yemeni government targets.

As the crisis in Yemen is resolved and the government turns its attention to regaining control of the country, we anticipate severe clashes between AQAP and government forces. If AQAP declines to fight and withdraws to its remote hideaways, the group may resume operations against foreigners in Sanaa and Aden and conduct transnational attacks. Given AQAP's tactical advances, such attacks might be more deadly than similar attacks in the past.

Iraq

While the Islamic State of Iraq was greatly damaged by Sunni cooperation with the Americans, the U.S. military withdrawal will change that dynamic. The power struggle between Sunnis and Shia could allow the Islamic State of Iraq to regenerate because the Sunni sheikhs not only tolerate the organization, but support it as a tool against the Shia and their powerful Iranian supporters. Given the tense political situation and the still-unresolved ethno-sectarian balance of power, there will be plenty of opportunity for terrorist attacks.

North Africa

In northern Algeria, AQIM has continued to resist the al Qaeda core's targeting philosophy, instead concentrating on attacking government and security targets. In a sense, AQIM essentially functions as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat but with a different name. The Algerian government has hit AQIM very hard in its traditional mountain strongholds east of Algiers, and the ideological rift over whether to follow al Qaeda's dictates also has hurt the group. Increased abductions of Westerners and clashes with security forces in the Sahara-Sahel are not convincing evidence of AQIM's expanding reach -- nor are incompetent attacks to the south of Algeria. Much of this expanded activity in the south is the result of rivalries between sub-commanders and attempts at raising money via kidnapping and banditry for survival. This is a sign of weakness and lack of cohesion, not strength.

A cell of Moroccan militants allegedly linked to AQIM conducted a

successful bombing attack in April against a cafe in Marrakech, Morocco, that killed 17 people, but it was a relatively unsophisticated attack against a soft target. Moroccan authorities claim to have arrested those responsible for the attack.

AQIM elements in the mountains east of Algiers remain weak and ineffective. Even the IEDs the group has employed have been somewhat weak, indicating that the group is running out of explosives. Some of the factions in the Sahel allegedly have received weapons from Libya, but aside from some landmines we have not seen signs of advanced weaponry, such as shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles or anti-tank guided missiles.

On the whole, AQIM is a shadow of what it was five years ago. It will continue to kidnap victims in the Sahel -- or acquire kidnapped foreigners from ethnic Tuareg rebels in Mali and Niger -- and conduct the occasional small attack, but it still is not a unified militant organization that poses a regional, much less transnational, threat.

Libya

Former members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) fought against the Gadhafi regime, and the group's leader, Abdelhakim Belhadj, is now the commander of the Tripoli Military Council. (Belhadj and the LIFG renounced jihadism in March as part of a deradicalization program run by Seif al-Islam Gadhafi.) With the fall of the regime in Libya and the current struggle for power among the various militias -- some of these militias, like the Tripoli Military Council, are Islamist -- jihadists have been presented an opportunity. It will be important to monitor Libya to see if the jihadist elements are able to make any gains there.

Egypt

The overthrow of Hosni Mubarak has created an opening for Egyptian citizens to participate in the political process. This will help dilute jihadist sentiment in the country. A faction of former militant group Gamaah al-Islamiyah is even taking part in the elections. However, while Mubarak was deposed, the military regime is still in place. The small core of hard-line jihadists is unlikely to embrace the change and will continue its struggle. Indeed, jihadist elements have attacked a number of oil pipelines in the months since Mubarak fell. We

anticipate that attacks against pipelines and security forces will continue, and 2012 could also see a return of attacks against tourists in the Sinai if the authorities are unable to weaken the jihadists there.

If the military regime is unwilling to relinquish power to the newly elected parliament, the resultant conflict and disillusionment with the democratic process could convince people to turn to jihadism as a viable political alternative.

Somalia

Divisions between Somali jihadists weakened al Shabaab in 2011, with rifts emerging between factions with nationalist goals and those aligned with al Qaeda with transnationalist goals. Al Shabaab has lost much of its territory in Mogadishu, and though it still has assets in the capital city and can conduct attacks and occasional raids there, it no longer controls large sections of the city. The Kenyan invasion of southern Somalia, the increased presence of African Union Mission in Somalia peacekeepers in Mogadishu and continuing pressure from U.S. unmanned aerial vehicle operations has forced al Shabaab to retrench. Aside from some low-level attacks in northern Kenya, the group cannot plan or conduct attacks outside Somalia. We do not see al Shabaab being defeated in 2012, but we believe that they will be unable to conduct a spectacular attack outside their immediate region.

Nigeria

Boko Haram made huge operational leaps in 2011; the group now employs vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) instead of small IEDs and small arms and machetes. This indicates that at least some element of the group has received outside training, likely from AQIM or al Shabaab (there have been reports of both). Boko Haram also displayed the potential to become a transnational threat when it conducted a VBIED attack against a United Nations compound in Abuja that killed at least 21 people. Boko Haram has made threats to conduct attacks in the Niger Delta, but so far it has been unable to strike outside northern Nigeria or the capital. Despite its operational advancement, Boko Haram is still far from being a true transnational threat. The group may attempt to increase its operational range inside Nigeria, but we expect it to remain predominantly

focused on northern Nigeria. We also believe that Boko Haram would strike other Nigerian cities, such as Lagos, before embarking on transnational attacks.

Indonesia
The Indonesian government has continued to hit the remnants of Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad and other jihadist elements hard, and it is unlikely that Indonesian jihadists will be able to regroup and conduct large-scale terrorist attacks in 2012. However, they will likely continue low-level attacks against soft targets, such as Christian churches in places like Poso, to incite sectarian violence. Non-jihadist Islamist groups -- Front Pembela Islam, for

example -- may also incite riots and contribute members to other jihadist groups.

Conclusion
While the al Qaeda core has been marginalized and heavily damaged, the ideology of jihadism continues to survive and win new converts, albeit at progressively lower numbers. As long as this ideology is able to spread, the war its adherents are waging will continue. While jihadists do not pose a strategic geopolitical threat on a global, regional or national scale, they nonetheless are capable of killing scores of people. For that reason alone, the jihadist threat remains in 2012.

EU set to back strikes on Somali pirate lairs
New policy shift
Source:http://www.starafrica.com/en/news/detail-news/view/eu-set-to-back-strikes-on-somali-pirate-224029.html

The **European Union** will likely approve plans Friday **to strike Somali pirate equipment on beaches,** widening the scope of its naval operations four years into a mission to protect shipping.
Germany had voiced reservations about plans to allow EU warships and helicopters to fire at trucks, supplies, boats and fuel stowed on the coast of Somalia, but a minister indicated Thursday that Berlin would now back the plans.
"Military officers say they want to render harmless the ships on the beach that could be used. This was a convincing argument," German deputy defence minister Christian Schmidt said after a meeting of EU defence chiefs in Brussels.
EU officials have stressed that the new mandate would not call for the deployment of troops on the ground in Somalia.
"We made clear that this should be limited actions against assets on the edge of the beach. Piracy must be fought at sea," Schmidt said.
Following months of debate, the decision is expected to be taken when EU foreign ministers meet Friday, one day after the defence chiefs, EU officials said.

The ministers will also formally approve the extension of the EU mission, Operation Atalanta, until December 2014.
The German participation in the expanded mandate, however, will have to be submitted to the parliament in Berlin for approval, Schmidt said.
The operation off the Horn of Africa, which will soon grow from six to nine ships, escorts vessels carrying humanitarian aid to Somalia and polices the key shipping route to thwart pirate attacks.
Warships and helicopters will have "very well defined conditions" for firing at pirate equipment in order to avoid harming people, a European official said, noting that Germany and other nations wanted strict rules of engagement.
The EU mission is one of several international anti-piracy operations off Somalia.
NATO agreed this week to extend its own mission until late 2014, with four ships under Turkish command. **But the trans-Atlantic alliance has not authorized strikes on land targets.**

U.S. Congressman: Hezbollah greater threat than al Qaeda

Source: http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20120323-u-s-congressman-hezbollah-greater-threat-than-al-qaeda

Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, the focus of the American security community has been on al Qaeda and its affiliates, and especially on Osama bin-Laden.

In the years that followed, through the efforts of the intelligence community and American special operations forces, the terror organization's potential has slowly been degraded and its leadership decimated. The capture and interrogation of some of its key figures, along with the killing of others, degraded the group's ability to plan and execute more attacks on the scale of 9/11, to the point where many analysts considered al Qaeda to be more of a brand or franchise than an active participant.

The greatest blow, and the one that received the universal acclaim of the public, was last year's raid in Pakistan that killed Osama bin-Laden. Less noted, however, was the treasure trove of documents, computer records, and e-mails that were recovered from bin-Laden's compound, and have been put to use further to degrade and even neutralize al Qaeda as an effective force.

In the public's mind, al Qaeda is still the primary terror organization to be reckoned with. Now, however, a U.S. congressman has sounded an alarm about a potentially greater enemy, one with operatives already in the United States.

The *Jerusalem Post* reports that Congressman Peter King (R-New York) reveals that the intelligence community considers the Iran-funded Hezbollah to be a far greater threat than al Qaeda.

"It really is the 'A' team of international terrorism — far more sophisticated than al Qaeda," King said in an interview with CNN's Starting Point. "We do know that a number of them have been trained as terrorists, so the question is, how quickly they can be made operational, and would they carry out an attack…"

King goes on to say, "We estimate it to be at least in the hundreds maybe the thousands of Hezbollah agents here in this country. And again, especially if things intensify between Israel and Iran, between the United States and Iran, could Iran take preemptive action in this action through Hezbollah?"

It is known that Hezbollah has had a number of agents in the United States for years, largely focused on fundraising and recruiting. The escalating tension between Israel and Iran, however, and between the United States and Iran, raises the stakes of Hezbollah's presence. Writing in the *Huffington Post*, Andrea Stone reports on a series of suspicious incidents involving Iranian diplomatic personnel since 2003.

Stone reports that security guards from the Permanent Mission of Iran to the United States have been observed photographing and videotaping subway train tracks, the track layout inside Grand Central Station, and using tour buses to videotape and photograph various New York City landmarks and infrastructure components, including the water line and the structure of the Wall Street Heliport.

Stone quotes Mitchell Silber, head of the NYPD Intelligence Division, as saying: "Iran has a proven record of using its official presence in a foreign city to coordinate attacks, which are then carried out by Hezbollah agents from abroad, often leveraging the local community — whether wittingly or not — as facilitators."

Bin Laden identification, DNA: The science behind the certainty

Source:http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700132514/Bin-Laden-identification-DNA-The-science-behind-the-certainty.html

As the world absorbs news that Osama bin Laden was killed Sunday in a raid by U.S. Navy SEALs in Pakistan, questions have surfaced about how his body was identified.

The White House has said that the body was positively identified using several methods, including photographs, biometric recognition technology that took precise measurements and compared them against known images of the terrorist leader, eyewitness identification by his wife and DNA testing.
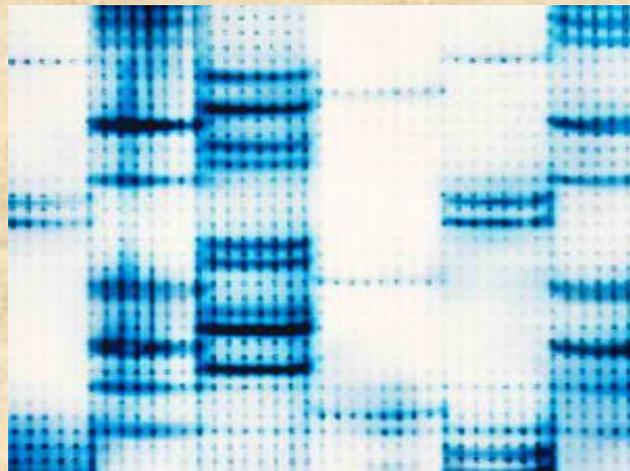
"We can say with 99.9 percent confidence that this was bin Laden," John Brennan, assistant to the president for homeland security and counterterrorism, was widely quoted by reporters as saying on Monday.

What happened to 100 percent? DNA testing doesn't work that way. It's about probabilities.

Using standard DNA testing, it takes 16 to 20 hours to confirm a DNA match, according to Timothy D. Kupferschmid, executive director and laboratory director of Salt Lake-based Sorenson Forensics. Sorenson has used its DNA expertise to identify suspects in some very high-profile crimes in recent years in cooperation with various police forces.

Kupferschmid said the Department of Defense has been "prototyping some much newer technology" that is reported to provide answers in a bit more than an hour and that's possibly what was used to positively identify his DNA

before bin Laden was buried at sea. It's likely, since such sequencing used newer technology, he noted, that samples of DNA have also subsequently undergone more traditional vetting, as well.

News reports, though, that a 99.9-percent positive match was achieved by comparing a DNA sample to DNA from bin Laden's half-sister is probably a bit of an exaggeration. It's not a close enough family relationship to get that certain a match. It would say the two were relatives, but not the specific relationship, he said.

However, the combination of methods, from biometrics to blood, would be good enough, according to the Salt Lake scientist. "They may even have had fingerprints that were intercepted at some point. There was certainly plenty (of data) to identify somebody."

It's a conclusion reached by other scientists, as well.

Dan Krane, a professor of genetics and a DNA expert at Wright State University in Ohio, told Popular Mechanics that modern quick DNA tests look at short tandem repeat sequences in the DNA and yield results that are "indeed incredibly accurate." The more closely related two people are, the more repeated patterns they will share. Like Kupferschmid, he noted that the 99.9 percent confidence number is a bit

high. The results "speak to the probability of a relationship between the two people, not the actual identity of the dead man," the article noted.

News reports said bin Laden's DNA was compared to other relatives, as well. Comparisons to multiple samples would likely firm up the certainty of the identification.

Yahoo News reported that "the U.S. is believed to have collected DNA samples from several of bin Laden's family members during the decade since the terrorist attack on 9/11." It is believed those testing the sample from the body that was later interred at sea had those reference samples already on file for a comparison.

"Bits of a person's unique genetic fingerprint are shared with his or her siblings and parents — since the latter are the ones who give you your DNA to begin with.... A close match identifies bin Laden with an exceedingly high probability of accuracy," the report said.

Casey Schwartz of The Daily Beast interviewed one of the creators of a rapid-result DNA analysis prototype. Dr. Frederic Zenhausem, biochemist and physicist who directs the Center of Applied Nano Biological Science and Medicine at the University of Arizona, said that "given the stakes of the mission in Pakistan, it's likely that the more traditional and well-established method of DNA analysis would have been used."

The article also quotes an unnamed former CIA agent as saying that to get a DNA test of 99.9 percent accuracy, as the U.S. government put forth, it was likely "we would have had his DNA on file for a long time," perhaps from when bin Laden worked with American forces against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan or in the years before 9/11 when he was emerging as an identifiable terrorist threat.

Pakistani Taliban training Frenchmen

Source: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/10161562

Dozens of French Muslims are training with the Taliban in northwestern Pakistan, raising fears of future attacks following the shooting deaths of seven people in southern France allegedly by a man who spent time in the region, Pakistani intelligence officials said Saturday.

Authorities are investigating whether Mohamed Merah, the Frenchman of Algerian descent who is suspected of killing three Jewish schoolchildren, a rabbi and three French paratroopers in Toulouse this month, was among the training group, the officials said.

Merah was killed in a dramatic gunfight with police Thursday after a 32-hour standoff at his Toulouse apartment. The 23-year-old former auto body worker traveled twice to Afghanistan in 2010 and to Pakistan in 2011, and said he trained with al-Qaida in the Pakistani militant stronghold of Waziristan.

Approximately 85 Frenchmen have been training with the Pakistani Taliban in the North Waziristan tribal area for the past three years, according to the intelligence officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media. Most of the

men have dual nationality with France and North African countries.

The Frenchmen operate under the name Jihad-e-Islami and are being trained to use explosives and other weapons at camps near the town of Miran Shah and in the Datta Khel area, the officials said. They are led by a French commander who goes by the name Abu Tarek. Five of the men returned to France in January 2011 to find new recruits, according to the officials. It's unclear whether Merah was

among that group.

A senior French official close to the investigation into the shootings told The Associated Press on Friday that

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despite Merah's claims of al-Qaida links, there was no sign he had "trained or been in contact with organized groups or jihadists."

A militant commander, Ahmed Marwat, claimed

Western officials have been concerned for years about Muslim militants with European citizenship visiting northwestern Pakistan, possibly training for missions that could include

in a phone call with the AP on Saturday that Merah was affiliated with the Pakistani Taliban in Waziristan, but provided no details. Marwat said he was part of the Jundullah wing of the Pakistani Taliban.

The claim could not be independently verified.

The Pakistani Taliban, which is closely allied with al-Qaida, has carried out hundreds of attacks in Pakistan over the past several years that have killed thousands of people. Taliban leaders say they want to oust the U.S.-backed government and install a hardline Islamist regime. They also have international jihadi ambitions and trained the Pakistani-American who tried to detonate a car bomb in New York City's Times Square in 2010.

The main sanctuary for the Pakistani Taliban is the restive tribal region along the Afghan border, especially North and South Waziristan. Despite a large military offensive in South Waziristan in 2009, the government has very little control over the area.

terror attacks in Europe where they would act as "lone wolves" or on the orders of others. In 2010 alone, dozens were believed to be there.

Merah told police during the standoff that he was trained "by a single person" when he was in Waziristan, not in a training center, so as not to be singled out because he spoke French," the director of the DCRI intelligence service, Bernard Squarcini, told the Le Monde newspaper.

Merah was questioned by French intelligence officers last November after his second trip to Afghanistan, and was cooperative and provided a USB key with tourist-like photos of his trip, the French official close to the investigation told the AP.

While he was under surveillance last year, Merah was never seen contacting any radicals and went to nightclubs, not mosques, the official said. People who knew him confirmed that he was at a nightclub in recent weeks.

Merah told negotiators during the police standoff that he was able to buy a large arsenal of weapons thanks to years of petty theft, the official said.

French prosecutors said Merah filmed himself carrying out the three shooting attacks in Toulouse that began March 11.

SurveillanceNew surveillance system: 1 second to search through 36 million faces
Source: http://www.diginfo.tv/v/12-0040-r-en.php

A new surveillance camera system can search through data on thirty-six million faces in one

can quickly review the person's actions before and after the image was taken.

類似顔画像検索システム
検索画面

second. Developed by Hitachi Kokusai Electric, the camera can automatically detect a face from either surveillance footage or a regular photo, and search for it.

DigInfo reports that the search results are displayed immediately, showing thumbnail images of potential matches. When a thumbnail is selected, the associated recorded surveillance footage can be viewed, so users

DigInfo notes that with the new system, it is assumed that faces are turning within around 30 degrees in the horizontal and vertical directions from the camera, and the faces are at least 40 x 40 pixels in size.

Hitachi says the system is suitable for customers that have a relatively large-scale surveillance system, such as railways, power companies, law enforcement, and large stores.

AQIM after bin Laden

Source:http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/reportage/2012/03/23/reportage-01

As the one-year anniversary of al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden's death looms, reports are emerging about retaliatory attack plots by al-Qaeda offshoots in Africa.

Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) plans to commemorate the May 2nd, 2011 killing of Osama bin Laden with large-scale terror operations in Mauritania, Algeria, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, Algeria's *Echourouk* daily reported on March 10th.

Terrorists recently arrested by Algerian security agencies allegedly confirmed that preparations to execute retaliatory attacks around the time of Bin Laden's death were in the works.

"It is only logical for that organisation, which is small in terms of numbers and huge in terms of financial resources and ambitions, to try to deal retaliatory blows to the countries that it considers infidel because of their dealings with its long-standing enemy, the West," said Mauritanian security analyst Hamadi Ould Sidi.

AQIM chief Abdelmalek Droukdel (aka Abou Moussaab Abdelouadoud) has been under siege for months, thanks to intensified security co-operation among Sahel states. A spectacular attack timed to coincide with the anniversary of Bin Laden's death would, for AQIM, reportedly serve to avenge the killing of its emirs and foot soldiers by Mauritanian and Algerian security forces.

The captured terror suspects said that after suffering particularly heavy losses in the Algerian regions of Tizi Ouzou, Boumerdes and Bejaia, Droukdel issued orders to strike back. Focusing on the southern areas of Algeria would distract security forces, the terror leader held.

But new recruits now refuse to carry out bombings without receiving a hefty financial reward.

Droukdel has had little success recruiting suicide bombers in the northern areas. To implement his plan, he has begun offering money to those willing to blow themselves up at government or security sites.

The information revealed by the Algerian newspaper reflects the extent of deterioration within AQIM and the diminution in ideological conviction among new recruits; something that shows that the group's religious discourse and its persuasiveness are facing major challenges. This has prompted some Mauritanian observers and analysts to say that the spiritual

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb leader Abdelmalek Droukdel released an audio tape in the wake of Bin Laden's death vowing not to give up the terror group's struggle.

dimension in the group is no longer strong enough to make members act in Bin Laden's name.

"Al-Qaeda's failure to carry out strong retaliatory operations that convey the spiritual arguments of Bin Laden makes many observers question anew the exact nature of the relationship between AQIM and the parent al-Qaeda organisation in Afghanistan and Pakistan," explains terrorism researcher Dr Houssein Ould Meddou.

"Although the Maghreb branch is inspired by some al-Qaeda ideas and theories, it hasn't completely assimilated them," he explains. The other issue that prevents AQIM from carrying out successful acts is the "extensive intelligence and military co-ordination between Sahel countries," Ould Meddou adds.

Within the organisation itself, brigades have been sparring for months.

Mohammed Ghadir (aka Abdelhamid Abou Zeid), the "Tariq ibn Ziyad" katibat boss, and Khaled Abou El Abass (aka Mokhtar Belmokhtar, or "Laaouar"), who runs the "El Moulethemine" battalion, have been vying for control of AQIM's Sahara emirate since last December.

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"Each brigade acts independently, establishing its own structure, kidnapping for its own account and imposing its own conditions in negotiations," the Nouakchott academic says.

Use of Bin Laden to recruit and inspire is a superficial practice at best. Cheikh Ould Mohamed Harma says that "the terrorist acts that Osama Bin Laden carried out were never unanimously approved by his supporters themselves".

"His value to them sprang from the belief that he was raising the banner of Islam against the West. Therefore, his image in the minds of simple religious people became associated with that of a religious hero. They didn't realise the true nature of the terrorist acts he was committing," Ould Mohamed Harma tells Magharebia.

Yet Bin Laden still pops up as a reference point.

When al-Qaeda splinter group "Jamat Tawhid Wal Jihad Fi Garbi Afriqqiya" (Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa) first emerged last December with a video claiming responsibility for abducting western aid workers from a Sahrawi refugee camp, turbaned members spoke of their ideological inspirations: Osama bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Omar. In Mauritania, Salafist ideologue Mohamed Salem Ould Mohamed Lemine (aka al-Majlissi) held a memorial for bin Laden at al-Shorafa Mosque in Nouakchott. Al-Majlissi, who spent three years in jail for a fatwa that led to the 2007 Aleg massacre of a French tourist family, led 70 fellow Salafists in prayers for the late al-Qaeda leader last spring. Attendees shared religious speeches, recited poems and vowed to "enforce Sharia and defend Islam".

"We prayed for mercy for his soul," al-Majlissi said.

Rather than inspire new fighters, Bin Laden may in fact have spurred a schism in al-Qaeda, as demonstrated by the splinter groups and battling brigades of the Sahel.

"Osama Bin Laden's death contributed to the independence of organisations that came out from under his mantle and started to run themselves independently, both spiritually and in the field," said al-Mokhtar al-Salem Ould

[AFP/ Mohamed Abdiwahab] Somalia's al-Shabaab and other African terror groups have benefited from the fragmentation of al-Qaeda.

Ahmed Salem, an analyst of extremist ideology.

"AQIM has turned the page on Bin Laden because he was just a spiritual father to them, especially as he had been away from terrorist operations for years even before his killing," he tells Magharebia.

Even without its figurehead Bin Laden, the decimated "al-Qaeda Central" brought another problem to the Maghreb: crime.

Sid Ahmed Ould Tfeil, a specialist in armed groups, says that when al-Qaeda funds dried up after Bin Laden's death, some members left Afghanistan and Pakistan to return to their homes in Libya, Tunisia, northern Mali, Algeria and Mauritania.

Taking advantage of the Arab Spring revolutions and chaos that followed Kadhafi's fall, some turned to weapons smuggling.

The birth of new terrorist movements, such as Jamat Tawhid Wal Jihad Fi Garbi Afriqqiya, also reflects the restlessness that started to appear in AQIM after the arrival of new leaders who monopolised the spoils, Ould Tfeil says. Many members resented the claims made upon limited resources by those who had not helped build the Maghreb branch.

The fracturing of Bin Laden's organisation leaves not a "terror central" but rather a disparate band of brigades with competing interests and objectives, Ould Tfeil adds. From the one al-Qaeda network under Bin Laden, "today we face multiple terrorist organisations, such as an African al-Qaeda, and perhaps also an Amazigh al-Qaeda and an Arab al-Qaeda, to be added to Boko Haram in Nigeria and Somalia's al-Shabab".

Despite the recent admissions by the captured Algerians, however, money issues may prove the main deterrent to an AQIM attack on the anniversary of Bin Laden's death. "Al-Qaeda wouldn't venture to carry out big terrorist operations under the current circumstances," al-Mokhtar al-Salem Ould Ahmed Salem says.

"They're detaining 11 Western hostages," he says. "By alleviating attacks, they seek to negotiate more ransom money from the hostages' countries."

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South Africa – New all purpose vehicle

Source: http://carscoop.blogspot.com/2011/06/monstrous-paramount-marauder-armored.html

Paramount Marauder produced by South African Paramount Group has a 290HP engine and armor that can stand almost everything from IEDs to RPGs and hand grenade proof windows.

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The increase on terrorist threat level for Europe in 2012

By Ioannis Michaletos
Source: http://rimse.gr/?p=397

The latest incidents in France which resulted in the murder of seven people by a radical Jihadi person, raises once more the threat level posed by radical Salafi elements.

First of all it is notable to point out that since early February 2011 the French newspaper "Le Figaro" has published a classified document of the French counter-intelligence stating that at least 100 EU nationals had been trained in 2010 alone, in Islamic terrorist camps in The AfPak region. The data from what it seemed didn't include Balkan nationals or those from Caucasus or Turkey, thus the overall number from this part of Eurasia must be significantly higher, without counting the "Arab Spring" process and the ongoing civil strife in Syria that proves to be like a magnet for all sorts of terrorist-driven Salafi elements.

The French paper back then stated that around 14 nationals were French and the press agency AFP confirmed also that Italian and Belgium citizens were training after being recruited by terrorists. Similar data have been confirmed over the past two years by British and German authorities, whilst a late 2011 report by the Austrian Ministry of Interior confirmed that radical Wahhabi cells of Balkan origin are residing in Vienna, where the attacker against the USA Embassy in Sarajevo the same year, had lived for some time.

The dynamics of the present day culminations in the Arab-Muslim world caused by the series of revolutions and conflicts of the Arab Spring, coupled with the European economic recession, will inevitably raise the alert level for all European security authorities, since the likehood of further attacks can be estimated. Moreover, the increase in posture in the Sunni world of the "stealth" radicals such as the Muslim Brotherhood sympathizers, as well as the various Takfiri groups or the Libyan Mujahedeen forces; further adds to the hypothesis that a looming crisis regarding urban terrorism of Islamic origin is to be expected.

In addition the influx of illegal immigrants from Central Asia and North Africa into the EU -And mostly from the Balkans- tends to sustain the issue of monitoring the increasing Islamic community in Europe that has developed extremist points of view. Simply put it, the chances for radical action are increasing on par with the population increase of desperate masses of people that are venturing into Europe in a time where the Continent is experiencing a far reaching debt and economic crisis.

Continuing, the Presidential elections in France and USA in 2012 and the probability that German early elections are going to be held along with the major world events of the Olympic Games in London this summer and the European football championship in Ukraine and Poland, are some other significant factors that raise the alert for the defense against terrorist activities within Europe.

In contrast to the even recent past, the proliferation of easy and cheap travel by all means and the mass introduction of secure, cheap and speedy communication and technology to all citizens in Europe, adds another immense challenge to the authorities. Simple tools such as twitter, Google earth, Facebook, Skype and other didn't even exist or were in nascent form back in the Madrid bombings in 2004 or the London ones in 2005. Nowadays all these tools and a host of other applications can be used by agile and tech savvy terrorists as auxiliary elements for strike preparation and in addition to be manipulated as to pass around in the millions copies of proclamations and through the social media to create a wave of sensation. The case of the lone wolf Brevik (Although not a Jihadist) is a clear and recent case After all the essence of any terrorist act, is not the "act" itself, but the effect that will have in the public of the targeted society or institution.

Another issue that further supplements the hypothesis of the current article is the mass entrance of undocumented aliens from radicalized societies in Europe since 2005. It is roughly estimated by examining the data issued by various local authorities and those of FRONTEX and Europol, that over the past 6 years around 500,000 – 700,000 people have arrived in Europe from Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Maghreb, Iraq, Syria, West Bank-Gaza, Sudan, Nigeria, Egypt, Yemen, Mauritania, Somalia.

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Very few of those have returned back and those that remained few again have been documented, registered or identified in any state-related capacity. That along is another factor to be assessed for, bearing in mind that the overwhelming majority of these people are marginalized due to mostly objective conditions, meaning the lack of employment and social mobility opportunities in present day Europe.

Lastly, the gradual or "step-by-step" victory of the Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan vis-a-vis the international community-NATO provides clearly a boosting factor in psychological terms for the Jihadist worldwide. Quite a few may protest to that notion, but the is fact that 150,000 troops with the full backing of dozens of states cannot attain a safe passage without fearing an imminent attack against them, in no more than 5% of the Afghani state territory. Consequently that means that the war in that country has been gradually lost in terms of political outcome and not necessarily on military terms.

It is of wider knowledge that when NATO troops exit Afghanistan the Kabul government would not be able to withstand the Taliban more than a few weeks. As the deadline for an eventual exit is approaching (2014), Jihadists may from now plan their move in order to speed up the process and claim their victory, before the international community drafts a meaningful plan to protect the Kabul government and the moderate stratums of the Afghani society.

Ioannis Michaletos is an associate of the Institute for Defense & Security Analysis in Athens, Greece. He is a political and security consultant for the IHS Jane's Information Group and a regular contributor for security issues for World Press, Serbianna, Balkanalysis and a host of other online journals. He holds a BA in political science from the Essex University and an MSc in human resources management from the Luton-Bedford University. Mr. Michaletos leads the Southeast European office of the World Security Network Foundation, contributes to the BRIGHT magazine in issues of Balkan organized crime, and is a member of the FLARE network (European network of civil society against trans-national organized crime).

Kenya: Police Step Up Terror Watch At the Coast

Source: http://allafrica.com/stories/201203280079.html

Security forces have stepped up surveillance in the Coast Province following increased terrorism threats posed in the country by members of the Al Qaeda-linked Shabaab militants.

Police are particularly focussing on Islamic religious schools known as Madrassas, following intelligence reports that some of them are used to train and recruit youths into terrorism activities.

Some of the Madrassas under investigation are owned by individuals associated with persons who have been arrested, detained or prosecuted over terror-related charges in the past, according to the police.

"Our investigations are now concentrated on these schools. There is credible information that some of them are not involved in the proper trainings they are registered for," said Coast Province police Chief Aggrey Adoli.

Police believe some of the Madrassas that are under their watch are funded by the Al Qaeda.

Intelligence reports seen by Capital FM News show that police are particularly interested in two Madrassas located in the Likoni suburb and at Kanamai, off the Mombasa-Kilifi highway.

Police believe one of the Madrassas is owned and run by a man in his late 70â-'s who was once arrested and detained in a terror-related investigation but was later released for lack of evidence.

The old man, who police said is under active investigation on terrorism-related activities, is also a relative to a controversial Muslim cleric based in Mombasa and who has been in and out of the police cells in terror investigations.

Persistent raids at one of his Madrassas in Likoni forced him to close it down, before it was relocated to Kanamai.

"We are aware the Madrassa in Likoni was closed after our surveillance increased there," Police Spokesman Eric Kiraithe said, adding "the investigation is still going on."

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Last weekend, police visited the two Madrassas as part of their wider investigation but they did not find the owner who was said to be away.

"He remains on our radar, we want to question him over activities in the Madrassa," a senior officer in the security operation said.

Workers and some of the old man's relatives at

the Madrassa at the time could not reveal his whereabouts.

"He has not been around for a while. We do not know where he is and since he does not have a mobile phone it is difficult to locate him," a young man who identified himself as Abdalla said.

Abdalla could not state his relationship with the old man in question, but police said they have always known him as his son.

The old man's wife declined to speak to us, and instead yelled back saying "I don't have anything to do with journalists, your frequent visits here sometimes back put us to trouble, and you have portrayed the school as having terrorism links. Please go away."

She could not be drawn into discussions about her husband's whereabouts.

Multiple interviews with security agents actively involved in anti-terrorism investigations in the country revealed that they were also watching a Muslim cleric believed to have trained and inducted Mohammed Saddiq Odeh, a Palestinian or Jordanian former Al Qaeda operative who was sentenced to life

imprisonment in 2001 for involvement in the 1998 United States embassy bombings in East Africa.

"These people are always related. They usually induct their daughters to terrorism before marrying them off to their associates who are also linked to terrorism activities," one police officer said, in reference to the relationship between two Mombasa-based Muslim clerics on the police radar.

Also on the police radar is Aboud Rogo Mohamed (photo) who was arrested in Kikambala in January by the Anti Terrorism Police officers.

During a raid in his home at the time, police said they found him with 102 bomb detonators, an AK-47 gun loaded with 27 rounds of ammunition, a ceska pistol loaded with 10 bullets, a revolver and 82 rounds of ammunition.

He is out on bond, having appeared in court on terror-related charges.

Kiraithe said although Rogo is out on bond, he remains on their surveillance.

"Our investigation has not been closed, they are still very active on this man," Kiraithe said.

Rogo was released on bail after his arrest in 2003 over the bombing of the Kikambala hotel and acquitted of all charges on June 29, 2005.

Kiraithe concedes that their increased surveillance on terrorism activities in the country, and particularly in Mombasa was re-ignited by the announcement earlier in the year by Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri that they had now integrated the Somali terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

"We did not take this announcement lightly. Our surveillance particularly in Mombasa has been stepped up... we have several people of interest in our investigation whom we want to speak to. These are the people we are concentrated on and we will get them," Kiraithe said.

Counter-terror strategy faces university opposition

Source:http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2012/mar/16/counter-terror-strategy-university-backlash?newsfeed=true

The government's counter-terrorism strategy is facing opposition on university campuses over concerns it is discriminatory and encourages spying.

Student groups and lecturers have moved to distance themselves from Prevent, a Home

Office initiative that aims to combat violent extremism, after being asked to report Muslim students deemed vulnerable to radicalisation.

The National Union of Students (NUS) is expected to table a motion

at its conference next month condemning as "totally unacceptable" approaches by Prevent officers asking for details of student Islamic society members.

The motion, a draft of which has been seen by the Guardian, will call on delegates from across Britain to "stand in solidarity with those negatively affected by Prevent".

It adds: "The language, concepts and unspecific terms of definition used in the Prevent strategy are unhelpfully generalist and in some cases problematic, and could well be open to discriminatory interpretations."

The NUS says it received government assurances in September last year that student unions would no longer be approached to provide students' details, after the Guardian revealed university staff had been asked to inform on depressed or isolated Muslim students.

Since then, however, sources at the University of Bradford say they have been asked to disclose students' names and dates of birth to a liaison officer working as part of Prevent, who attended activist meetings on campus.

The university confirmed that it worked with counter-terror police as part of a programme involving "risk and tension monitoring", and that it had a member of staff who worked as a Prevent liaison officer. It denied the officer had requested names or monitored meetings.

On 6 February a home affairs committee review of Prevent concluded that students with extremist views were not always "subject to equal and robust challenge" at universities and recommended this be remedied with new government guidance.

The £60m strategy is facing rising resistance on campuses across the country, with a growing list of university unions – including those at Warwick, Manchester Metropolitan and Goldsmiths – saying they have declined offers to work in partnership with it.

A London-wide student manifesto calling for Prevent to be "reviewed extensively" has been authored by union representatives from King's College, the London School of Economics, University of the Arts London, Queen Mary and Imperial College.
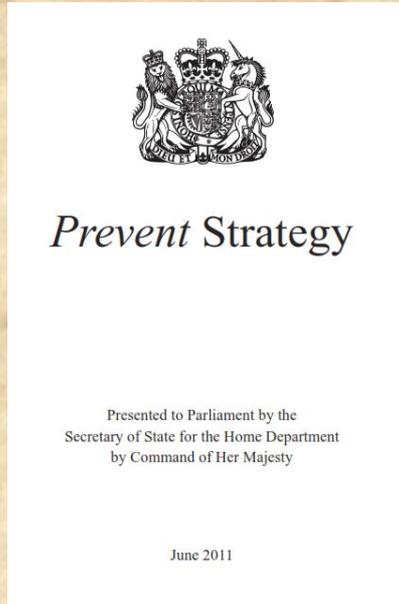
There is equal unease among university staff, some of whom have been offered training in how to detect and report warning signs that a student is a potential extremist.

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) said it was concerned that, despite far-right groups being identified as a possible threat, Muslims continued to be singled out as part of the strategy, predominantly targeted at combating Islamist extremism associated with or influenced by al-Qaida.

"We're happy with information and awareness raising; what we're not happy with is the idea that teachers and lecturers are going to be trained to monitor a specific ethnic group," said Norman Crowther, an ATL spokesman.

A Home Office spokesperson said: "Prevent aims to turn people away from violent extremism. It is not about spying or intelligence gathering. The Prevent strategy makes clear that universities have a responsibility to help protect vulnerable young people from radicalisation. The vast majority of them recognise this and take part in Prevent."

NOTE: You can download full document "*Prevent*" from the Newsletter's website – "CBRNE-CT Papers" section.

Lawlessness and terror: The Beduin kingdom of Sinai

By Zvi Mazel
Source: http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-EdContributors/Article.aspx?id=263865

Some 300,000 Beduin live in the vast Sinai peninsula – nearly three times the size of Israel – and more than a quarter of them still lead a nomadic existence. The

country is difficult of access, harsh, mostly mountainous and desert wilderness. Egypt has been finding it increasingly difficult to maintain its authority there.

Though Sinai has been part of Egypt from the dawn of history, Beduin tribes who settled there hundreds of years ago lived according to their own traditions and enjoyed a relative autonomy, mainly left alone by the central

government. They have their own judicial system based on ancient customs and traditions which ensure the homogeneity of their society. There was no real attempt to penetrate this society and subordinate it to the judicial system of the country until the middle of the 19th century.

Even then Cairo was essentially interested in ensuring the safety of the trade routes and protecting Muslims making their way to Mecca and Christian pilgrims going to the Santa Katharina monastery. Local personal and tribal conflicts and property issues were left to the traditional Beduin system. Even today, the uneasy coexistence between the Egyptian and Beduin judicial systems goes on.

When Sinai was under Israeli rule – from the Six Day War in 1967 to the evacuation of Sinai in 1982 according to the peace treaty, it laid down the basis of a tourist infrastructure which was later developed by Egypt and which turned the peninsula into one of the main source of foreign currency. Israeli

authorities enjoyed good relations with the Beduin and tried to improve their lot.

Once returned to Egypt, there was greater attention paid to the peninsula, now perceived as a buffer zone, while its tourist potential was being recognized. Efforts were made to develop the northern part of Sinai while new tourist infrastructure was built in the south. Special regulations were passed to prevent foreigners – i.e. Israelis – from purchasing land. The Beduin, however, were not part of that economic boom.

The new hotels in Sharm e-Sheikh and along the Eastern coast were staffed by thousands of employees recruited in Cairo; El Arish vacation resorts were built for the wealthy. Meanwhile the Beduin kept on tending their flocks and doing the most menials jobs; they had to turn to protests, sometimes violent, to get their villages linked to the electricity grid and obtain a steady water supply.

Resentment against the central government, especially the ministry of the interior, the police and security services built up and soon boiled over. Extremist Islamist organizations found a fertile ground among disgruntled Beduin, who founded a jihadist group which came to be known as "Tawhid and Jihad," leading to terror attacks on Sharm e-Sheikh and Taba in 2004 and 2005, after which thousands were arrested. Most were released, but some were judged and sentenced to long prison terms; others were kept in jail to exert pressure on family members.

These measures exacerbated the tension. Ordinary Beduin started banding together to hold protests and demand not only the release of their parents but more social justice; they wanted low cost housing and scholarships for

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their children; they also wanted the lands where they had been living or roaming for hundreds of years to be registered in their names. In 2007 the governor of North Sinai promised that action would be taken on all those issues, but little if anything was done.

Meanwhile, radical Islamist movements were pouring money into the peninsula, ensuring greater and greater collaboration with the Beduin. Smuggling in and out of Gaza brought it more and more revenues, while drugs and African immigrants were being introduced illegally into Israel. CNN and the London *Guardian* have published gruesome reports about the way these Africans are being abused by the Beduin, describing in graphic detail torture, rape and even organ harvesting. It is probably largely thanks to the Beduin that arms and missiles from Sudan – and now from Libya – flowed and keep on flowing into the Gaza strip.

Beduin groups grew stronger and bolder. Under cover of the anti-Mubarak demonstrations in January 2011 they conducted a daring raid in January 2011 on the al-Marg jail north of Cairo and freed Hamas leader Iman Nofel and the head of the Hezbollah cell in Egypt, Sami Shehab. The raiders were equipped with state of the art weapons and drove modern vehicles. This extremely complex operation could not have been planned and executed without the combined help of Hamas, Hezbollah and Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

With the fall of Mubarak there was a general relaxation of law and order throughout Egypt, but nowhere as badly as in Sinai. Fearing for their lives secret agents and regular security people melted away. Last July Beduin attacked

a police station in El Arish in broad daylight. Another group declared it was setting up an Islamic Emirate in North Sinai. Police roadblocks are routinely attacked. Beduin are now kidnapping foreign tourists on an almost daily basis to obtain the release of their brethren who have been arrested and jailed.

Twice they laid siege to the barracks of the multinational force in Sinai in charge of observing the implementation of the peace agreement with Israel. The pipeline bringing gas to Jordan and to Israel has been sabotaged 13 times – so far. Sinai is turning into a terror stronghold. Missiles directed at Eilat fortunately missed their mark, but last August a terror attack on Road 12 left eight Israeli dead.

Bedouin tribes in Sinai

As usual, Egyptian media are blaming Israel for this sorry mess, claiming that the peace treaty forbids Egypt to send troops to restore order in northern Sinai. They conveniently forget that Israel has agreed to a temporary increase of troops – and that Egypt has not deployed all the soldiers it could. Today it is no longer a question of using force. The government must open a real dialogue with the Beduin and try to settle at last the demands which have been a festering sore.

Israel watches with growing concern as the peninsula is turning into a lawless territory used by Hamas and other jihad organizations to plan and carry out attacks against its southern border. It could – and will – probably get worse when the Muslim Brothers form the next government. The Brothers are already saying that they want the border between Gaza and Egypt open. For the moment, the parliament is powerless to enforce its will. What is going to happen when a new president is elected, a new government sworn in and the army goes back to its barracks is anybody's guess.

Zvi Mazel is a former Ambassador to Egypt and a fellow at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.
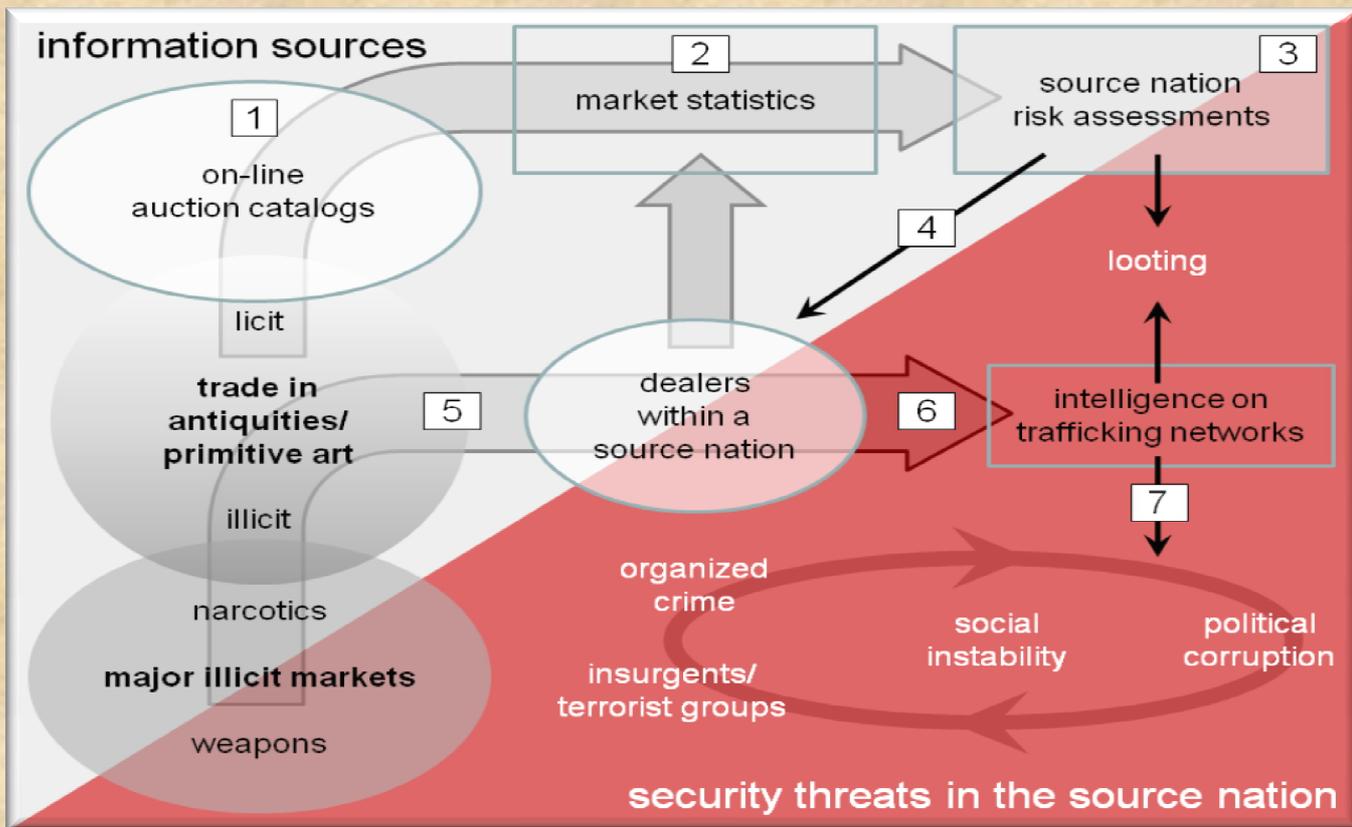
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Terrorists, Organized Crime Increase Teaming Efforts

By Robert K. Ackerman, *SIGNAL Online Exclusive*
Source:http://www.afcea.org/signal/articles/templates/Signal_Article_Template.asp?articleid=2933&zoneid=342

Securing the homeland will require closer cooperation among military and civilian government organizations as diverse threats adopt each others' tactics and techniques. Terrorists, smugglers and other organized crime entities have learned from each other and, in some cases, are joining forces to threaten Western democracies in new ways.

more apparent than in Afghanistan, he stated, where the Taliban continues to receive a large part of its revenue through heroin trade. William F. Wechsler, deputy assistant secretary of defense for counter narcotics and global threats, testified that more than 90 percent of world's heroin comes out of Afghanistan, and the parts of Afghanistan where that heroin

Source: http://culturalsecurity.net

Testifying before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, Michael A. Sheehan, assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict, described a menacing trend in which "terrorism, drug trafficking and other types of transnational organized crime are increasingly intertwined.

 "The convergence of crime, terrorism and insurgency is in my view a burgeoning geopolitical trend with grave implications for our national security," Sheehan declared.

Nowhere is the link between transnational organized crime, insurgency and terrorism

largely comes from are the parts where the Taliban has influence or even significant local control. "That is not an accident," Wechsler said. "The Taliban and the narcotics traders are interrelated. You can't go after one without going after the other."

He continued that terrorists groups are adopting criminal techniques to fundraise, which is a trend that U.S. officials see accelerating. And, criminal organizations are adopting terrorist techniques. For example, drug cartels in Mexico adopted the terrorist tactic of beheading people and posting grisly videos after seeing terrorists do the same.

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But another growing trend worries U.S. officials. Wechsler noted that terrorist organizations and criminal organizations that heretofore have been separate now are working together in ways that are new to U.S. officials. He cited the attempted assassination of the Saudi ambassador in the United States, in which the Quds force—an Iran-based terror group—tried to use the Mexican Zetas drug cartel to carry out the murder.

"We used to—and still do—think of states as sponsors of terror," Wechsler said. "There are also states that are sponsors of crime, that use criminal activity as a tool of the state, as a revenue producer of the state—and that's a dynamic that we are watching very closely."

Sheehan stated that various U.S. government agencies and organizations must increase their coordination to fight these multifaceted threats. "By integrating counterterrorism, counter narcotics and other types of transnational organized crime capabilities, resources and authorities, the impact of our actions are more strategic, more effective and [make] better use of available resources," he told the subcommittee.

"In order to confront increasingly networked threats, we need to be increasingly networked as a government," he explained. "Active threat networks will exploit the limitations the U.S. government often faces because of separate agency authorities, budgets and institutional cultures."

Sheehan cited the ongoing fight against an evolving al Qaida network as an example. Prevailing in this effort will require involving the global information environment. "We know that al-Qaida cannot be defeated by kinetic action alone. In order to counter the residence of al-Qaida's ideology, our approach must include a balance of capabilities implemented in close coordination with inter-agencies, our allies and local communities."

One way to bring U.S. assets to bear in this new fight is to employ unique analytical and defense intelligence tools. Sheehan said this would help break down the walls between law enforcement and intelligence to ensure that all the information that the United States possesses can be used to enhance the analysis of the financial networks that are used by adversaries to support themselves.

Wechsler noted that coordinated efforts among various agencies working across both organizational and international lines has paid dividends. Recently, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Department of the Treasury initiated an action against a Lebanese Canadian bank involved in drug trafficking from Latin America through West Africa into Europe. Drug money was laundered into used car sales in the United States, after which cars were brought to West Africa, and the money from those sales then was used to buy knockoff goods in China. That money was funneled back into Latin America. This global money laundering network was controlled by Hezbollah, which got much of the money. The coordinated U.S. government effort resulted in indictments and civil actions in U.S. courts for hundreds of millions of dollars, he added.

In that vein, Sheehan called for new Defense Department authorities for action. "Most of our authorities right now are narrowly construed toward counterterrorism, and those work," he pointed out. "For some countries, we may need a little more flexibility to go in to establish relationships that build upon their capacity to take on these threats. Some of these threats are not pure terrorism—extortion groups and criminal groups—so if we have a broader range of authorities, then we can respond more agilely to each country with a different set of programs."

Al-Qaeda 'could target UK youths'

Source: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-17606434

British youths from African communities could become radicalised as al-Qaeda looks to Africa to build its strength, the Rusi think tank has suggested.

It says such a development would pose new challenges for UK and other Western intelligence services.

It warns of potential for new or greater radicalisation among British youths from the Somali and other east and west African communities.

The government said it was tackling home-grown terrorist threats.

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Radicalisation has already been seen during the past 15 years among some young members of the Pakistani, North African and Indian communities in Britain, the report published by the Royal United Services Institute suggests.

Report author Valentina Soria said: "Most significant is the potential for radicalisation and then mobilisation of a new subset of British youths."

"The UK could soon be facing much greater radicalisation among the Somali minority and new radicalisation in some sections of other communities from east and west African countries."

This was because the "jihadist challenge" may be migrating across Saharan and Sub-Saharan Africa as the al-Qaeda leadership - weakened by the death of Osama Bin Laden - looks to partnerships to re-group and re-energise itself, the report says.

Western intelligence services have acknowledged that the terror threat has changed and shifted, including into Africa, with Somalia a particular focus of concern.

But this report suggests those intelligence services also face new challenges tracking the threat if "jihadism evolves and disperses into territories of ungoverned, or loosely governed, space across large stretches of the African continent".

Regarding Somalia, Ms Soria said foreign fighters now represented "a valuable, albeit still limited, source of manpower for al-Shabab", a Somali hardline Islamist group banned in the UK.

'Operational necessity'
It is "possible that the use of new terror tactics may have further alienated its African recruits who are mostly reluctant to get involved in suicide bombings", she said.

"As a result, the recruitment of foreign fighters could be read as a choice of operational necessity rather than as a move aimed to make al-Shabab the next al-Qaida."

She added that the "dynamics of jihadism in Africa may provoke direct terrorist attacks inside the UK" but said there had been "no direct public evidence of this happening".

Ms Soria said: "The UK cannot expect to remain immune from the 'spill-over' effects of events that could reshape part of the African continent."

A government spokeswoman said: "We are tackling the threat of home-grown terrorism with our new prevent strategy, which is challenging extremist ideology and tackling the radicalisation of vulnerable people.

"We are also working with governments in Africa to improve their capacity to tackle the terrorist threat."

Al Qaeda still after N.Y.C., NYPD chief Ray Kelly warns

Source: http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/al-qaeda-n-y-nypd-chief-ray-kelly-warns-article-1.1055664#ixzz1r5avwJcy

The ominous graphic posted on terrorism websites suggesting an Al Qaeda attack is yet another reminder that New York City is the No. 1 target for terrorists, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said Tuesday.

"It's not tied to any threat," Kelly said. "But it's obviously a cause of concern.

"It reminds us that New York is still very much on their (terrorists') minds."

The graphic, which depicts the New York skyline in movie-poster style, crossed the NYPD's radar early Monday.

The cops have their cyberexperts scrambling to figure out who posted it on the As Ansar forum, a website used by jihadists.

"Al Qaeda coming soon again in New York," blares the logo, which appears in bold yellow letters over a composite of the city's skyline.

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Deputy Commissioner Paul Browne, the   routinely scour the Internet, which he described

NYPD's top spokesman, said police analysts have determined software costing $16,000 was used to design the graphic, replete with 3-D images.

Kelly did not dismiss the possibility the graphic was posted as a joke, or to scare New Yorkers.

"They want to keep the message out there," Kelly said, in describing jihadist websites. "They want to give us a certain amount of angst and anxiety.

"It's part of their approach."

The commissioner said officers assigned to intelligence and counterterrorism duties

as "the new Afghanistan."

"That's where training happens," he said.

"That's where radicalization happens. It has been a very valuable tool for terrorists."

Kelly made his comments shortly before addressing a Police Headquarters gathering of Jewish leaders as part of the NYPD's pre-Passover security briefing.

As always, the NYPD will devote extra officers to Jewish neighborhoods and to houses of worship.

'Iranian Terror Cell Planning Attacks on Jewish, Israeli Targets in Turkey'

Source: http://www.algemeiner.com/2012/04/03/%E2%80%98iranian-terror-cell-planning-attacks-on-jewish-israeli-targets-in-turkey%E2%80%99/

Intelligence agencies are searching for members of Unit 400, a secret Iranian special-ops division of the Revolutionary Guard's elite Quds Force, which has been ordered to attack Jewish, Israeli and Western targets in Turkey, *Sky News* reported on Sunday.

Intelligence sources told *Sky News* that in recent months Unit 400 has been developing "a standing operating procedure for carrying out an attack in Turkey against Western targets as well as Israeli and Jewish [ones]." The source added that intelligence assessments have shown "these procedures are in a very advanced stage, and that the intention is to act on the plans very soon."

The sources also told *Sky News* that in the wake of growing threats of possible military action against Iran's nuclear program, Unit 400 has been instructed to carry out "more frequent and more daring terror attacks around the world as a demonstration of 'Iran's asymmetric power.'"

From 2009 onwards several attempted attacks were perpetrated around the world, which in retrospect

were identified by various international intelligence sources as to have been carried out by Unit 400:

- In 2011, six Turkish citizens were injured during an attack blamed on Unit 400 on the Israeli consul in Istanbul.
- Unit 400 has also been identified as having been behind the failed assassination plot to kill the Saudi Ambassador to Washington in 2011.
- Unit 400 has carried out revenge missions in early 2012 on Israeli diplomats world wide. They have been targeted in Tbilisi, New Delhi and Bangkok by small teams belonging to Unit 400. For example, in New Delhi the wife of a security official in the Israeli embassy was injured by a 'sticky bomb' that was attached to her car. The attack in New Delhi and use of the car bomb could be seen as a way for Unit 400 to signal that it was taking revenge.
- The intelligence source also spoke of an impending attack in Turkey.

The commanders of Unit 400 have been identified as Hamed Abdellahi and Majid Alavi, who is a former deputy minister in Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security. Once Khamenei has decided to conduct an attack, Unit 400 activates a cell and recruits in country if required

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US puts $10m bounty on Lashkar-e-Taiba's Hafiz Saeed

Source: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-17594018

Hafiz Saeed was held after the Mumbai attacks but released without charge

The US has offered a $10m (£6.2m) bounty for Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, the founder of Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba [LeT].

Mr Saeed now heads the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) group, widely seen as a front for LeT - which is blamed for the 2008 Mumbai attacks in India.

In a statement, JuD described the US move as "yet another attack on Islam and Muslims".

Both JuD and Lashkar-e-Taiba are blacklisted by the US.

The BBC's Tulip Mazumdar in Islamabad says that despite being on a national "watch-list" in Pakistan, Mr Saeed moves around the country relatively freely.

The US announcement puts Mr Saeed on a par with the Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Omar when it comes to "most wanted terrorists", our correspondent adds.

Mr Saeed was in Islamabad last week protesting outside parliament - calling for Pakistan to cut all ties with both the US and India. On Tuesday he spoke by telephone on a television chat show.

He has consistently denied any suggestion that either he or JuD - which he says is a charity - have played any role in militant violence.

The Pakistani government has not commented on the US announcement, but it has long argued that it cannot take action against him

unless police or the courts formally instigate proceedings.

Pakistan arrested Lashkar-e-Taiba's senior leaders after the Mumbai attacks. But most of them, including Mr Saeed, were later freed on appeal.

The US has also offered a $2m bounty for Abdul Rehman Makki, Mr Saeed's brother-in-law and co-founder of Lashkar.

The three-day rampage by 10 gunmen in Mumbai in November 2008 left 165 people dead. Nine of the attackers were also killed.

India blamed the Mumbai attacks on LeT, and India-Pakistan ties hit rock bottom.

The sole surviving gunman, Pakistani national Mohammad Ajmal Amir Qasab, was captured and sentenced to death by a court. His appeal is pending.

'Most wanted'

Mr Saeed figures prominently on a list of "most wanted" given to Pakistan by India.

"Hafiz Mohammad Saeed is a former professor of Arabic and engineering, as well as the founding member of Jamaat-ud-Dawa, a radical Deobandi Islamist organisation dedicated to installing Islamist rule over parts of India and Pakistan,

REWARDS FOR JUSTICE LIST
- Ayman al-Zawahiri: $25m
- Mullah Omar: $10m
- Hafiz Saeed: $10m
- Abu Du'a: $10m
- Yasin al-Suri: $10m
- Hakimullah Mehsud: $5m
- Jamal Mohammad al-Badawi: $5m
- Sirajuddun Haqqani: $5m
- Wali-ur Rahman: $5m
- Hafiz Abdul Rahman Makki: $2m

The US State Department's Rewards for Justice website describes Mr Saeed as "a Pakistani citizen" with "red hair" and "brown eyes".

and its military branch, Lashkar-e-Taiba," the website says.

India welcomed the reward, saying it sent a strong signal to LeT members that "the international community remains united in combating terrorism" and bringing to justice those behind the Mumbai attacks.

But the JuD statement said that it will only serve to add to anti-American sentiments among Muslims.

JuD spokesman Yahya Mujahid said the Americans had "done this in panic" because the JuD is running public campaigns against US drone attacks in Pakistan and against the Pakistani government's plans for reopening Nato supply routes to Afghanistan.

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The supply routes were closed down in November when 24 Pakistani soldiers on the border with Afghanistan were accidentally killed in a US air strike.

Mr Mujahid said that JuD was also being targeted because of its opposition to Pakistani plans to grant trade concessions to India.

"The Americans are being influenced by Indian propaganda," Mr Mujahid said.

Interpol has issued an arrest notice against Mr Saeed for his role in the Mumbai attacks and

the US has designated LeT and JuD as "Foreign Terrorist Organisations".

Cables released by Wikileaks in December 2010, attributed to US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, said Hafiz Saeed and Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, head of Lashkar-e-Taiba, "continue to run" LeT "despite being detained for their role" in the Mumbai attacks.

The message alleged that Mr Lakhvi and Mr Saeed "planned, directed and executed" the group's attacks in South Asia.

Islamist site threatens strike 'at heart of Berlin'

Source: http://www.expatica.com/de/news/german-news/islamist-site-threatens-strike-at-heart-of-berlin-_219635.html

A statement posted Wednesday on an Islamist website used by Al-Qaeda threatened a strike at the "heart of Berlin" unless Germany

releases a jailed female militant.

"This is a special message to the old lady of Germany (Chancellor Angela) Merkel... you should learn from what happened in France," said the unsigned statement on one of the group's main sites.

"Immediately release Um Seif Al-Islam Al-Ansariya before another Mohammed Merah strikes at the heart of Berlin," it added, reference to the gunman who murdered seven people in Toulouse, France in March.

Al-Qaeda's north Africa branch, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), says it is holding German engineer Edgar Raupach, kidnapped in Kano, Nigeria in January.

It wants to exchange him for Felis Lowitz, whose Muslim name was given as Um Seif Al-Islam Al-Ansariya.

"Many Muslims have heard about what you have done to Um Seif...you tore off her veil and tore off her clothes," said the statement, the first posting on Shamukh al-Islam website since it went offline, along with several other jihadist sites, more than a week ago.

Nigerian authorities have detained five men, including a Mauritanian, believed to be linked to the January kidnapping.

Four of the suspects were arrested in a raid on a supermarket in the northern city of Kano owned by the Mauritanian, while the fifth was detained in a separate raid.

Nigerian security officials said at the time of the March raids that an AQIM operation manual was found in a computer seized during the arrest.

'CIA failed to give Britain details of terror plot to protect secret sources'

Source: http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/news/uk/cia-failed-to-give-britain-details-of-terror-plot-to-protect-secret-sources-7621438.html

US intelligence chiefs refused to pass to Britain full details of a "Mumbai-style" terrorist plot

targeting London because of concerns that secret sources could be exposed in our courts.

The CIA had told MI6 18 months ago of al Qaeda plans against several cities in Europe, which suggested that the seizing and killing of hostages could be involved.

The plot was in its early stages, but the US agents stopped short of passing on everything they knew in order to protect the identity of their sources.

British intelligence officers were forced to look deeper into the information they had received, with their investigations ultimately leading to the identification of several terror suspects.

Justice Secretary Ken Clarke, defending plans to extend secret court hearings to civil cases, said that the case highlighted the reluctance of US intelligence agencies to fully share information after the Binyam Mohamed case in 2010.

A court ruling led to the publication of seven paragraphs of intelligence material supplied in confidence to Britain by the CIA relating to the torture of the former Guantanamo Bay detainee.

Ministers claimed at the time that the disclosure would harm the flow of future information from the US.

Mr Clarke said: "The Americans have got nervous that we are going to start revealing some of their information, and they have started cutting back on what they disclose."

A senior British security source added: "The urgent threat-to-life operational material is still coming. But we see strong signs of a greater reluctance to share some of the other stuff — the building blocks, the bits that let you put the jigsaw together."

David Anderson QC, the Government's terrorism watchdog, today said that there had been a "diminution" of intelligence sharing, but insisted the Government's "well-founded fears" about a drop in intelligence sharing should not be used as a "scare tactic" to introduce secret trials in "unrelated" civil cases.

Terror's 'Invisible Women'

By Karla J. Cunningham

Source: http://www.rand.org/commentary/2012/04/04/LAT.html

Women are becoming more lethal. In jihadist organizations — including even Al Qaeda, which had long banned females from violent roles — women are increasingly taking part in terrorist actions.

Since 1985, terrorism's so-called invisible women have accounted for a quarter of fatal attacks in Iraq, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, Morocco and Palestine. My research found that by mid-2008, women had acted as suicide bombers 21 times in Iraq's markets and other civilian venues patronized by Shiites.

Other research has demonstrated that since 2002 women have carried out fully 50% of suicide attacks in Sri Lanka, Turkey and Chechnya.

So why do we think of violent jihadists as largely male? One reason is that terrorism observers, mostly men who have historically focused on men at war, tend to view women who participate in acts of terrorism as exceptions. Given women's increasingly violent roles in jihadist organizations, however, researchers overlook females as effective killers at our peril.

Chechen women have been so successful as terrorists that Chechen leadership has now shifted to using them more than men. The Sri Lankan terrorist organization Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam managed to kill India's prime minister in a one-on-one suicide attack because a female terrorist was able to get close to him where a male terrorist might have had more difficulty.

The increasing participation in violence by female jihadists represents, in part, a generational shift in their attitudes toward violence. In the past, these women seldom went beyond such

activities as gun-running, harboring fugitives, fund-raising and intelligence — activities that oiled the terrorist machine and enabled it to operate smoothly but kept women at a remove from violence. Now many are no longer content to sit on the sidelines.

In 2008, Ayman Zawahiri, then second in command of Al Qaeda and perhaps now its leader, allowed no female bombers in Al Qaeda. He told female supporters their role was to stay home and raise children. But then the next year his wife, Omaima Hassan, defied him and went online to encourage women to become more active in jihad.

Part of the reason male jihadists have accepted more female participation is that terrorist organizations have lost many men through counter-terrorism. As women have volunteered to become suicide bombers, they proved to be highly successful in hiding their bombs — and their intent to use them — under religious clothing. They raise fewer suspicions, and male jihadists appreciate that women can take advantage of the lack of female security personnel and gender-biased enforcement to get closer to their targets.

For their part, a younger generation of female jihadists has come to believe that acts of violence can be just as liberating politically and spiritually for women as for men. A religious woman can deflect her parents' or husband's objections by invoking the name of religion, which trumps all.

The new mantra is "even women must fight."

The U.S. has also produced its female terrorists. "Jihad Jane," born Colleen R. LaRose, seemed to self-radicalize via the Internet. She recruited a female Muslim convert, Jamie Paulin-Ramirez, who moved with her 6-year-old son to Europe to take part in jihad. LaRose was arrested in 2009 and eventually charged with several terrorism-related crimes. She pleaded guilty to all counts. Other indictments of U.S. women have linked them to supporting roles in terrorist organizations (including Al Qaeda and Hezbollah) in Somalia, Afghanistan, Egypt and Britain.

The women-as-terrorist trend is highly likely to continue. Al Qaeda recently launched an Arabic-language magazine targeting women — much as its English-language magazine, Inspire, targets men — and urging them to take up the jihadist mantle. In their writings for the magazine, women also attempt to shame men for not being active enough.

As women step up their participation, terrorist-watchers need to keep pace. Terrorism's "invisible women" need to be counted and countered not only by the U.S., but by all countries that harbor them.

Karla Cunningham is a political scientist at the Rand Corp. She writes regularly on female terrorism.

West Africa's MOJWA Militants — Competition for al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb?

By Dario Cristiani
Source: http://www.jamestown.org

With a deadly suicide attack on a security facility in southern Algeria, a newly formed group of West African militants has demonstrated it is a serious security threat and a potential competitor to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

As the gates opened for the daily food delivery to the headquarters of Algeria's gendarmerie in the southern city of Tamanrasset, a second vehicle loaded with explosives rushed in behind. Seconds later a series of blasts collapsed the building's external wall, injuring 23 (*La Tribune* [Algiers] March 3). After a second pre-planted bomb was defused near

the headquarters, Algerian police apprehended a Malian and an Algerian who were trying to flee Tamanrasset with weapons, explosives and €7,000 (*El Khabar* [Algiers], March 4).

Responsibility for the attack was claimed by the Jamaat Tawhid wa'l-Jihad fi Garbi Afriqiya (Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa - MOJWA), a new group supposedly created after a split within AQIM (*Jeune Afrique*, March 3). The attack was carried out by two allegedly Malian suicide bombers, using a Toyota with 200kg of TNT (*Le Temps D'Algérie*, March 6). MOJWA emerged for the first time

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in December 2011, when it claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of three European aid workers from a Saharawi refugee camp in Algeria in October 2011 (*La*

Repubblica [Rome], March 3; *La Tribune* [Algiers], March 5). The group is demanding a ransom of about €30 million for their liberation (*L'Expression* [Algiers], March 3).

In a December 2011 video, six members of the group claimed that their references are Osama Bin Laden, Mullah Omar and several local Islamist historical figures, such as al-Hajj 'Umar ibn Sa'id Tall, 'Uthman Dan Fodio and Amadou Cheikhou, three key figures in the history of

West African Islam and the regional anti-colonial struggle (*Tahalil* [Nouakchott], December 18, 2011). The group also threatened France, given its past as a colonizer in the region and its present role in the local security configuration (*Le Figaro* [Paris], January 3). MOJWA is allegedly guided by a Mauritanian, Hamada Ould Muhammad Kheirou (a.k.a. Abu Qumqum) (*Le Temps*

D'Algérie, March 4). Mauritanian authorities have issued an international arrest warrant for the MOJWA leader (Carrefour de la République Islamique de Mauritanie., March 4). A possible explanation for this split is to be found in AQIM's resistance to expanding its leadership to fighters coming from countries other than Algeria.

The "Sahelization" of AQIM is the result of a decade-long process that started with the weakening of the now defunct Groupe Islamique Armée (GIA) in the late 1990s and the retreat of its successor, the Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC), to two strongholds - the Berber-inhabited Kabylia in the east and the Sahara/Sahel region in the south. However, the shift in geographical focus had more to do with AQIM's financial needs and economic activities than with jihad. The largely ineffective control of the Sahel states offered AQIM a number of illicit business opportunities, the most remunerative being the kidnapping of Westerners and smuggling The changing geography of AQIM, however, did not result in the ethnic pluralization of its leadership. It remained substantially an Algerian group in its command and, although much more "internationalized" in terms of rhetoric and strategic aims following the merger with al-Qaeda, its strategic priority and main target has firmly remained Algeria.

Tamanrasset is somehow different from other Algerian cities, as its historical, cultural, social and political features are much more rooted in Saharan than Mediterranean dynamics. [1] Given its cultural diversity and its strategic importance in controlling this area, Algerian authorities have always tried to boost control over Tamanrasset through a massive security presence, although this control vanishes in the enormous desert region outside the city.

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The attack on Tamanrasset is consistent with the self-claimed aim of MOJWA to pursue jihad in West Africa as the city is home to the Comité d'état-major opérationnel conjoint (Committee of Joint Chiefs - CEMOC), the structure for regional counterterrorism cooperation between Algeria, Mali, Niger and Mauritania. Hitting Tamanrasset is a symbolic warning that cooperative regional efforts to face the terrorist threat will be unsuccessful. The attack also demonstrates a strong operational capability - Tamanrasset is a highly militarized city, being the home of the Algerian Army's 6th division. The attack then implies that MOJWA can count on a wide range of connivances and collusions, including the support of loyal tribesmen, an ability to smuggle weapons and explosives into the city and the availability of volunteers from the surrounding areas for suicide missions.

The resurgence in terrorist attacks and clashes between security forces and jihadist militants indicates the greater availability of explosive devices and weapons following the collapse of Qaddafi's Libya. With the largely Tuareg Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) seizing the major cities of northern Mali, the security situation in Western Africa is likely to continue to deteriorate in the coming months; Boko Haram has increased its operational profile in northern Nigeria, Senegal had some problems during the electoral process, Niger is facing a serious food crisis and, along with Algeria, is facing new flows of refugees from northern Mali. Given the structural weakness of states in the region and the permanent instability characterizing these territories, it is possible that one of the ambitions of this new group might be to exploit this situation in order to enhance its operational profile.

Marking a clear dividing line between conjecture and factual evidence is always particularly troublesome when dealing with the jihadist phenomenon in this region. According to the claim made by MOJWA, it differs from AQIM in strategic priorities, internal organization and ideological foundations. The attack in Tamanrasset and the non-Algerian leadership are consistent with this claim. The real question is whether this group has truly severed itself from AQIM, representing a potential regional competitor in both in the jihadist domain and more mundane smuggling activities, or is it simply another sub-group of the already internally fragmented AQIM, working more specifically in the territories of western Africa?

If MOJWA is truly independent of AQIM, it may be competing with AQIM for scarce resources in the region by increasing its jihadist profile through operations like the attack in Tamanrasset. It could also prove to be a competitor in terms of recruitment, as it would be much more attractive to those West African fighters who want to fight their own governments rather than focus specifically on Algeria. Fragmented groups could, in some ways, be a more difficult threat to handle in the short term, as the possible competition among them could trigger a race to enhance their respective operational profiles by carrying out attacks to show their strength. In the long term, however, this fragmentation could represent a smaller strategic threat, since a larger and more geographically widespread group can represent a more serious strategic threat.

If, however, MOJWA is merely an arm of AQIM, that would mean the end of the simple "economic functionality" of the Sahelian space, so far fundamental as an area of wealth production and training, but whose importance was neglected operationally In this case, this group will enhance the operational profile of AQIM in the region. Given the developments in northern Mali and northern Nigeria, as well as the wider regional increase in instability since the deterioration of security conditions in several countries of the area, then an enhanced operational jihadist profile in Western Africa will bind together these several scenarios of crisis into a greater arc, stretching from Nigeria to the Mediterranean coast of Algeria.

Note:
1. See Geoff D. Porter, "Curtailing Illicit and Terrorist Activity in Algeria's Tamanrasset," CTC Sentinel, August 15, 2008, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/curtailing-illicit-and-terrorist-activity-in-algeria%E2%80%99s-tamanrasset.

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The New Mastermind of Jihad

Source:http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303299604577323750859163544.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

Mohamed Merah, the 23-year-old Islamist gunman who hunted down three Jewish children and a rabbi after murdering three French paratroopers in Toulouse last month, didn't act alone. In his journey from the slums of Toulouse, to the local mosques, to the terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan that he described to French police, to filming his murder of the terrified children in order to post video clips on the web, Mr. Merah was following a path marked out years earlier by the coldblooded jihadist theoretician Abu Musab al-Suri.

European Pressphoto Agency
Abu Musab al-Suri, in an undated photo released by the U.S. government's Rewards for Justice program around 2004. He's been called 'the most dangerous terrorist you've never heard of.

What is perhaps more disturbing, Mr. al-Suri was recently set free from prison in Damascus, Syria, and his current whereabouts are unknown. Turned over to Syria after his capture by the CIA in late 2005, Mr. al-Suri was released sometime in December (according to intelligence sources and jihadist websites) by the regime of President Bashar al-Assad—a move apparently intended to warn the West of the consequences for opposing his rule.

Barely noticed in the midst of Mr. Assad's own brutal assaults on civilians, Mr. al-Suri's release may well contribute to the emergence of more attackers like Mr. Merah in the West. "His videos are already being reuploaded. His audios, reposted," wrote Jarret Brachman, a former CIA analyst and the former director of West Point's Center for Combating Terrorism, in a blog post after the news of Mr. al-Suri's release first appeared on jihadist sites.

Once called "the most dangerous terrorist you've never heard of" by CNN, Mr. al-Suri, whose real name is Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, served in the days before 9/11 as the facilitator who took Western reporters to meet with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan. Photographs of him from those trips show a well-built man with pale white skin, a red beard and blue eyes who—Afghan garb aside—would not look out of place in an Irish pub or a cafe in Brussels.

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Associated Press
Mr. al-Suri in a photo released by the U.S. government's Rewards for Justice program around 2005. Mr. al-Suri scolded Osama bin Laden for having 'caught the disease of screens, flashes, fans and applause.'

Mr. al-Suri's plans for a wave of "individual jihad" in the West are contained in "A Call to a Global Islamic Resistance," a 1,600-page book that he published on the Web in 2005, shortly before he was apprehended in Pakistan with a $5 million CIA bounty on his head. The manifesto combines strikingly clearheaded historical analysis with trenchant commentary on what he saw as two decades of strategic and operational failures by jihadists. The destruction of the World Trade Center was a short-term public-relations success for al Qaeda, Mr. al-Suri conceded, but American cruise missiles had made short work of the group's havens in Afghanistan, and Western special forces and intelligence agencies had decimated the ranks of its fighters and crippled the global jihadist movement.

What Mr. al-Suri learned from the Afghan debacle and from al Qaeda's subsequent defeat in Iraq was that jihadists were all but helpless in battle against modern Western armies. In place of old-fashioned hierarchical terror organizations, which had failed, he called for a global struggle in which shadowy motivators and facilitators would prompt jihadists to train and arm themselves in independent, self-generating terror cells that would target Western civilians. His goal: a relentless campaign of exemplary acts of violence under a single ideological banner, culminating in the use of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. al-Suri has been credited by Western European intelligence agencies and police with drafting the blueprints for the train bombings in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005, as well as with helping to shape Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's terror campaign in Iraq. Apprehended on Oct. 31, 2005 by the Pakistani intelligence service, he was turned over to the CIA, which sent him back to his native Syria. He was "treated well during his incarceration" of six years, according to an Islamist spokesman in London, Dr. Yasser al-Siri. Some Islamists place him now in Syria; others suggest that he was flown to Iran, where he resided along with other top figures in al Qaeda after the organization's defeat in Afghanistan, before he made his way to Pakistan.

One of the chief exponents of Mr. al-Suri's brand of jihadism was the Yemini-American cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, who helped to motivate Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan to kill 13 colleagues in November 2009 at the U.S. Army base in Fort Hood, Texas. Mr. Awlaki was also instrumental in producing a slick, downloadable English-language magazine called Inspire, which contained bomb-making recipes along with long excerpts from Mr. al-Suri's writings.

Mr. al-Suri is interesting, said Gilles Kepel, the French political scientist who is widely considered the world's leading authority on Islamist radicals, "because he is part of the second generation of the jihadist movement, the ones who were concerned with the failure of mobilization after 9/11." For Mr. al-Suri, according to Prof. Kepel, the failure of the 9/11 attacks to rouse global Muslim outrage was compounded by the failure of the jihadist terror campaign in Iraq, and by subsequent Western success in reducing what was once a global movement into increasingly isolated archipelagos of local movements and causes.

Mr. al-Suri held Osama bin Laden personally responsible for sticking to outmoded methods of organization and warfare that made al Qaeda easy prey for Western armies and intelligence services. His direct communications

with bin Laden, some of which were recovered from a hard drive obtained in Kabul in 2001 by Journal reporter Alan Cullison, were characteristically blunt. "We are in a ship that you are burning on false and mistaken grounds," he wrote, accusing bin Laden of having "caught the disease of screens, flashes, fans and applause."

In a meeting of the leadership of al Qaeda held in northern Iran in 2002, as reported by Brynjar Lia of the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment, Mr. al-Suri issued a strong call for the movement to abandon its hierarchical structure or face annihilation by the West—a call that other senior jihadists ignored. He repeated his message in his magnum opus, warning that "If we insist on using these methods under the current circumstances, it is—in my opinion—like committing suicide." Now that al Qaeda has been crippled and its leadership killed or jailed, Mr. al-Suri appears to have won both the ideological and the practical battle.

Born in Aleppo, Syria, Mr. al-Suri is hardly a friend of the Assad family or the Syrian regime. He joined the Muslim Brotherhood while a student and then rose to become a member of the Brotherhood's military command in 1982 during the ill-fated uprising in the city of Hama,

which was brutally crushed by Hafez al-Assad, the current president's father.

Mr. al-Suri fled to France and then to Madrid, where he met and married a Spanish woman named Elena Moreno Cruz, who converted to Islam and accompanied him on his subsequent journeys. Ms. Cruz furnished him with an EU passport, and he has remained, by several accounts, deeply in love with her.

In "Architect of Global Jihad," a scholarly biography of Mr. al-Suri published in 2008, the Norwegian expert Mr. Lia portrays him as the most brilliant and dangerous ideologue of his cohort of radicals, "a dissident, a critic and an intellectual" who put "hard-nosed realism before religious wish-fulfillment and pragmatic long-term strategies before utopianism"— qualities that would be admirable if he were not a master terrorist.

The fact that Mr. al-Suri is now free is likely to make his theories more visible and popular in jihadist circles, even if he doesn't succeed in planning or inspiring another mass casualty attack like the train bombings in Madrid and London. His release also serves as a reminder that Mr. Assad's continuing hold on power in Syria is a threat not only to his own people but also to the civilian populations of the West.

Mr. Samuels is a contributing editor of Harper's Magazine.

Talking to Terrorists: A Personal Journey from the IRA to Al Qaeda

By A Faizur Rahman
Source: http://www.dnaindia.com/lifestyle/review_book-review-talking-to-terrorists_1672969

Author: Peter Taylor
Publisher: HarperPress
Pages: 383
Price: Rs450

In his *Meditations*, the great Roman emperor and stoic philosopher, Marcus Aurelius had written; "Facts stand wholly outside our gates; they are what they are, and no more; they know nothing about themselves, and they pass no judgment upon themselves." This aphorism is strikingly true in the case of BBC investigative journalist Peter Taylor's latest book, *Talking to Terrorists*, which places before the world some hard (and hard-hitting) facts on terrorism and how it is being countered today.

And it is up to us, the believers in justice and fairness, to use "our own guide and ruler, Reason" — to quote Aurelius again — and judge them. Lest we act in haste, Taylor cautions us that the word "terrorist" is not easy to define and is therefore effectively banned on the BBC World Service and Reuters. He himself tries to avoid using it in his work and sometimes puts it in inverted commas "to indicate a degree of equivocation" over its meaning.
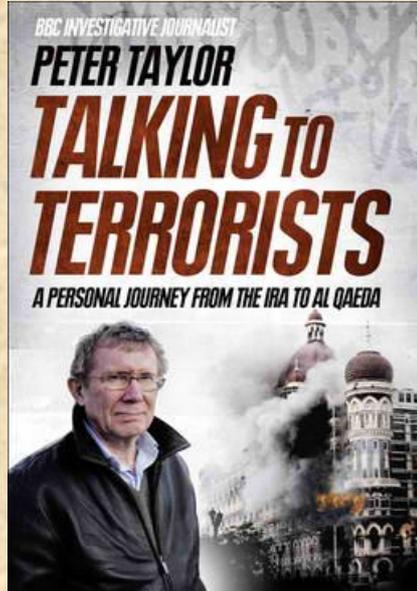
Citing the Northern Ireland peace process, Taylor initiates his argument and points to how a seemingly intractable conflict was resolved when the British government recognised the reality "that it would have to talk to the IRA, and make the compromises necessary to bring the conflict to an end." Keeping this as the template Taylor devotes the rest of the book — more than three-fourths of it — to al Qaeda,right from its conception "in the mountains and sand of Afghanistan" in the late 70s, down to the killing of Osama bin Laden in May 2011.

The crux of Taylor's thesis is that retributive violence is no answer to extremism and that terrorists must be talked to in order to understand their motivation and to explore why they are prepared to kill for a cause, be it secular or religious. Taylor's talents have clearly been honed by the vantage of his nearly 40 years' experience in reporting terrorism. His insightful analysis, which exhibits such skills fully, is also an excellent primer for the youth to understand and ward off attempts by terrorist outfits at radicalising them through misinterpreted theology. It is also a warning to governments against resorting to torture under euphemistic sobriquets like "enhanced interrogation techniques" with the conviction that it is the only means through which information could be elicited from terrorists.

Part of Taylor's penetrating scrutiny is the process of talking to terrorists face to face in their prison cells, and this is where he contributes the most to our understanding of the threat posed by organisations like the al Qaeda. Almost all the militants he interviews give one common reason for their radicalisation: blind US support to Israel, the presence of American troops on Muslim lands, and "Russian atrocities" against the Muslims of Chechnya. For instance, Salim Boukhari, a young Algerian Muslim serving a 12-year sentence in Germany for terror activities, laments that "to see the Palestinians suffering like this, it's hard. Israel does what it likes and no one is trying to stop them. It isn't fair. All the time America is helping Israel." But what ultimately made Boukhari cross the Rubicon

was the war in Chechnya, which he wanted to join "to fight the aggression of the Russians."

Similar feelings, mostly against the US and Israel, are expressed by many others, including Abu Bakar Bashir of Jemaah Islamiyah and a former Guantanamo detainee whom Taylor is allowed to meet at a Saudi rehabilitation centre in Riyadh, on the condition that he will not name him. When asked by Taylor if he was a terrorist, this "most hardened former *jihadi*" denied it vehemently, saying; "I didn't kill any women, children or innocent people. That's what the Israelis are doing in Gaza and the US in Iraq."

Although Taylor strongly denounces the violence unleashed by al Qaeda, he feels that engaging such outfits may be the only way forward. According to him, elements of the aforementioned reasons for war against the West must be "up for discussion", particularly the withdrawal of Western forces from Iraq and Afghanistan, and a reduction in America's support of Israel.

The invasion of Iraq, says Taylor, without a shred of evidence to link Saddam and 9/11, provided Osama with an opportunity to recruit more supporters for his cause. As proof, he quotes the evidence Baroness Manningham-Buller gave to the Chilcot Inquiry, where the former Director of MI5 stated: "Our involvement in Iraq radicalised … a whole generation of young people … who were attracted to the ideology of Osama Bin Laden …" But the US continues to ignore these facts.

But the most chilling fact that *Talking To Terrorists* brings out is the use of "enhanced interrogation techniques" (EITs) that were authorised by the Bush administration in the wake of 9/11. These included physical torture such as waterboarding, tying a dog leash to the detainee's chain and leading him through a series of dog tricks, sleep and toilet deprivation, facial and abdominal slaps, electric shocks and beating the testicles with a metal rod. As if this was not enough, the detainees were

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psychologically tormented by insults to Islam and desecration of the Quran. Taylor reproduces the damning conclusion of the Senate Armed Services Committee, which included John McCain as a senior member. The Committee, in its December 2008 report, conceded that it was the "top officials" who authorised such torture and that America needed "to own up to its mistakes so that we can rebuild some of the goodwill that we have lost."

More recently, the UN special rapporteur of torture, Juan Mendez, accused the US government of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment towards Bradley Manning, the US soldier who was arrested in May 2010 on charges of being the WikiLeaks source. Mendez reveals that the US military kept Manning under solitary confinement for 23 hours a day over an 11-month period. Expressing shock and disappointment at such iniquitous practices, Taylor cites his interviews with FBI interrogators Edward Needham, Ali Soufan and Steve Gaudin (who had de-briefed several terrorists) to prove that torture to elicit intelligence is counterproductive and hence, not the way to deal with terrorists, although it may yield results occasionally.

But the recent Quran burning incident at a US military base and the ruthless massacre of 16 unarmed civilians (including women and children) by an American soldier, both in Afghanistan, clearly show that lessons have not been learnt. This makes Peter Taylor's thesis all the more relevant.

Faizur Rahman is secretary general of Islamic Forum for the Promotion of Moderate Thought.

Hero Dogs of 9/11

Source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D91GQRX3YdY

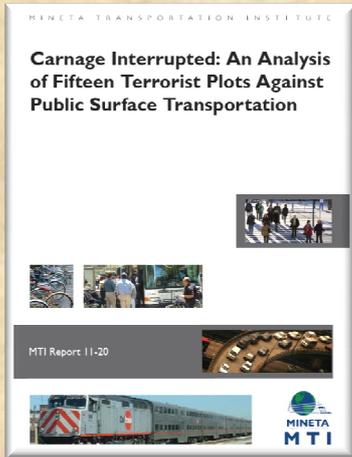▶ See also: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXLivftY4qo&feature=related

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Carnage Interrupted: An Analysis of Fifteen Terrorist Plot against Public Surface Transportation

Principal Investigator: Brian Michael Jenkins
Source: http://transweb.sjsu.edu/project/2979.html

This report examines 13 terrorist plots against public surface transportation that were uncovered and foiled by authorities between 1997 and 2010 and two failed attempts to carry out attacks. Certainly, this is not the total universe of foiled or failed terrorist plots in these years, but they were selected on the basis of what is known about them and the accessibility of information. The report focuses on terrorist plots in the West. Seven of the 15 plots took place in the United States, and four occurred in the United Kingdom. These two countries figure prominently as targets of terrorism, and in addition, American and British officials have dealt with terrorist plots through publicized arrests and trials, which provide additional information. Although motive was not a criterion in the selection of the plots, all but one involve individuals or groups inspired by al Qaeda's ideology of violent global jihad against the West. The exception is the 1997 Flatbush plot, in which two terrorists, both of whom had connections with Hamas, angered by events in Palestine, simply wanted to kill as many Jews as possible to express their opposition to U.S. support for Israel. Other sources suggest that the Flatbush plotters wanted to force the release of jailed Islamist terrorists in the United States, including Ramzi Yousef, who participated in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, and Sheik Omar Abdul-Rahman, who was convicted for his involvement in a plot to carry out additional bombings in New York.

Case Studies

1997: Flatbush Plot
2002: London Tube Poison Gas Plot
2003: Heathrow Express Ricin Plot
2003: New York Subway Poison Gas Plot
2004: London Tube Poison Gas Plot
2004: Herald Square Plot
2005: Attempted London Train and Bus Bombings
2005: Melbourne and Sydney Terrorist Plots
2006: Milan Metro Plot
2006: PATH Tunnel Plot (New York)
2006: Attempted German Train Bombings (Cologne)
2008: Barcelona Metro Bomb Plot
2008: Bryant Neal Vinas Plot
2009: Zazi Bomb Plot
2010: Washington Metro Bomb Plot

NOTE: You can download the full report from the Newsletter's website – "CBRNE-CT Papers" section

XIANG HUA MEN Freed By Iranian Naval Commandos

High Profile Pirate Leader Garaad Captured In The Operation
Source: http://maritimesecurity.asia/free-2/piracy-2/xiang-hua-men-freed-by-iranian-naval-commandos/

Just hours after Panama-flagged cargo ship XIANG HUA MEN was hijacked by pirates 14 nautical miles off the Iranian coast, Iranian commandos stormed the vessel, rescuing the 28 Chinese crewmembers and capturing the nine pirates on board.

Two Iranian naval vessels approached the ship, following which the pirates threw their weapons overboard. Xinhua news agency reported that the Chinese embassy in Iran had requested that Iran intervene militarily to free the vessel.

"The Chinese embassy… immediately established contact with relevant Iranian authorities demanding (that) Iran adopt all necessary measures to fully rescue the ship and crew," Xinhua reported.

Somalia Report can confirm that **Mohammed Garaad**, a well-known pirate based out of Puntland was one of the nine pirates arrested. *Somalia Report* spoke with Garaad's cousin this morning, who stated that Garaad was one of the nine pirates arrested. Garaad was responsible for the Blida hijack, which was subsequently released for $3.5 million. His gang has come under pressure from Puntland security forces recently: in February, a number

of his colleagues were arrested, and the authorities burned two of their speedboats.

If convicted, this marks a significant blow to Somalia piracy, particularly for younger pirates

The sugar-laden vessel has resumed its voyage to Iran. The Xiang Huamen had departed from Shanghai, and was heading towards Imam Khomeini port in southwest Iran. The general cargo vessel is owned by Nanjin Ocean Shipping Company, out of Nanjing, China.

Garaad and his pirate crew left Harardhere, in Somalia's Mudug region, in late March in search of targets. Garaad, in his early 40s, was born in Harardhere, became a pirate in early 2001 and has routinely escaped arrest attempts by Puntland security forces, including a raid in November of last year. Trained in 1999 as a marine in fisheries protection by the British security company, Hart, and a former soldier, Garaad is a skilled mariner.

who viewed the highly skilled Garaad as invincible.

This is the second such incident this week. On Tuesday, the Iranian navy freed hijacked vessel Eglantine, and arrested the thirteen pirates on board. Iranian news service Fars quoted Iran's navy commander, Habibollah Sayyari as saying "A ship carrying thousands of tones of goods to Iran was attacked and hijacked on March 29. Pirates wanted to take the ship to Somalia, but our forces reached the hijacked ship in the shortest time possible, and after 48 hours of intensive fighting… they were able to arrest the 13 pirates and free the crew." Due to favorable weather conditions, pirate attacks are expected to remain frequent during the month of April.

Training Terrorists in Nevada: Seymour Hersh on U.S. Aid to Iranian Group Tied to Scientist Killings

Source: http://www.democracynow.org/2012/4/10/training_terrorists_in_nevada_seymour_hersh

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Journalist Seymour Hersh has revealed that the Bush administration secretly trained an Iranian opposition group on the State Department's list of foreign terrorists. Hersh reports the U.S. Joint Special Operations Command trained operatives from Mujahideen-e-Khalq, or MEK, at a secret site in Nevada beginning in 2005. According to Hersh, MEK members were trained in intercepting communications, cryptography, weaponry and small unit tactics at the Nevada site up until President Obama took office. The MEK has been listed as a foreign terrorist groups since 1997 and is linked to a number of attacks, spanning from the murders of six U.S. citizens in the 1970s to the recent wave of assassinations targeting Iranian nuclear scientists. Hersh also discusses the role of Israeli intelligence and notes the Obama administration knew about the training, "because they have access to what was going on in the previous administration in this area in terms of the MEK, in terms of operations inside Iran." His new report for The New Yorker blog, "Our Men in Iran?," comes as nuclear talks are set to resume this week between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Why U.S. Bounties on Terrorists Often Fail
By Scott Stewart
Source:http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/why-us-bounties-terrorists-often-fail?utm_source=freelist-f&utm _medium=email&utm_campaign=20120412&utm_term=sweekly&utm_content=readmore&elq=45dd8f0 d5d7c4e55b7e5fa135ca544cd

U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of State Wendy Sherman announced April 3 that the U.S. government's "Rewards for Justice" (RFJ) program was offering a $10 million reward for information leading to the capture and conviction of Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, the founder of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). In other Rewards for Justice cases involving Pakistan, suspects such as Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Abdel Basit and Mir Amal Kansi have hidden in Pakistan and maintained relatively low profiles. In this case, Saeed is a very public figure in Pakistan. He even held a news conference April 4 in Rawalpindi announcing his location and taunting the United States by

saying he was willing to share his schedule with U.S. officials.

While the Saeed case is clearly a political matter rather than a pure law enforcement or intelligence issue, the case has focused a great deal of attention on Rewards for Justice, and it seems an opportune time to examine the history and mechanics of the program.

Rewards for Justice
In the shadow of the 1983 and 1984 bombings of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait and the 1983 Marine barracks bombing in Lebanon, the U.S.

Congress established the Rewards for Justice program under the 1984 Act to Combat International Terrorism. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service, which was established by the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986.

The program was intended not only to reward people who provide information that leads to the arrest or conviction of people who plan, commit or attempt terrorist attacks against U.S. targets but also to obtain information that

Mullah Mohammad Omar -- the rewards initially offered by the program were much smaller, up to $500,000. That amount was increased to $1 million in 1990, and then augmented to $2 million total through matching funds provided by the Air Transport Association and the Air Line Pilots Association. The program gained the ability to offer large payments for figures such as al-Zawahiri under the 2001 Patriot Act, which was passed after the 9/11 attacks.

The RFJ got off to a slow start and didn't really begin to have much of an impact until the early

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Rewards for Justice

Seeking Information Against International Terrorism

Rewards for Justice

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FBI Most Wanted

Search the RFJ Site:

Wanted
Information leading to the arrest and conviction of
Hafiz Mohammad Saeed
Up to $10 Million

Place of Birth : Sargodha, Punjab Province, Pakistan
Date of Birth : 06/05/1950
Sex : Male
Hair : Red
Eyes : Brown
Nationality : Pakistani
Citizenship : Pakistan

Hafiz Mohammad Saeed is a former professor of Arabic and Engineering, as well as the founding member of Jamaat-ud-Dawa, a radical Deobandi Islamist organization dedicated to installing Islamist rule over parts of India and Pakistan, and its military branch, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba. Saeed is suspected of masterminding numerous terrorist attacks, including the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which resulted in the deaths of 166 people, including six American citizens.

prevents such attacks. U.S. government employees and the employees of other governments are not eligible for the program. The law also authorizes program participants to be entered into the U.S. Department of Justice witness protection program to ensure their safety after providing information. The statute covers arrests of and convictions for the subjects sought and contains a clause for "favorable resolution" of such cases that can be applied when a military strike results in the death of the suspect.

While the RFJ program currently offers large rewards -- $25 million for Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of al Qaeda, and $10 million for figures such as Saeed and Taliban leader

1990s. Its first significant success occurred during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, when an informant in Bangkok tipped off American officials to a pending attack against U.S. interests there by agents of the Iraqi Intelligence Service. The informant received a significant reward and was relocated to a safe place along with his family. However, rewards paid for information leading to the prevention of attacks have proved to be the exception rather than the rule for the RFJ.

The program also figured prominently in the February 1995 capture of Abdel Basit in Pakistan. Basit, widely known as Ramzi Yousef (the name on one of his fraudulent passports), is a

Pakistani citizen born in Kuwait. He was the principal operational leader and bombmaker in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. After fleeing the United States he also planned a number of other failed or thwarted attacks in Manila, Bangkok and Pakistan. Basit is also the nephew of alleged 9/11 planner Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, with whom he conspired. The widespread use of the Ramzi Yousef name and Iraqi passport provided a great deal of confusion regarding his true identity, but it also allowed the government of Pakistan to extradite the Pakistani citizen to the United States with very little public backlash.

The RFJ was also used by the CIA to entice Pakistani tribesmen in June 1997 to hand over Mir Amal Kansi, who was convicted and executed in Virginia, for a January 1993 shooting outside the CIA headquarters in Langley, Va. Kansi, a Pakistani citizen, was rendered from Pakistan instead of extradited, which generated a great deal of controversy inside Pakistan.

While the RFJ advertises that it has paid out more than $100 million in rewards, it must be pointed out that a great deal of that money has been paid in Iraq, where the reward paid for the deaths of Udai and Qusay Hussein alone was $30 million. More than $11 million has been paid out in recent years for leaders of the Abu Sayyaf group in the Philippines. Although $25 million rewards were offered each for Saddam Hussein and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, rewards were not authorized in their cases.

In order for a high-profile reward such as that offered for Saeed to be established, a case has to be made before an interagency rewards program committee, which is chaired by the director of the Diplomatic Security Service. In addition to State Department personnel, the committee includes representatives from the Department of Justice, the FBI, the National Security Council, the CIA, the Department of Defense, the Department of Treasury and the Department of Homeland Security. This interagency RFJ committee also authorizes the payment of rewards once cases are resolved and an informant is nominated to receive a reward. The secretary of state must personally authorize any reward offer exceeding $5 million, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton approved the reward for Saeed after receiving the committee's recommendation.

Intelligence can come into the program via the Internet, telephone or mail. After a reward is issued and publicized, the RFJ staff is typically deluged with potential leads -- many of which come from scammers and mentally disturbed individuals. However, most of the good sources the program has developed have contacted U.S. embassies or intelligence officers in person. While the program was once envisioned as an operational entity that would recruit and run informants, it has for the most part become an administrative program that provides rewards to informants run by other agencies.

The CIA also has specially designated operational funds that can be used as payments for intelligence pertaining to terrorism, albeit in a much more low-key fashion. Such payments do not have to undergo the type of public and interagency scrutiny and limitations that RFJ rewards must endure.

Limitations

The RFJ does have its limitations. Despite the huge rewards offered, the program has had very little luck in recent years capturing high-profile figures in Pakistan such as al-Zawahiri, Mullah Omar, Hakeemullah Mehsud or Sirajuddin Haqqani.

Additionally, although the program was instituted in large part as a response to the attacks conducted by Hezbollah against U.S. interests, the program has not had success in capturing figures such as Hasan Izz-al Din, Ali Atwa and Mohamed al-Hamadei, who are accused of hijacking TWA Flight 847 in 1985, despite the $5 million rewards offered for each of them.

One of the big assumptions behind the initiation of the program, and the subsequent increases in the amount of the rewards offered, is that everybody is for sale. If enough money is offered all the suspects will be turned in. Yet despite the very high rewards offered for many suspects, people have not come forward to offer information regarding their locations. This is likely due to two factors. First, it is clear that not everyone is for sale. Most of the people who are close enough to the target to provide actionable intelligence are in fact true believers and can't be bought.

Second, there is a general distrust of the U.S. government in the parts of the world where most of the critical suspects are hiding -- places like Lebanon and Pakistan. Individuals

who might otherwise be induced by the cash rewards do not trust the U.S. intention or capability to protect them or their extended families. This protection would be required against reprisal not only from the terrorist group but also from the government itself. A current case in point is the medical doctor who helped locate Osama bin Laden and who is now in prison in Pakistan facing possible high treason charges.

As illustrated by the amounts of the rewards listed above, the program has proved more successful in a place like Iraq, where the U.S. military had a significant presence and control, or a location like the Philippines or Thailand, where the U.S. government is viewed in a somewhat better light.

It is also very difficult to get suspects out of hostile areas controlled by powerful tribes like the Pashtun along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border or powerful groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon, or to nab suspects who are protected by the government in a country like Iran or Pakistan.

In the Saeed case, the RFJ program is clearly being used for political purposes. This is firmly underscored by the fact that the announcement of the reward was made in India, the site of the 2008 Mumbai attacks and Pakistan's longtime regional rival. Certainly, due to sentiment on the Pakistani street and the Pakistani government's need to maintain the use of militant proxies in pursuing its interests in the region, the U.S. government does not expect the government of Pakistan to hand Saeed over. This case simply cannot be divorced from the larger dynamic of U.S.-Pakistani relations in the context of the pending U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Saeed's choice of Rawalpindi, the heart of the Pakistani military establishment, as the location for his news conference clearly indicates that he feels secure that the Pakistani government will continue to protect him. The U.S. government certainly knows this. Therefore, the intent of the U.S. government in this case is not so much to facilitate the capture of Saeed but to use the reward as a mechanism to pressure the government of Pakistan to keep under control the militant networks that have evolved out of the LeT.

Scott Stewart is STRATFOR's VP, Tactical Intelligence. He is a former Diplomatic Security Service Special Agent who was involved in hundreds of terrorism investigations, most notably the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the follow-on New York City bomb plot investigation, during which he served as lead investigator for the U.S. State Department. He led a team of Americans who aided the government of Argentina in investigating the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, and was involved in investigations following a series of attacks and attempted attacks by the Iraqi intelligence service during the first Gulf War. He has been featured in and cited by numerous publications and broadcasts, including The Los Angeles Times, Reuters, USA Today, the Associated Press, World Magazine, Fox News and TIME. Prior to joining STRATFOR, Mr. Stewart was protective intelligence coordinator for Dell Computer Corp., where he served as a member of Michael Dell's executive protective team. While at Dell, he also acted as a consultant on terrorism issues for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Analyst says Somali pirates have new weapons from Libya

Source: http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/12/us-africa-pirates-idUSBRE83B0HO20120412

Somali pirates have acquired sophisticated weaponry, including mines and shoulder-held missile launchers from Libya, and are likely to use them in bolder attacks on shipping, a senior maritime security analyst said on Thursday.

"We found that Libyan weapons are being sold in what is the world's biggest black market for illegal gun smugglers, and Somali pirates are among those buying from sellers in Sierra Leone, Liberia and other countries," said Judith van der Merwe, of the Algiers-based African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism.

After Libya's ruler Muammar Gaddafi was killed by rebels in the north African state, weaponry from his well-

stocked arsenals made its way onto the black market, she said.

The information was gathered from interviews with gun smugglers, pirates and other sources, said Van der Merwe.

Pirates operating from the Somali coast have raked in millions of dollars in ransoms from hijacking ships and a report in 2011 estimated that maritime piracy costs the global economy between $7 billion and $12 billion through higher shipping costs and ransom payments.

Warships from NATO, the European Union and other affected countries deployed in the Gulf of Aden have had only limited success in combating pirate attacks, mainly because of the huge expanse of sea that needs surveillance, some 2.5 million square miles.

"What we are seeing is a decrease in the number of successful attacks, but an increase

"We believe our information is credible and know that some of the pirates have acquired ship mines, as well as Stinger and other shoulder-held missile launchers," Van der Merwe told Reuters on the sidelines of an Indian Ocean naval conference.

in the ransom amounts paid out, and the fear is that better armed pirates could risk more or pose a greater challenge when facing capture," Van der Merwe said.

Pirates have attacked as far away as the Indian coast, about 1,000 nautical miles away, and are increasingly turning their attention southwards towards South Africa.

A former commander of naval Task Force 151, one of the multi-national forces in the Gulf of Aden, said pirates usually surrendered when faced with the massive firepower of naval vessels.

"At this stage we are seeing no evidence the pirates of Somalia are having any weapons beyond the AK47s and RPGs," Rear Admiral Harris Chan of the Singapore Navy told Reuters at the conference.

Azerbaijan extremist promises acts of terror during Eurovision song contest

Source: http://en.gazeta.ru/news/2012/04/12/a_4343741.shtml

Religious extremists in Azerbaijan have announced threats to conduct acts of terrorism during the Eurovision 2012 song contest, due to be held in Baku in May.

An article published on Ummanews.ru by an author who calls himself Mouslim, says that "Eurovision is a nightmare for all Muslim people."

"Forces of Satan, perverts, and homosexuals of the world must know that they cannot easily come to our land where righteous Muslims spilled their blood and behave as they want. They will be attacked for sure," Mouslim wrote.

The author of the article says that: Muslims will not miss the chance to deal with the legal objects for destruction."

According to Mouslim, no special security forces would be able to prevent the "massacre against the infidels."

Earlier an act of terror was conducted in the Azerbaijan city of Gyandzha, which Mouslim calls "a rehearsal for the bigger reaction."

Security forces of Azerbaijan carried out secret operations last week in Baku, Sumgait, Gyandzha and other regions of the country. They have detained 17 members of illegal extremist groups who are suspected of planning major terror acts.

Serb threatening to blow up levees in Holland

Source: http://inavukic.com/2012/04/13/serb-threatening-to-blow-up-levees-in-holland/

The Youtube film in which a Serb, Miroljub Petrovic (photo), threatens that the levees at the North Sea shore in Holland will blow-up if the Serbians currently held on war crimes charges and convictions are not freed, has been posted in late February 2012. Petrovic claims that Holland would be flooded and North Sea would reach the centre of Amsterdam.

The film is in the Serbian language and a translation is as follows:

"*We are in Holland, 20 kilometers from Amsterdam, we are at the shores of the North Sea, North Sea is behind us, it's visible, the levee is here built for protection against water as Holland is under sea level. If it comes to the breaking of the levee, this levee is very thin as we see, about all Holland would be flooded.*

The information we have is that a group of Serbian intellectuals has made a plan for the freeing of Serbian patriots Seselj, Mladic, Karadzic and the rest. The plan is as News 011 has learned, to send an ultimatum to the puppet government of Holland to free Serbian heroes otherwise this crumbly levee will be blown up and Holland would suffer a huge catastrophe.

For that eventuality an expert on Holland's levees professor Vojislav Petrovic has been engaged and we will talk to him on this occasion to hear what he has to say in relation to these levees of Holland.

Professor Petrovic, tell us what is the state of these levees and how dependable a protection this is for Holland?

The people of Holland think that this is a dependable protection but looking at the natural conditions created by Planet Earth, tides, Moon, this is very crumbly and poor protection for Holland and in this case penetration of the North Sea into Holland towards the centre of Amsterdam.

What are the levees built of, is it a quality material?

Quality material, if quality material is sand which you can see down there, you know yourself how strong it is. Practically that's soil in powder that water can carry anywhere it wants.

That means that if the plan of Serbian intellectuals is fulfilled to direct rockets at this

levee it would be good for Holland to build a stronger levee.

Yes, yes, and this levee is from the last Century, this is the third millennium, which means we would do them a favour with that and they would do a favour to themselves to

free our patriots from the prisons where they're holding them.

Thank you professor Petrovic on this professional statement. Especially for portal …(tone unclear), from Amsterdam, Miroljub Petrovic."

Croatia's Vecernji list says that the AIVD service in Netherlands is investigating two films in which Miroljub Petrovic is threatening to blow up levees in Holland if Vojislav Seselj, Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic and other Serbs held at the International Criminal Tribunal for war crimes or on war crimes charges.

The same Miroljub Petrovic has now developed a history of threats to blow-up dams, levees … During Croatia's Homeland War he threatened to blow up Peruca dam.

Whether he himself actually participated in the blowing-up Peruca dam in Croatia when Serb rebels bombed it in January 1993 during operation Peruca, as revenge for Croatian army having liberated Maslenica, I cannot say. But what I can say is that it did happen. Thankfully, a British citizen Mark Nicholas Gray, member

of the UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Forces) there, acted swiftly and steered the excess water into side-channels near the dam, preventing the dam from total collapse. Catastrophe was thus avoided.

Perhaps Petrovic's threats are only that. The concerning thing, is that one does not really know whether the "group of Serbian intellectuals" planning to blow-up the levees in Holland actually exists. Learning from the Serb rebel actions in Croatia during 1990's it's difficult to brush aside Petrovic's threat against Holland as benign or as a ranting of an eccentric man. Unfortunately, eccentric people do eccentric things, and attract eccentrics or deviants.

Second Quarter Forecast 2012
Source: http://www.stratfor.com

As we enter the second quarter of 2012, the most important question is whether Israel or the United States will carry out a strike on Iranian nuclear facilities. It has been our view that such an attack is unlikely in the extreme

but, at the extreme, conceivable. Because of the Israeli campaign designed to both intimidate Tehran and create a sense of urgency over the Iran question, public awareness of the danger has risen. Except for this campaign, we do not believe such a strike is likely, and we lay out our arguments in this forecast.

This does not mean we are not in the midst of an Iranian crisis. As we discussed in our annual forecast, Iran is emerging as the dominant power in the Persian Gulf, absent the United States, and following its withdrawal from Iraq, the United States does not seem to have an appetite for re-engagement in the region. The focus for this quarter is Syria, where the survival of the current regime -- with or without President Bashar al Assad -- would set the stage for a major extension of Iranian power. The United States has opposed the survival of the regime in order to block Iranian influence. It has thus far failed to block Iran either in Syria or with the use of sanctions. It is the future of

the Syrian crisis that we think will define Iranian power, but we doubt the Syrian issue will find closure this quarter.

Of perhaps greater importance in the long-term are elections in France. If President Nicolas Sarkozy is re-elected, French relations with Germany will remain intact, as will the foundations of the European Union. If Sarkozy is defeated, then another element of the European Union will become uncertain. We do not forecast elections, but we have forecast that the current European elite will come under substantial pressure from both austerity measures and imbalances of trade with Germany. The French election is certainly the most important, but there will be many others in Europe in the coming years to test this hypothesis.

The other processes that we laid out in the annual forecast, from Chinese internal challenges to a moderate U.S. recovery, remain unchanged, and we do not see this quarter as being decisive in any of these. Apart from the French elections, the most important signal of geopolitical change would be the fall of the Syrian regime. The longer it survives, the more likely it is to survive, and its survival would strengthen Iran -- in some ways more than the acquisition of nuclear weapons.

Europe
The second quarter in Europe will be marked by elections in two countries at the core of the European financial crisis: France and Greece. In our

annual forecast, Stratfor wrote that the French election would be important in 2012 because the Franco-German partnership is the core of the European system, and any serious breach between the two would herald the end of the European Union. France's elections will thus be the pivot around which Europe will move in the second quarter.

French presidential elections will occur in two rounds -- the first on April 22 and a run-off election scheduled for May 6. A month later, France will hold parliamentary elections in two rounds. Paris will look inward during most of the second quarter as politicians focus on domestic issues and will have neither the time nor the will to lead Europe jointly with Berlin, as it has since the beginning of the crisis. Furthermore, as France examines domestic issues it will differentiate itself from Germany, a process that, among other things, will highlight the divergent interests of the French and German economies. During this quarter the differentiation will only be rhetorical; no substantial decisions that could strain the Franco-German relationship will be made.

Germany will also be focused on domestic issues, with German Chancellor Angela Merkel forced to address problems within her coalition. Regional elections are also coming up, including a vote in Germany's most populous state, North Rhine-Westphalia.

With Germany and France, the largest and second-largest economies in the European Union, consumed by domestic matters, Stratfor expects the EU decision-making process to be slowed considerably this quarter.

Meanwhile, northern European countries will face the question of how to deal with their own budget deficits. As core countries -- most notably the Netherlands and Germany -- have domestic debates about their own austerity measures, the legitimacy of their push for more austerity in Europe's periphery will shrink. This, combined with the paralysis of the Franco-German alliance, will encourage Europe's peripheral countries to relax the restructuring of their economies, casting doubts on the effectiveness of the European Union's latest fiscal agreements.

In our annual forecast, Stratfor wrote that during the crisis Germany "is using its superior financial and economic position to attempt to alter the eurozone's structure to its advantage." While Germany will continue using its economic power in this sense this quarter --

especially by claiming that the crisis is not over yet and more fiscal responsibility is needed -- Berlin will find it difficult to achieve this goal as countries try to loosen their austerity measures. Finally, if Greece holds elections in late April or early May -- as the Greek government has recently indicated will occur -- a weak coalition is likely to emerge because no party will have enough votes to secure a majority government. Parties that traditionally have not been part of the political establishment are expected to be key actors in the second quarter, either by participating in the discussions to form a coalition after the elections or by voicing their discontent with the Greek government if the elections are postponed. If the latter happens, fringe parties could organize protests that may lead to street violence.

Middle East
The Iran Dilemma

Stratfor's annual forecast for the Middle East included three broad trends: Iran will accelerate its efforts to consolidate and extend its regional influence while it has the opportunity; Iran will be operating under heavy constraints and will be unable to fundamentally shift the politics of the region in its favor; and Saudi Arabia will be wary of the potential for a U.S.-Iranian strategic accommodation in this threat climate, but given Iranian constraints, will gamble on a closer alignment with the United States.

This forecast remains on track. In the first quarter, Iran emphasized its most potent deterrence strategy -- its threat to the Strait of Hormuz. Tehran made its point, not only to the United States and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, but also to Iran's main energy clients in Europe and Asia. This strategy has so far helped Iran ward off an attack, but it has also spurred the United States to intensify its sanctions drive and gradually reduced Iran's share in the energy market. The deadline for foreign compliance with the U.S.-led sanctions on Iranian oil will come this quarter, and the credibility of the sanctions campaign will again come into question when Washington is unable to gather the political will to force Iran's largest energy customers to comply.

Iran will make a concerted effort to reduce the momentum of the U.S. sanctions campaign. By taking a more conciliatory approach to nuclear negotiations with help from Turkey, Russia and China, Tehran will try to give its energy

clients political cover to resist the pressure to comply fully with the sanctions. Tehran's conciliatory moves will be mostly superficial, however. Iran will continue relying on carefully measured rhetorical threats to sustain the price of oil and avoid military conflict.

Saudi Arabia sees the impediments to a U.S.-Iranian negotiation at this stage and so will use this time to continue strengthening a GCC-led regional coalition against Iran while reinforcing the strategic foundation of its alliance with Washington. Though Saudi Arabia cannot completely make up for a shortfall of Iranian crude in the market in the next quarter, it will continue increasing its market share and supply the United States with more oil as a means of strengthening its political favor with Washington and giving the United States more flexibility in pressuring Iran.

The Iran-U.S. conflict is thus unlikely to see significant change this quarter. Military posturing and sanctions rhetoric will intensify, but the cost of a strike remains too high for the United States and Israel, and Iran will be able to withstand the rising pressure from the West.

The Syrian Crisis
Stratfor's forecast about the al Assad regime's ability to hold together and the unlikelihood of a foreign military intervention is on track. The minority Alawite government in Damascus will continue military crackdowns on restive cities to rid the areas of rebel strongholds and quell civilian protests. Despite this, the rebels will continue attacking security targets and infrastructure but will remain unable to defeat the Syrian army or hold significant territory. While the civilian opposition will struggle for relevancy, the rebel opposition will become more radicalized and show further signs of blending into a jihadist insurgency.

Though it will be difficult to trace the origins of the various jihadist groups that arise in Syria this quarter, Saudi Arabia is likely supporting the growing jihadist trend as a means of fortifying the rebellion and undermining the Syrian regime. Riyadh will be unable to fully control the increasing jihadist activity in Syria in the long term, and local nodes could use the opportunity to try to reinvigorate their campaigns in the Saudi kingdom over the next several months. Jihadist nodes in the Arabian Peninsula will continue finding haven amid Yemen's political paralysis, but their tactical capabilities will remain severely limited.

Egypt's Political Transition
The Egyptian military has set an ambitious timeline for laying the political foundation of the post-Mubarak state. By the end of the quarter, Egypt is scheduled to complete presidential elections, draft and ratify a constitution via public referendum, and complete a transition from military to civilian rule. Through these processes, particularly the drafting of the constitution, Egypt will determine just how much authority the military and an Islamist-dominated parliament will wield. Judging by the progress in the political transition thus far, there is no guarantee that all these deadlines will be met, but the Muslim Brotherhood's demands will have to be addressed before a power balance between the civilians and the military is enshrined in a new constitution. As outlined in Stratfor's annual forecast, the military still has the advantage in this standoff and will maintain a great deal of influence over Egypt's future civilian government. Both the Muslim Brotherhood and the military will make concessions, but Egypt's political Islamists will end up making greater sacrifices to avoid thwarting the political transition altogether.

Former Soviet Union
Returning Russian President Vladimir Putin, who will be inaugurated May 7, will focus on addressing the numerous domestic challenges facing the Kremlin. First is a reorganization of the Kremlin elites. This process, which will entail government reshuffles, new appointments of strategic business chiefs and increased pressure on many Russian oligarchs, will begin before Putin's inauguration and last many months. Protests and rallies both against and in support of the Kremlin will continue, though they will not be as large or prevalent as in the first quarter of the year.

A critical issue for Putin as he resumes the presidency is the future of Russia's economic programs. The Kremlin has realized that its modernization and privatization programs might be stalled, since Moscow's main partners in the projects, the Europeans, face financial difficulties. Moscow has already decided to pay for certain projects, such as railway projects with German firms, to keep the Europeans involved and encourage them to contribute technology. In the second quarter, Russia plans to privatize a major strategic asset -- Russia's

second-largest bank, Sberbank -- to gauge the Europeans' appetite for investing in such a program. If the initial privatization occurs, then Russia will move forward with its ambitious programs this year and in years to come. If not, it will rework the programs, downsizing some components and contributing more financially in order to maintain its economic ties to Europe.

Meanwhile, prolonged tensions between Russia and NATO will intensify ahead of a tentatively planned Russia-NATO summit in May, the first since 2007. Russia will increase its focus on the United States' plans for ballistic missile defense in Central Europe. Moscow will use leverage such as activating the S-400 air-defense system and possibly deploying Iskander short-range ballistic missiles in Kaliningrad, along with continuing diplomatic and military maneuvering in Syria. However, Russia's provocations will not move the United States to back down from its current security plans for the region. Moscow will not force this escalation to the point where it will cause a break with NATO or the United States, though relations will continue to sour. At the same time, Russia will maintain warm security relations with Western European countries, especially Germany.

Russia's increased pressure on the United States will cause the Central Europeans, particularly Poland and Lithuania, to react. Warsaw and Vilnius are already working on presenting more concrete challenges to Russia's increasing influence. Fueled by progress in their efforts to move away from Russian energy supplies, these countries, as well as other Baltic and Nordic states, have increased regional security cooperation as well, and this will help them respond to Russia's strengthening military posture in the region.

South Asia
A limited U.S.-led offensive will begin in eastern Afghanistan this quarter. The scope and objectives of this operation will be more modest than offensives in recent years in southern Afghanistan. As the spring fighting season intensifies, an uptick in insurgent attacks against International Security Assistance Force troops and Afghan security targets will also occur. While the Taliban have considerable motivation to launch more spectacular attacks for political purposes, we expect such actions to be tactically consistent

with past attacks and not to demonstrate a fundamentally new capability.

Stratfor forecast that the United States and the Taliban would continue negotiations this year but has remained skeptical on a final deal emerging by the end of the year. Significant disruptions to these talks, such as those seen in the first part of the year, will continue, but the negotiations will endure in spite of spoiler attacks.

Small force reductions ahead of the drawdown of U.S. troops to 68,000 by the end of September have begun, and so far the United States is on track for an accelerated drawdown by the end of the second quarter. The first quarter saw an intensification of "green-on-blue" incidents -- attacks by Afghan forces on foreign forces they are cooperating with -- that have prompted serious changes to force protection measures. This will place an additional burden on the smaller number of foreign forces in the country and affect coordination between foreign and Afghan forces at a particularly delicate time.

Pakistan's ongoing political evolution will continue in favor of the civilian forces as the army-intelligence complex's ability to shape events gradually weakens. The strengthening of civilian governance will complicate U.S.-Pakistani ties, but the second quarter will see an overall improvement in relations as negotiations progress slowly. The potential reopening of the Pakistani supply line will be one indication this quarter that the United States and Pakistan are moving forward in their negotiations on a post-U.S. Afghanistan settlement.

East Asia
China's Economic and Political Challenges
The weakening global economy and Beijing's staggered restructuring will contribute to the slowing of China's economic growth in the second quarter -- a trend complicated by the rising costs of utilities and labor. Although Beijing had indicated a willingness to accept lower growth in favor of economic rebalancing, continued weakness in the export sector and problems in domestic investment will make Beijing likely to adopt some expansionary measures to prevent a significant economic slowdown that could threaten the employment situation. Additional monetary easing, including rate cuts, are likely in the second quarter.

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The implementation of fiscal policies like tax reforms, direct subsidies and wage increases to promote consumption will not be sufficient to shift away from traditional investment-driven growth in the next quarter. In particular, fixed investment could continue to be a primary driver enhancing the country's growth in the second quarter, whereas the export sector -- which is subject to increasing global trade disputes -- will likely receive support from Beijing. While there is little reason to think Beijing will carry out broad-based changes to its real estate policy, it is likely to make localized adjustments in the quarter. Beijing is betting that this, coupled with declining prices, will help sustain or even drive up real estate demand in the second quarter.

The ousting of Chongqing Party leader Bo Xilai has made China's political infighting publicly visible and has led to immense speculation, anxiety and ideological divisions as Beijing's leadership transition enters its critical stages. Intensifying internal political tensions could contribute to conflicting policy directions on handling social issues or the contentious reform agenda. Nonetheless, the opacity of the political system will continue to fuel speculation and rumors and, combined with latent social discontent, could lead to sporadic political backlash.

North Korea's Next Launch

North Korea will launch a satellite in April to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of founder Kim Il Sung. The launch will fall between a special conference of the Workers' Party of Korea and a session of the Supreme People's Assembly to formalize the leadership transition to Kim Jong Un.

Although the launch is being portrayed abroad as a provocation, North Korea announced the move to the United States even before the death of Kim Jong Il. The February missile and nuclear moratorium was meant to reduce international criticism of the launch. Pyongyang will make a case for returning to negotiations in the latter half of the quarter, but further action will be delayed by the election seasons in South Korea and the United States, respectively.

Japan's Political Tensions and Economic Decisions

Political conflict over Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda's consumption tax hike bill will raise both internal and external pressure on the Democratic Party of Japan-led governing coalition, threatening to topple Noda's Cabinet within the second quarter. Moreover, to prevent investor perceptions of Japanese long-term financial insolvency, Noda could accede to calls for early elections in exchange for support for the tax hike bill from the Liberal Democratic Party. This would probably pave the way for third parties to make inroads into the parliament.

Regional Economic Integration

Having learned from the 1997 Asia financial crisis, Asian countries have realized the importance of regional economic integration during the current economic turmoil. As economically weakened Asian countries look for ways to strengthen the safety net against liquidity shortages and wean themselves from the Western financial system, they are turning to regional-based economic mechanisms such as the Chiang Mai Initiative.

Furthermore, accelerated cross-regional trade liberalization -- particularly measures led by the United States -- has promoted the regional dynamic by making free trade agreements a priority. These pacts, whether bilateral or multilateral, are meant to maximize the benefits for all countries involved. China will likely try to take the role of facilitator in many of these agreements. China, Japan and South Korea are working to finalize their investment pact in May as part of negotiations on a trilateral free trade agreement, and other bilateral agreements are in the works.

Latin America
Argentina's Finances

Though not included in our annual forecast, Argentina's implementation of stringent trade and capital flow restrictions was a prominent development in the country in the first quarter. These measures are designed to keep capital in the domestic financial system and will cause economic volatility during the second quarter as new policies are implemented. As a result of trade barriers implemented Feb. 1, there are already reports of consumer goods shortages in Argentina ranging from furniture to pharmaceutical drugs. These shortages will worsen before the quarter is over. International tensions will continue to build over the next quarter between Argentina and the European Union,

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the United States and Mercosur member countries. However, Argentina will not change its behavior because of international threats and will instead focus on domestic needs.

A spike in export revenue will occur during the second quarter, injecting foreign capital that will provide some short-term relief for Argentina's financial situation. This, combined with political fallout from goods shortages, will push Argentina to begin to allow more goods in on a limited basis by the end of the quarter.

Alongside these macroeconomic shifts, Argentina's energy industry will remain at the center of political contention as the government pressures the sector's largest company, Repsol YPF, to increase investment and output in order to relieve financial pressure on the government. The government will begin to place similar though less severe pressure on the mining sector to increase investment and output in the second quarter.

Brazil's Economy and Politics

Growing concerns about Brazil's falling industrial production will lead the government to extend more support to Brazilian businesses and raise trade barriers to external competitors. Under this rubric, tensions with China and Mercosur member countries will grow during the second quarter, but Brazil will not reach a breaking point with any one trade partner. Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff will continue to pressure the international community to take action on currency and trade issues. Rousseff will use her visit to the United States in April to push for increased exports to the United States, but aside from symbolic measures the two will find little common ground.

Domestically, Brazil's focus on municipal elections will dominate the political climate. These elections will occupy political parties at every level of government and weaken cohesion within the governing coalition.

Militancy in Colombia

Colombia is experiencing what the government is calling a resurgence of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The government's new counter-militant strategy, called Sword of Honor, can be expected to increase the tempo and scope of operations against the FARC and other violent criminal organizations in the second quarter. This will increase violent clashes and the chances for

retaliatory strikes by the FARC on vulnerable targets, including urban settings and energy infrastructure. Colombia's continued security cooperation with Venezuela will be a boon in the second quarter as Bogota's operations chase militants and criminals across Colombia's eastern border.

Mexico Prepares for Elections

Mexico will spend the quarter preparing for the July 1 presidential and legislative elections. Few legislative or political changes will occur, although the ruling National Action Party will attempt to make symbolic gains in the fight against transnational criminal organizations.

Overall levels of violence will continue for the next quarter, with a high concentration of violence in Tamaulipas and Veracruz. Attacks will increase in both Nuevo Laredo and Culiacan as the competition for that territory between the Sinaloa and Los Zetas cartels intensifies. The most important struggle this quarter will be between the Knights Templar and Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion, which are competing over central and Pacific states including Jalisco, Michoacan, Guerrero and Guanajuato. Guanajuato can expect higher levels of violence in the second quarter than it has seen since 2010.

Economically, Mexico can expect continued stable growth. This will occur as the economy picks up in the United States and Mexico's exports to the United States increase.

Chavez's Health and Reforms in Venezuela

Two issues will dominate the second quarter in Venezuela: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's deteriorating health, and the implementation of key economic reforms. Chavez is currently in treatment after his second round of surgery for abdominal cancer. Though confirmed information remains scarce, it appears that he may have less than a year to live. The political dynamic in Venezuela can be expected to focus on this uncertainty, with key political players making backroom deals in anticipation of a change of leadership.

After a relatively calm first quarter, public dissension can be expected to pick up in the second quarter as important reforms become law and take effect. The Law of Fair Costs and Prices officially went into effect April 1, and while its effects will be varied, it can be expected to increase the instances of scarcity in basic

household goods and raise prices on the gray market. Additionally, some version of a new labor law is expected to take effect May 1. The law is not yet finalized and may not be ready by May 1, but with the presidential campaign season under way it will be an important symbolic move for Chavez to implement on International Labor Day. The law most likely will force companies and government agencies to renegotiate labor contracts in a process that is sure to generate civic unrest across several sectors.

Sub-Saharan Africa
Nigeria's Struggle With Militants
New political efforts aimed at disrupting Boko Haram will be launched in the second quarter, and Nigerian security forces will maintain pressure on the militant group in the country's North-East region. After the March 24 election of North-Easterner Bamanga Tukur as the national chairman of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Nigerian government will expect Tukur to deliver insights into Boko Haram so that the central government can weaken the group.
Boko Haram will face significant challenges beyond its northeastern core but will be able to sustain itself given the North-East region's need to use the militant group for political leverage ahead of the PDP's 2014 leadership convention. During the second quarter, Boko Haram will conduct attacks largely concentrated in the North-East region. Sustained low-level violence will keep the pressure on the Nigerian government to accommodate the North-East, and keeping violence at that level will avoid attracting unwanted international focus on the Nigerian government.
Militants in the Niger Delta region will carry out occasional attacks, mostly on Nigerian soft targets, with occasional strikes against energy infrastructure. These operations will serve to remind international oil companies and the Nigerian government that militancy in the region can be reactivated should political conditions require it.

Increasing Pressure on Jihadists in Somalia
The second quarter will see the further development of a broader containment strategy against Somali jihadists. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeeping force will receive additional forces, including

new Ugandan troops in April and new Sierra Leonean troops in June. This will allow AMISOM to strengthen its position in Mogadishu and begin expanding beyond the immediate neighborhoods of the capital, including patrols in adjoining regions and towns such as Afgoye and Baidoa.
More than 4,000 Kenyan peacekeepers will be integrated into AMISOM, a move that will help command and coordination during the second quarter, though the Kenyans will remain deployed to maintain the southern containment flank against al Shabaab. The Ethiopians will retain their blocking position in central Somalia, working with the Somali militia Ahlu Sunnah Waljamaah to disrupt al Shabaab fighters in that region.
Collectively, these efforts are meant to consolidate current gains, though the strategy to cut off al Shabaab from popular support remains a long-term objective. An enhanced security environment will support political efforts to make the transitional Somali government a permanent organization, a process that will be supported by elections planned for August.

South Africa's Political Scene
The leadership race within South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC) will accelerate during the second quarter. A policy planning conference scheduled for June 26-29 will give party factions an opportunity to position themselves in front of delegates who will vote at the leadership convention scheduled for December. Neither policy discussions nor election campaigns will be finalized this quarter, however.
The second quarter will see a start to South Africa's strike season, with unions under the banner of the Congress of South African Trade Unions starting their annual round of wage and working condition negotiations. This strike season will continue into the third quarter.

A Shifting Relationship for Sudan, South Sudan
With insufficient forces to defeat each other and long supply lines exposed to rival regular and irregular forces, Sudan and South Sudan will resort to internationally mediated border and oil sector negotiations.
The countries will maintain significant deployments of regular and irregular forces along their shared border,

especially in South Kordofan-Unity state and Blue Nile-Upper Nile areas. Because of the presence of these forces, tensions along the border will remain, and occasional violent flare-ups will occur.

Lower-level negotiations will take place under African Union mediation in neighboring Ethiopia in early April, and the closure of less contentious issues such as citizenship rights could then lead to a rescheduled inaugural bilateral summit involving more fundamental issues. Negotiating full border and oil revenue and tariff agreements will likely take the rest of the year, however. Though both governments will encourage diversified foreign investment, the limited prospects will compel Sudan and South Sudan to continue working toward cooperation, even if that cooperation is rife with tensions.

Brazil's Reluctance To Define Terrorism

Source: http://www.stratfor.com

Summary

The Brazilian Senate's Penal Code Revision Committee on March 30 proposed the addition of a legal definition of terrorism to the country's penal code. The committee has debated since 2011 on a variety of changes to the code that will be presented in May. Though the abstract concept of terrorism is repudiated in Brazil's constitution and a penalty for acts of terror was established in the 1983 National Security Law, the country's legal system fails to specify a definition for terrorism, and thus renders the penalty for terrorism unenforceable. Any "terrorist activity" is instead treated as a separate type of crime.

ANTONIO SCORZA/AFP/Getty Images
Brazilian elite police conduct an anti-terrorism drill at the Engenhao stadium in Rio de Janeiro in 2009

Brazil's failure to adopt a solid legal definition of terrorism is rooted in both domestic and international politics. Internally, the term "terrorism" is a sensitive one for left-wing political and social figures. Externally, increased involvement in international counterterrorism efforts could undermine Brazil's neutral foreign policy. These factors, along with the lengthy legislative process the proposed penal code amendments will face, make it unlikely that a definition of terrorism will be included in the code -- at least not before the upcoming string of major international events that Brazil will be hosting from 2013 to 2016.

Analysis

As Stratfor has noted, the term "terrorism" is both hazy and politically charged. However, having a definition in place that would allow terrorists to be pursued and prosecuted would benefit Brazil. First, it would boost Brazil's relationships with countries that cope with terrorist attacks in their territories or beyond, including the United States, Israel and many European states. Second, the change could assuage security concerns about the high-profile events that Brazil will host in the next few years, including the Confederation Cup and the pope's World Youth Day in 2013, the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016, by allowing authorities to take a more active role in combating terrorist threats.

The implementation of an anti-terrorism law would also address the concerns of legal experts, Brazilian politicians sympathetic to the measure, and security professionals who say that, in addition to having a "loose end" in the constitution, Brazil has a problem with homegrown

militancy. For example, to demand better prison conditions, the criminal group First Capital Command launched a wave of attacks in Sao Paulo in May 2006 that targeted civilians and policemen and left 130 dead.

However, Brazil's civilian government has resisted implementing a definition of -- and thus enforceable penalties for -- terrorism since before former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's administration (1995-2002) for its own reasons. Internally, "terrorism" is a very sensitive term, particularly for citizens and politicians who identify with the left wing; many artists, unionists, intellectuals and activists (including current Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff) were labeled "terrorists" and punished during the 1960s and 1970s for openly resisting -- sometimes violently -- the military dictatorship. For many, the prospect of combating terrorism still carries negative connotations of work or student union dissolution, suppression of social movements or, especially since the 9/11 attacks, U.S. imperialism. Similar sentiments can be found in many South American post-dictatorship republics.

Having no definition of terrorism has had foreign policy implications as well. Since terrorism technically never occurs in a legal sense in Brazil, the country is able to avoid unwanted attention from external media and governmental entities. If Brazil adopts an overt anti-terrorism law, the United States could use it to persuade Brazil to increase its participation in the international fight against militancy. For instance, Washington could pressure Brasilia into attending to long-held U.S. suspicions about Hezbollah-linked money laundering and financing operations in the tri-border area between Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina or into sharing intelligence on and extraditing individuals in Brazil who aid and abet militants overseas. In addition to tarnishing relations with Middle Eastern and North African countries, where Brazil is trying to expand

trade ties, these measures could antagonize militant groups that currently have no real desire to attack Brazil (in part to avoid disrupting any financial assets they could have there) and increase the chances of retaliation against Brazilian nationals and assets at home or overseas.

These issues make the approval of the Penal Code Revision Committee's proposal a challenge, and the sluggish nature of Brazil's legislature only exacerbates these difficulties. The proposal would have to go through multiple rounds of voting and negotiation in both houses before being ratified by the president -- if the measure made it that far (previous attempts have never reached that point). Congress will be especially slow in the coming year because it has a number of priority bills to vote on beforehand, including the legal framework for the World Cup that is currently in the Senate, and October municipal elections will draw attention away from lawmaking as Brazil's political parties shift their attentions to campaigning.

As a rising regional power, Brazil is increasingly called on by other countries to get involved in international security issues. This is new ground for Brazil and arguably something it is not politically ready to handle. Its geographic position, which brings with it a lack of any immediate strategic threat, has largely spared the country from having to deal with the global flux of political alliances and violence. This alone has given Brazil the ability to maintain a neutral foreign policy with various states on issues like terrorism, granting it an extra measure of independence in foreign affairs. This policy is not something it wants to change anytime soon. This, along with Brazil's lack of internal political will and slow legislative process, means the country will continue to avoid instating a legal definition of terrorism and will resist dealing with the issue on the United States' terms.

Al-Shabab executes American-born terrorist

Source:http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2012/04/al-shabab_executes_american-born_terrorist. html#ixzz1sCNUiQbj

The Somali al-Qaeda affiliate, al-Shabab, has executed an American terrorist according to media reports in Somalia. The al-Qaeda-allied group al-Shabaab executed US-born jihadist

Omar Hammami on April 5th, according to unconfirmed Somali media reports.

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Hammami, known as Abu Mansour al-Amriki, said he feared for his life from other al-Shabaab leaders because of strategic and ideological differences in a statement released last month.

According to Somalia's Gedo Online, Hammami was the only one absent from a recent meeting attended by top al-Shabaab leaders in Baraawe.

Al-Shabaab reportedly hunted down Hammami after he left Marka in the Lower Shabelle region. He was reportedly beheaded on the spot and buried somewhere between Marka and Baraawe.

According to the report, the alleged execution angered some al-Shabaab leaders, who accused al-Shabaab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane of ordering the execution.

A group of foreign fighters and other top al-Shabaab members, including Fuad Mohamed Khalaf, also known as Fuad Shongoole, reportedly fled to the Galgala Mountains following the news of the execution.

Hammami grew up in Alabama and turned jihadist sometime after he dropped out of college in 2002. He traveled with a friend to Somalia and joined up with the al-Shabab terrorist outfit.

Huffington Post reports that Hammami feared for his life from his comrades due to disputes over the interpretation of Sharia law.

Hammami, known as Abu Mansur al-Amriki, or "the American," appears in a video saying he has disagreed with his comrades in the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab militia on Islam's Sharia law and strategy. The authenticity of the video could not be independently verified.

He thumbed his nose at the US because of several erroneous reports that he had been killed in drone attacks. He isn't laughing anymore now that his head has been separated from his body and his carcass dumped into an unmarked grave.

Why are terrorists attacking tourists?

Source: http://www.eturbonews.com/28797/why-are-terrorists-attacking-tourists

The headline news in eTN about the takeover of Timbuktu by Islamists compels tourism stakeholders to think sincerely why such events are happening at the map of tourism?
With the rebels, including Islamist factions

preaching Sharia of Islam, now in control of Timbuktu's streets, tourists may not return soon to the spot near the Niger River that for centuries was a symbol of remoteness, bewitching voyagers with tales of wealth, wisdom, and life-giving water.

Some important questions that instantly come to mind after reading such news include:
- Why are terrorists attacking tourism destinations and tourists?
- Do terrorists attack tourist or tourism destinations to gaining maximum international media coverage?
- Do terrorists attack tourists to get the maximum impact of killing people of different nationalities in one attack?
- Do terrorists attack tourists because they are against tourism?

Why terrorists are targeting tourism destinations and tourists is a serious question that needs detailed research, or at the least, the attention of groups working to mitigate terrorism, but unfortunately, no serious work has been done so far in this field.

One of the most important tourism destinations in Pakistan was Swat Valley, which turned out to be the foremost target of terrorists,

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eventually gaining control of the valley for more than 2 years now. Terrorists are now reportedly moving to the rest of north of Pakistan, which is the most beautiful and peaceful area of this terrorism-ridden country, and the presence of Talibans have been claimed by local residents of Gilgit and Balitistan. Gilgit Baltistan is a gateway for extreme tourism, with international climbers and mountaineers coming from all over the world to conquer 5 out of 12 peaks

above the 8,000-meter summits, including K-2, Nanaga Parbat.
On October 21, 1992, militants ambushed a tourist bus, killing a British woman and injuring two British men. The woman was the first foreigner to die in militant-related violence in Egypt. This news was a flashpoint of international electronic media for many days and in print media for many weeks. Egyptian

militants considered this development a real success as it got international attention about their fight against the then Egyptian government, and it was an easy way to promote their struggle.
This event encouraged militants and terrorists to wage war against tourists in Egypt and to

gain international attention. Then tourism destinations of Egypt faced a series of attacks followed by headlines and breaking news in the international media. A new tool had been invented by terrorists - kill tourists and get attention.
To understand the trend of terrorism against tourism, one can cite the following terrorist attacks on tourists or tourism destinations to look at the similarities of these events:

1 - Gunmen in Ethiopia's arid north attacked a group of European tourists traveling in one of the world's lowest and hottest regions, killing five, wounding two, and kidnapping two, an Ethiopian official said Wednesday, January 18, 2012.
2 - The 2005 **Sharm el-Sheikh** attacks (photo, left) were a series of terror attacks on July 23, 2005, perpetrated by an Islamist organization, targeting the Egyptian resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, located on the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula. Eighty-eight people were killed, the majority of them Egyptians, and over 200 were wounded by the blasts, making the attack the deadliest terrorist action in the country's history.
3 - The 2003 **Casablanca bombings** were a series of suicide bombings on May 16, 2003, in Casablanca, Morocco. The attacks were the deadliest terrorist attacks in the country's history. Forty-five people were killed as a result of these attacks (12 suicide-bombers and 33 victims). The suicide bombers came from the shanty towns of Sidi Moumen, a poor suburb of Casablanca, and were from the Salafia Jihadia group.
4 - The **Luxor Massacre** (photo) refers to the killing of 62 people, mostly tourists, that took place on November 17, 1997, at Deir el-Bahri, an archaeological site and major tourist attraction located across the River Nile from the Luxor in Egypt.
You can find many news items of such nature including attacks in Bali, Islamabad, Bumbai, and many more corners of the world where European tourists were attacked by purist Islamists belonging to a particular sect of Islam that believes killing of non-Muslims and even Muslims is Jihad, if these people are not following purist Islam.
Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia, Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (HSM) in the entire Africa, the Islamic

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Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in Uzbekistan, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) in Kyrgyzstan, the IMU-affiliated East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) in Turkmenistan and the whole of Central Asia, Tehrik-i-Talibans in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and all such groups who openly claim responsibility for killing people and attacking tourists have one similarity - they are followers of purist Islam and the concept of Jihad as according to Salafiyyah.

Salafiyyah is related to or includes Wahhabism, so that the two terms are sometimes erroneously viewed as synonymous. Salafism has become associated with literalist, strict,

world - Pakistan and Saudi Arabia - because the official "Wahhabi" religion of Saudi Arabia has essentially merged with certain segments of Salafism, and these two countries were front offices of Afghan Jihad against the former Soviet Union on the instructions of the United States and other western countries that wanted to defeat the former Soviet Union through Afghan Jihad.

Followers of Salafism were frontrunners of Afghan Jihad, so they tried to spread the same mode of Islam in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan when the former Soviet Union was defeated in Afghanistan. This

and puritanical approaches to Islamic theology and, in the west, with the Salafi Jihadis who advocate violent jihad against civilians as a legitimate expression of Islam.

This mindset was very much appreciated and supported by certain international powers that needed it for Jihad in Afghanistan against former Russia (USSR), because this was the only sect in Islam that consider killing of human beings justified for the larger cause of the spread of Islam, while Baralvi Sunnis and Shia sects are against Jihad unless war is waged officially by enemies and the land is attacked by enemies.

Salafism was the official religion of Talibans when they were ruling Afghanistan before the 9/11 event. The Taliban government was officially accepted by only two countries of the

mindset does not like the mingling of non-Muslim with Muslim societies, therefore, there is no room for tourism in this sort of society that is run by this mindset. Salafi from all over the world were invited and facilitated to reach Afghanistan to wage Jihad against the "infidel" Soviet Union, and these people were provided the best possible guerrilla war training against the regular army of the former USSR. The majority of young people came from the Middle East and Arab countries, including Osama Bin Laden and all who became top leadership of Al-Qaeeda thereafter.

After defeating one of the biggest regular armies of the world (the former USSR), these people became confident that they could wage war and Jihad against any army of the

world, and most of them went back to their native countries like Yemen, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Sudan, Nigeria, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia and started work to replace democratic and monarch governments of their countries with Islamic governments, like Talibans who made Afghanistan an Islamic republic of Sharia. And in their Sharia, there is no room for tourism, because according to them, tourism brings also non-Islamic cultural changes and mingling with non-Islamic people who then pollute Islamic society.

economic and social ills, and Pakistan can be an example where terrorism has ruined the entire economy of the country, although Pakistan has everything to offer to tourists. "The contribution of tourism and travel to both industrialized and developing countries is now so great that any downturns in the level of activity in the industry are a cause of concern. The repercussions extend beyond activities directly associated with tourism, notably airlines, hotels, and catering, to sectors that supply intermediate or final goods that are

Tourism is a critical source of revenue generation and, therefore, a major component of economic development, a relationship that rewards states when positive conditions such as a strong global economy exist.

But what happens when negative conditions exist, such as terrorism?

You can find the majority of attacks on tourists were in the poorest countries of the world where tourism could play a pivotal role to enhance economies, but terrorists discourage people to visit these areas, leaving poor people in poverty and blocking ways for change and prosperity of these poor nations.

The impact of terrorism on a state's economy may be enormous, leading to unemployment, homelessness, deflation, crime, and other

purchased by firms and employees in the industry, so that all sectors of the economy are affected to a greater or lesser extent.

International tourism is an industry that lives on personal contacts and has a message: to enable and facilitate a face-to-face intercultural dialogue. A successful tourism industry needs political stability, peace, security, and the potential for dialogue between different groups of people without mental or physical restrictions.

Terrorism against tourists and in tourist destinations, aims, among other things, to prevent intercultural contacts and dialogue. It seeks to hinder a possibly better and deeper understanding of "others."

Terrorism against tourists in general is either a politically- or a culturally-motivated act. There are various instances which show the impact of terrorism on tourism: like various attacks in Srinagar, Pakistan, Indonesia, India, the United Kingdom, Egypt, and Arabian countries.

Tourism provides maximum chances for people and societies to stay with each other and to understand each other. Today, world peace is a victim of conflicts, ranging from geographical to conceptual and from political to religious. Human agony has been growing multi-dimensionally. One of the core reasons of such financial, political, and social unrest is the lack of oneness and the absence of interfaith harmony within societies. Achieving harmony among races, cultures, continents, and religions is a major issue for individuals and groups that feel pain for millions of poor, powerless, homeless, and hopeless people around the world.

Meeting each other and living together for some time helps to understand each other. Tourism has always been an important tool for such meetings. For long, tourism has been working as a way of creating harmony among people. East-West exposure historically has become possible through travelers. These are the reasons why terrorists are attacking tourism, because they know the development of tourism is death of their separatist ideas. The development of tourism will ensure a stronger interfaith harmony that will defeat their ideas of dividing people in the name of religion and races.

Psychopysiological Touch Screen Stress Analysis
The ultimate investigative focus technology
By Billy Boyle
Source: http://www.pvsa.net

Post 9/11, security screening procedures at airports, ports of entry, border crossings, consulates and embassies have escalated to keep pace with the evolving tactics of aggressors – from box cutters to shoe bombs, from liquid explosives to bombs implanted in the human body. Terrorist and smugglers have become more evasive. The sophistication of threats from unforeseen sources continues to rise and may already challenge the capabilities of conventional individual screening systems.

Testing in 2006 by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) at several major airports found that about 50% of fake bombs components were missed by screeners.. Systems currently utilized, such as metal detectors, individual pat downs, and x-rays, rely heavily upon human interpretation, which, with a high volume of traffic, can be somewhat unreliable. TSA has added full-body scanners to the physical screening process. Such devices, however, are not widely acceptable for a variety of health, religious, cultural, and privacy concerns. It was reported in March 2011 that some of these body scanners produce 10 times the amount of radiation first reported. They, too, are dependent upon human operators who make errors. Additionally, these full body scanners are not capable of detecting bombs implanted in a body or body cavity. This growing threat was shown by a recent Al Qaeda rectum bomb attack on a Saudi Prince and the development of explosive breast implants. Conventional screening systems attempt to identify certain prohibited items, but cannot indicate the hostile intent of a person.

Is there a reliable solution?
Yes, and it is available today! Instead of attempting to physically detect weapons, bombs, drugs, or other concealed items, we offer a cost-effective, user-friendly system that, without relying solely on human interpretation, detects whether or not a person represents a potential hostile threat.

The Psychophysiological Touch Screen Analysis (PTSSA) system is the result of over 35 years of evolving research and development. This state-of-the-art security screening system utilizes very sensitive touch screen computers that measures the human neuro-muscular response to questions, resulting with insights into a person's intentions. A person is asked simple questions, in their native language, requiring a YES or NO response. A number of simple baseline questions are followed by a short series of questions assessing the person's intention with regard to weapons, smuggling, terrorism, and associations. Average testing time for 147 test subjects

was 1.6 minutes per subject. A redesign of the questions brought testing time down to about 1 minute. The stress responses are measured against the baseline responses, where finely-tuned algorithms

precisely determine the person's emotional reaction to each test question. A successful test produces a green or blue indicator on the report monitor, and the person is cleared. An unsuccessful test produces a yellow, orange or red indicator, requiring the person to undergo a secondary test.   Additional screening questions either clear the person or identify them as a potential threat. In that case, the person may be denied access, placed on a "watch" list; and/or, depending upon the laws of the country, further investigated by a designated agency.

The PTSSA system accommodates persons who may be illiterate or visually impaired by using a speaker or headset, which vocalizes the test instructions and questions in the selected native language. The person being tes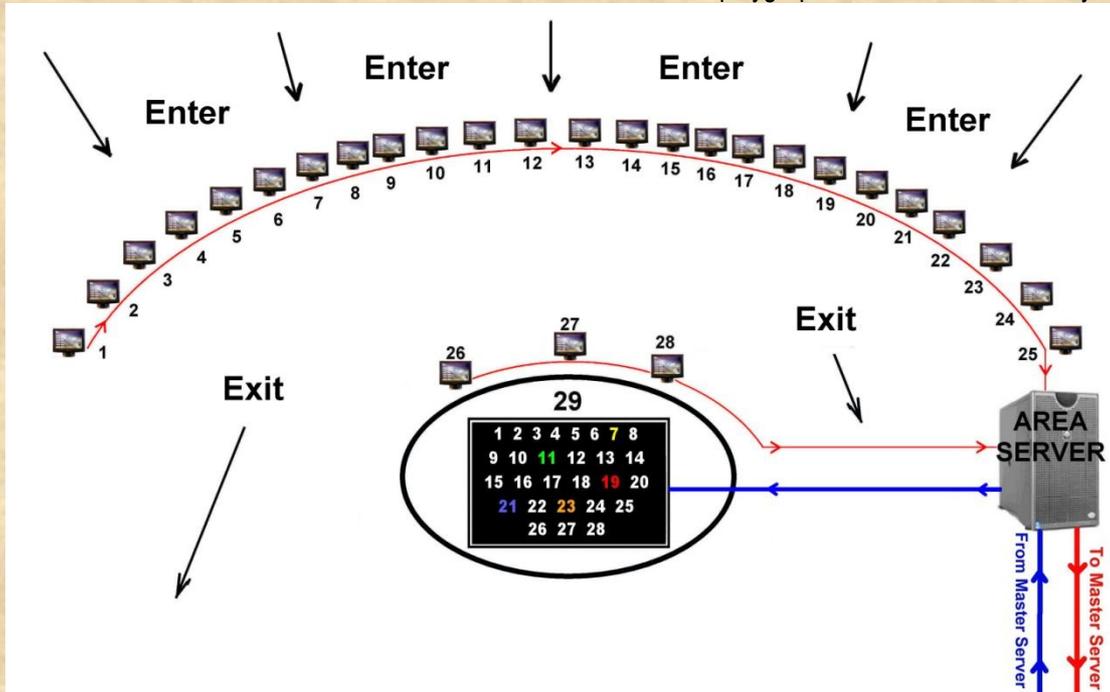ted touches the color-coded YES or NO answer buttons on the specialized computer touch screens in response to the questions.

The PTSSA system is capable of integrating optional hardware such as cameras, magnetic card readers, finger print scanners, passport scanners, and RFID technology.

The Science
The PTSSA is a patent-pending system that captures a person's emotional reactions resulting from variations in the person's subconscious neurological response, a proven indicator of psychological stress (see *www.pvsa.net/main/page_research.html*). This neurological response to stress generates micro muscle tremors, which are detectable and measureable. Both polygraph and voice stress analysis

systems are reliable and have been used extensively for years in law enforcement. However, both of those systems require highly trained operators, are too slow, expensive, and cumbersome for high volume security screening.
The PTSSA system has been proven in many tests to produce 100% comparable results when run side by side with voice stress analysis. It does not require highly trained operators and is very fast – basic screening is usually about 1 minute. A PTSSA network can screen tens of thousands of people simultaneously and generate a critical, accurate analysis for all tests in less than one second.

Real World Testing Completed
The PTSSA system was successfully tested in a real world environment during December 2010 at the Lagos, Nigeria Murtala Muhammed International Airport. More than 2000 passengers were randomly selected and screened with PTSSA system. While the x-ray machines are used to screen all baggage in an effort to help identify suspicious items of interest, the PTSSA system will be utilized to screen all passengers to help identify those with suspicious intent. During the test, the system identified a number of individuals involved in smuggling (*by their own admissions*) activities and three individual involved in terrorist activities (*by their abnormal reaction patterns*).

Proof of Concept

The PTSSA system has been thoroughly tested: *http://www.pvsa.net/main/page_research.html*

A study was conducted in 2005 to determine whether or not the Psychophysiological Touch Screen Stress Analyzer (PTSSA) is capable of capturing a psychophysiological response to a stimulus. The algorithms utilized in the PTSSA were developed in the 1980's by Profiles for the Mark II Voice Stress Analyzer. These algorithms were developed in a real world environment with 2000+ examinations.
In this study, a truth verification examination was administered by the PTSSA to 25 different subjects. This survey was adapted for the PTSSA from a psychological preconditioning questionnaire that had been developed for voice stress analysts and polygraph examiners in the 1980's. **CONCLUSION:** There was 100% correlation between the PTSSA and PVSA

concerning the relevant and control issues. This evidence proves, beyond a reasonable doubt, that when the subject touches the specialized computer touch screen, in response to the stimulus displayed on the touch screen, the subject's psychophysiological response was captured.

Emotional Reaction and Time Factor Analysis of 147 Test Subjects
Second Proof of Concept Study 2009

4. This column is the average time it took the subjects to read each individual question.

5. This column is an average of Q3, Q4, Q5 and so on for each zone. Please notice the average emotional reaction pattern for each zone decreased in each zone. This is because the subjects have adapted to being asked and responding to the questions they are asked on the PTSSA. This is more proof that PTSSA can measure emotional reactions when a person touches the screen in response to the stimuli on the PTSSA screen.
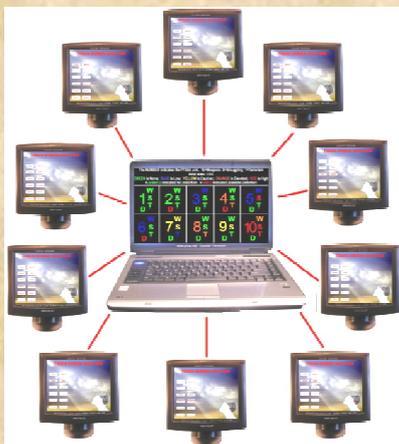
1. This column indicates how the test subjects emotionally reacted to each question.

2. Q1 and Q2 are adaption questions. Q3, Q4 and Q5 establish the 1st of 4 moving baselines.

3. This Threshold Stress Level (TSL) High and Low is the average bandwidth for these 147 tests. If any of the Reactions for Q6 through Q14 are greater than 24.38 or less than 11.70 then it is considered out of the bandwidth and a Hit. Two Hits for any one issue is considered significant and should be further investigated.

6. Zone References…
Zone 1 is Q3, Q4, Q5.
Zone 2 is Q6, Q7, Q9.
Zone 3 is Q10, Q11, Q12.
Zone 4 is Q12, Q13, Q14.

7. This distortion factor is used to determine whether or not the subject carefully read each question. It takes a longer time to read questions 6, 7, 9, and 11 than questions 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 13, 14, and 15. The average for these read times will vary depending on the person's reading skills but the ratio should remain constant. The average read time of the longer questions should be within a few of point of the average read time for Q6, Q7, Q9, and Q12. The person must carefully read each question because it is a very important part of the psychological preconditioning. process.

	Reaction Factor Analysis	Read Time Seconds	Zone Factor Analysis	
Average Test Time per Subject	1.6 min.			
Q1	20.42	3.2		
Q2	20.30	3.1		
Q3	21.06	2.4		
Q4	20.16	3.9	20.72	Zone 1
Q5	20.94	3.8		
Weapons Q6	22.29	13.7		
Weapons Q7	19.47	11.3	20.44	Zone 2
Weapons Q8	19.57	5.8		
Smuggling Q9	19.56	11.6		
Smuggling Q10	19.23	3.7	19.14	Zone 3
Smuggling Q11	18.64	7.1		
Terrorism Q12	19.13	10.6		
Terrorism Q13	18.83	3.5	18.93	Zone 4
Terrorism Q14	18.80	5.3		
Q15	18.58	3.0		
Average Reaction Factor	19.50	11.8	Average Read Time for Q 6, 7, 9, 12	
Threshold Stress Level High	24.38	4.3	Average Read Time for Q3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15	
Threshold Stress Level Low	11.70	2.8	R/T Distortion Adjust Factor	

Real World Environment Test of the PTSSA in Lagos, Nigeria
On December 14, 2010 testing was concluded at the Lagos' Murtala Muhammed International Airport. More than 2,000 passengers were randomly selected and screened through the PTSSA system utilizing the Potential Threats Test (PTT). The PTT was utilized to help identify those with suspicious intent. The PTSSA system identified numerous individuals involved in smuggling activities (*by their own admissions*), but the main focus of the screening was terrorism, and three individuals were identified as having involvement in terrorism activities (*by their emotional reactions indicators*). http://pvsa.net/main/page_information_beta_test.html

The Known Outcome Test (KOT) was also administered and designed to provide additional evidence that the PTSSA can accurately determine when a person is practicing deception. This KOT examination was also administered at the Lagos, Nigeria International Airport to a number of adult passengers and security agents without regard for their age, ethnicity, or gender. All testing was monitored and observed by officials from the Nigerian Civil Aviation Agency (NCAA) and the Federal Aviation Administration of Nigeria (FAAN). **CONCLUSION**: The reliability of the KOT examination was 99.163% in detecting deception.
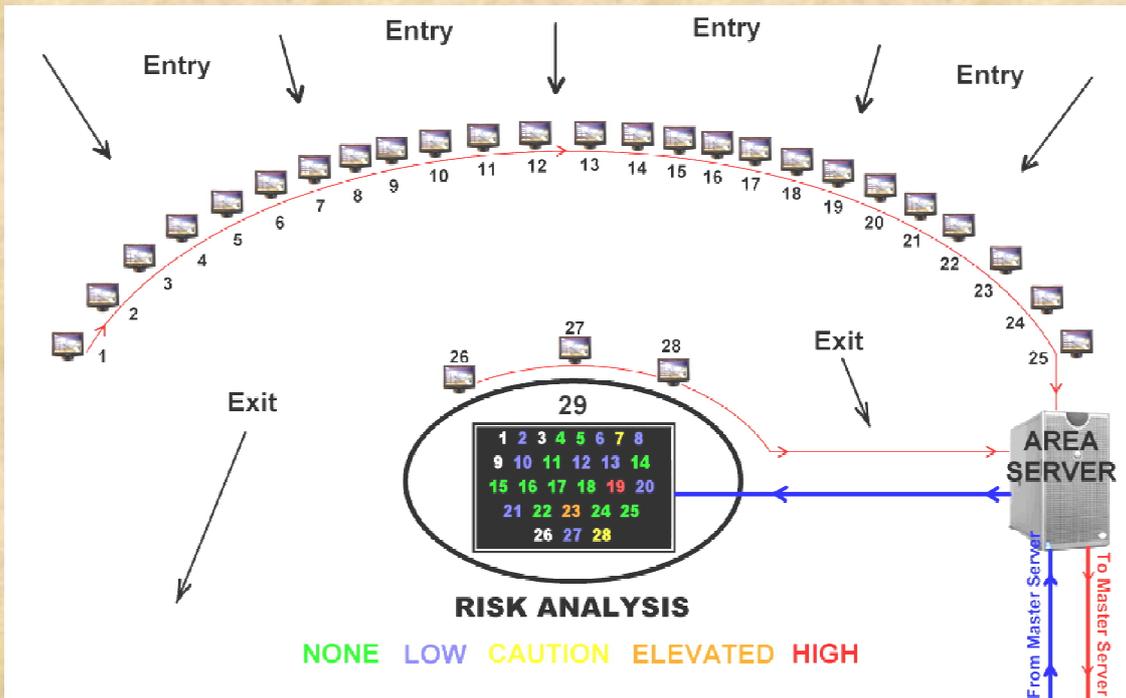

Airports and Mass Transit
The PTSSA system is deployed in a modular setup where any number of touch screens can be provided to accommodate heavy usage during peak traffic times. While this system utilizes substantially reliable screening technology, ongoing heightened concerns for weapons, explosives and drugs may require that it be used in tandem with conventional metal detection and x-ray systems. As an auxiliary system, the PTSSA is more reliable and cost effective than full body scanners, which are similarly deployed as an auxiliary system, and does not raise the negative health, privacy or religious issues associated with that technology. Below is a sample

layout of a modular system for aviation. Similar styles and layouts for various mass transit facilities can be modified to accommodate the specific needs of that particular facility.

Specific design depends upon the intended purpose (aviation, railroad or bus terminals, border or general population screening,) volume of traffic and particular building architecture. A 28 touch screen system can process up to 1120 passengers per hour. Data analysis is very easy to interpret.

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Visa Processing and Border Crossings

US and UK embassies and consulates currently experience large and continuously growing backlogs of visa and related document applications in Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and South America. For example, 215 US facilities process approximately 6.7 million visas per year; 150 UK facilities process approximately 2.2 milion visas per year. To date, more than 4 million U.S. Border Crossing Cards (Laser Visa) have been issued to Mexican citizens. There is growing political momentum in the U.S. for biometric identity cards that will be optional for U.S. citizens and mandatory for aliens. Utilization of the PTSSA system in embassies, and as a tool for identifification and verification of aliens, is a fast, inexpensive solution to address delays and improve effeciencies for visa and ID card processing.

Facility Entry Screening

The need for screening persons entering sensitive facilities such as the U.S. Capital, federal courthouses, major government buildings, nuclear power plants, chemical plants and ports of entry is an immediate and critical concern. Current technology focuses on processes designed solely to find a bomb, weapons and/or contraband. The PTSSA system offers a means of determining intention, rather than exclusively focusing on finding physical objects. Federal facilities operated by the GSA, the Department of Energy and the Department of Transportation will be able to offer increased security through implementation the PTSSA system.

Employee Background Checks

The use of truth verification technology for pre and post employment screening is presently regulated in the United States, where it is acceptable for use only by certain government agencies, financial instutions, armored car companies, and pharmaceutical companies. The PTSSA system can be invaluable for these entities. For example, a potential employee would be examined not only for their past performances, but also their future intentions.

Many countries, currently under seige from violence and threats from drug cartels, terrorists, and related corruption, faces a situation where 80% of the kidnappings and ambushes of government officials and corporate officers are attributed to the active participation of employees. Pre screening job applicants and current employees with the PTSSA system would offer significant insights into the motives of certain indivuduals, resulting in a decrease

of these kidnappings, ambushes, and identification of those directly or indirectly involved with the drug cartels and terrorists.

Criminal Investigation Support
Currently investigations tend to rely upon polygraphs or voice stress analysis. Results generated by the PTSSA system have a 100% correlation with results from voice stress analysis testing. In contrast with those systems, the PTSSA system is faster, easier to use and does not require a highly trained expert to administer.

Law Enforecment and Military Support

With the number of deployed troops growing dramatically since 9/11, there is a significant need for a small, portable technology that can assist law enforcement and military personnel in assessing threats from the indigenous population. The current military environment has an abundance of suicide bombers that pose extreme threats to personnel, facilities and equipment. Physical check points have proven insufficient in accurately identifying the intent of individuals. The PTSSA system (in its Toughbook configuration) offers a fast, multi-lingual means of assessing the intentions of persons with only limited exposure of military or civilian personnel.

PTSSA ToughBook System for hostile environment

After a U.S. State Department representative went through a hands on demonstration of the PTSSA system, he saw a definite need for the system to be deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq for the purpose of identifying Islamic Taliban extremists and their supporters. Many of these extremists have infiltrated the Afghan military and police and are creating havoc in many of Afghan agencies as well as killing unsuspecting U.S. troops. This representative now has a demo unit in hand.

Cost
A PTSSA basic system includes hardware, software, set up, staff training, system calibration on the first 2000 screenings, and warranty. We quote per number of stations per location plus a nominal charge per screening. This provides for remote IT system monitoring, maintenance and periodic software upgrades. You can also purchase the system for a multi-year commitment based on a per-person screening fee. Hybrid procurement approaches may prove advantageous for an initial installation followed by later wide area, multiple-site deployments. The cost of design and installation of supporting furniture, fixtures, partitions and equipment as well as Uninterrupted Power Systems (UPS) and broadband connections are particular to each location and to each client's preferences; they are priced in addition to the cost of the basic system and are determined after site reconnaissance and user interviews

The PTSSA system has a number of applications:

Private Employers, Investigators, and Security Contractors
- Job Applicant and Current Employee screening (as permitted by the Federal Employee Polygraph Protection Act within the United States)
- Criminal Investigative Interviews and Verification of Information

Law Enforcement Agencies.
- Job Applicants
- Post Screening of Employees
- Criminal Investigative Interviews and Verification of Information from witnesses, suspects, informants
- Post Criminal Conviction (Probation and Parole)

- Prisoners and Visitors
- Counter Terrorism
- Anti Smuggling

Embassies and Consulate Screening

- Individuals issued visas
- In country personnel
- Counter Terrorism
- Anti Smuggling
- Criminal Investigative Interviews and Verification of information from witnesses, suspects, informants

Ports of Entry and Airport Screening

- Security Personnel
- Counter Terrorism
- Anti Smuggling

Military Screening

- Recruits
- Combatant Detainee
- Counter Terrorism
- Anti Smuggling
- Prisoners and Visitors
- Criminal Investigative Interviews and Verification of Information from witnesses, suspects, informants

Bomber freed by secret justice: Terrorist released after supergrass deal in closed court
Source:http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2130552/Bomber-freed-secret-justice-Terrorist-released-supergrass-deal-closed-court.html#ixzz1sJS0IWha

A convicted terrorist who plotted to blow up a jet has been secretly walking the streets of Britain for two years after being freed early in return for becoming an Al Qaeda supergrass.

Saajid Muhammad Badat, 33, was jailed for 13 years for planning to destroy a transatlantic plane with a shoe-bomb in a co-ordinated attack in December 2001 with fellow Briton Richard Reid.

Deal: Terrorist Saajid Muhammad Badat, pictured, had his 13 year sentence cut to 11 after the agreement with prosecutors

But yesterday it emerged that the former grammar school boy had been freed two years early after striking a secret deal to testify against a suspected terrorist in America.

In an extraordinary secret court hearing, the Islamic fundamentalist was released following a private discussion between a judge, his solicitor and prosecutors.

Badat, who was jailed in 2005, would only have been eligible for release in July this year, with a licence period extending to August 2013, but his sentence was cut in the deal agreed by the judge.

Yesterday Scotland Yard and the Crown Prosecution Service released a joint statement saying this case – the first of its kind – was a great example of how the authorities were fighting terror.

But the case has raised questions about the extent of secrecy surrounding criminal courts. In addition, it is unclear how much his freedom has cost the taxpayer as Badat will require substantial levels of police protection.

Indeed, details of his release might never have been made public but for a trial in New York this week where he is due to give evidence against suspected U.S. terrorist, Adis Medunjanin.

He is accused of plotting an Al Qaeda attack on the New York subway on

the eighth anniversary of 9/11 in 2009.

Yesterday the CPS released court documents showing that Badat was 'highly trusted within the higher echelons' of Al Qaeda.

He was so 'well placed' that he was 'assessed of being of potential use in between 12 and 18 future trials' in the U.S., the documents reveal.

After signing a secret agreement to co-operate with the CPS and the FBI, Badat faced 'marathon interviews' for almost 45 hours as police sought to squeeze every last detail about Al Qaeda's structure and commanders both here in Britain as well as in America.

His evidential debrief took place in 112 interviews over some 26 days.

Passport: Badat had an identical device to the one used by fellow Briton Richard Reid found at his home two years later

Scotland Yard said yesterday he had been providing intelligence for a number of years while behind bars which had assisted anti-terrorist investigations.

But the judiciary and police were so keen to keep his case under wraps that they took extraordinary steps to prevent his release from being known.

Today it can be revealed that even as far back as 2005, the authorities were attempting to hide his co-operation as the trial judge handed down what was in effect a coded sentence disguising the real reason that his tariff had been slashed by three-quarters to just 13 years.

Mr Justice Fulford said Badat could have been facing a term of more than 50 years after pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy with others to destroy a passenger airliner whilst in flight by igniting a high-explosive device.

The Old Bailey heard that Badat, from Gloucester, was to have been 'a key player' in

a second wave of spectacular airline attacks masterminded by Osama Bin Laden's henchmen five months after the September 11 hijackings.

Plot: He had worked with Richard Reid, pictured, who tried but failed to set off a bomb in his shoe over the Atlantic

The plan was for the 25-year-old to trigger his bomb in a simultaneous attack with fellow British shoe bomber Richard Reid as they travelled across the Atlantic on two packed airliners.

Badat, who had been trained in Al Qaeda camps in Pakistan, had a bomb designed to be placed in his shoes.

The devices that he and Reid intended to use were sufficient to blow a hole in the fuselage of a jet.

But while Reid was flying from Paris to Miami in December 2001, Badat got 'cold feet' and didn't board his flight from Amsterdam's Schipol airport.

Instead, he emailed his handler in Pakistan, telling him he had 'big problems' and could not complete his mission.

He hid the device under his bed at his parents' home in Gloucester. He was not caught until 2003 when police, acting on intelligence, searched the house and found the bomb.

After his arrest, he claimed he had been manipulated and had wanted to

'get away from danger and introduce some calm in his life'.

On 22 April 2005, Mr Justice Fulford sentenced him to 13 years saying: 'It would not be in the

the blandness of the sentencing remarks that were appropriate in that situation and which were given and a positive identification of this man and it is something he would have been

Conviction: Explosives and bomb making equipment were found by police in Sadat's suitcases

Equipment: Badat had hidden an identical device to the one used by fellow Briton Richard Reid, including explosives, left, and a detonator, right

public interest to send out a message that if would-be terrorists turn away from death and destruction before any lives are put at risk, the courts will not reflect in a significant and real way any such genuine change of heart in the sentence which is handed down.'

But when the CPS struck a co-operating witness agreement with Badat under the terms of the Serious Organised Crime and Policing Act in November 2009, it emerged that there were other reasons for the lenient sentence.

On November 13 2009, when prosecutors applied to cut his sentence during a closed court hearing at the Old Bailey, Mr Justice Calvert-Smith confirmed that the trial judge knew Badat had been cooperating with the authorities.

He remarked: 'One would have thought that rats would have been smelt from the moment Mr Justice Fulford passed his sentence.'

Representing Badat, Sarah Forshaw replied: 'Possibly, but there is big difference between

concerned about.

'Badat was highly trusted within the higher echelons of the organisation'

She went on: 'He (Badat) is –undoubtedly was- highly trusted within the higher echelons of the organisation.

'Those against whom he proposes to provide assistance and ultimately evidence would know very well if the court were to provide him with what might be perceived as a lenient sentence.'

Mr Justice Calvert-Smith said that his ruling and even the existence of the hearing must be kept secret, saying Badat was: 'of such international and overwhelming importance to the administration of justice, not just in this country, but worldwide.'

He ordered that his parole hearing be fast-tracked so that he was apply for parole the same day.

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The downgrading of his Category A prisoner status was also 'expedited' so that he would be eligible for parole on the judge's instructions.

The court was told that Badat had renounced terrorism in his words and actions and believed he had been manipulated and exploited by Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda leaders.

It was said Badat felt that ' Al Qaeda has hijacked Islam, misinterpreted the religious creeds for its own ends and thereby manipulated and pressured many Muslims into terrorist-related activities'.

Badat was granted legal aid in the same hearing, but such was the secrecy surrounding the case that the judge said legal services should not even be told the identity of the defendant.

The Daily Mail has led criticism of plans for more secret courts as an affront to traditions of open justice.

Last night the CPS refused to reveal which cases he had aided, although police confirmed that has not formally given evidence in any British terrorist trials

Sue Hemming, Head of the CPS Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division, said: 'We considered very carefully the merits of entering into this agreement with a convicted terrorist, and we believe that the administration of justice internationally benefits from such an agreement.

'This trial is the first time a UK convicted terrorist, has agreed, under the terms of our agreement, to give evidence in the United States. This will be in the trial, opening today in New York, of Adis Medunjanin, relating to an alleged al-Qaeda martyrdom plot in New York from 2008-2010.

'Badat has helped with investigations in this country, he continues to co-operate and has agreed to testify in other trials if called upon.'

Ms Hemming added: 'While in prison he fully co-operated with investigators in the Counter Terrorism Command of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and US law enforcement officers in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and provided information of overwhelming importance in relation to investigations they were conducting.

'We knew what he was like before all this and we knew what he was like afterwards... He is still the same person'

Scotland Yard's Deputy Assistant Commissioner Stuart Osborne, Senior National Co-ordinator Counter Terrorism said: 'The Counter Terrorism Command of the Metropolitan Police Service will use all available legislative processes to combat terrorism.

'This case is an example where the SOCPA legislation has secured substantial and significant evidence and intelligence relating to investigations undertaken by the Counter Terrorism Command which has also assisted law enforcement agencies in other countries.'

Badat is now believed to be living under witness protection, although he refused an offer of a new identity despite fears that his evidence would make him one of Al Qaeda's most wanted.

Badat exact whereabouts were a closely guarded secret last night.

He is due to give evidence in the trial of Adis Medunjanin in New York tomorrow via videolink after being questioned in a room in London by a member of the Brooklyn District Attorney's team and his lawyer Robert Gottlieb.

No judge - British or American - was present and the hearing took the form of a US style deposition, where each lawyer gets to ask questions.

Yesterday his family who still live in Gloucester refused to comment.

A man believed to be younger his brother said: 'You have seen what the CPS have said and we would rather keep everything else within the family.

'At the end of the day he is my brother.

'We knew what he was like before all this and we knew what he was like afterwards. He is the same person.

'If people want to say that he is a terrorist then that is up to them.'

The quiet grammar school boy who joined Al Qaeda

He was a hard-working grammar school pupil and respected member of his community who somehow turned into an Al Qaeda terrorist.

Four years after leaving school with ten GCSEs and four A-levels, Saajid Badat was preparing to use a shoe-bomb to blow up a transatlantic flight.

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Schoolboy: Badat in 1994

The plan was for Badat to trigger his bomb in a co-ordinated attack with fellow British shoe bomber Richard Reid as they travelled to the U.S. on two airliners.

Badat's transformation from softly-spoken, devout Muslim to would-be mass killer shocked relatives and friends.

After all, his parents were hardworking Pakistani immigrants who had placed great emphasis on his upbringing. His father Muhammed arrived in Gloucester via Malawi in

the early 1970s and got a job at the Wall's ice-cream factory.

Muhammed's wife Zubeida was a seamstress who taught sewing classes.

Their hopes for a better life for their son, who was born in 1979, were fulfilled when he won a place at Gloucester's Crypt Grammar School. After receiving a glowing report from headmaster David Lamper, who said he was 'punctual, cheerful and polite', Badat began a sociology degree in London in 1997.

He gave the impression of being a happily Westernised young man, a keen footballer and Liverpool FC fan who played for an Asian team at weekends. But his parents' pride was to be shattered when he was arrested in November 2003.

According to family friends, Badat's conversion to terrorism could have begun after an argument with his 'very strict' and religious father, who had made ten pilgrimages to Mecca and demanded his son dedicate his life to Islam by becoming a cleric. Badat defied him by going to university instead.

He occasionally came home to visit his mother, but would not speak to his father. Then in 1998, he dropped out of university after just one year.

In the next three years, Badat travelled in Pakistan and Afghanistan. It was there that he became a fully-fledged Al Qaeda member, undergoing training in how to use explosives at two camps.

He studied terrorism alongside as many as 40 fellow Britons, including Reid, a south London petty criminal. Both Badat and Reid volunteered for the shoe-bombing operation and Badat went back to Europe via Saudi Arabia.

Boarder: The room at the College of Islamic Knowledge and Guidance in Blackburn, Lancashire, where Badat lodged

On September 11, 2001 – the day Al Qaeda carried out its murderous attacks on New York and Washington – he was at the British Embassy in Brussels, claiming to have lost his passport and duly receiving a replacement. Reid played the same trick, designed to secure a new passport free of incriminating stamps from Afghanistan.

He went on to catch a flight from Paris to Miami on December 22, 2001, shod in his explosive footwear, only to be stopped by fellow-passengers.

Three days before his own suicide mission, Badat pulled out.

It may have been a last-minute attack of nerves, or possibly a belated renunciation of violence.

He enrolled at the College of Islamic Knowledge and Guidance in Blackburn, and was reconciled with his father. Police caught up with him two years after his planned suicide mission, by which

time he was yet again leading a harmless existence.

But after becoming the first convicted terrorist to reach a supergrass deal with UK prosecutors – a decision which will infuriate Islamic militants – Badat will forever be looking over his shoulder for those bent on revenge.

Terrorist and Organized Criminal Search Data Base

Source: http://tocsearch.com

The TOC-search (Terrorist and Organized Criminal Search) is a dynamic data base which offers comprehensive information on global terrorist network and help researchers, analysts, students and others working to prevent terrorism. It is result of a common project realized by the Faculty of Security Studies and Faculty of Mathematics, University of Belgrade, which had started in December 2007.

The scope of the TOC-search data base is to provide in-depth research and analysis on terrorist incidents, terrorist groups, organizations, their members, leaders and also links and relations between the individuals and groups. The idea is to integrate data from variety of sources, including foreign and domestic news, professional security journals, reports and databases, academic works.

The starting point in the TOC-search project was the data presented on the map Al-Qaeda Network: Principals, Supporters, Selected Cells and Significant Activities (1992-2004). The map was prepared by J. L. Boesen, Raytheon Genesis Facility Institute Reston (2004), using the data derived from open sources. The data presented in the map were classified and stored in order to create backbone of the base.

The data in the base are classified in seven entities: individuals, groups, organizations, supporter, actions, links and GMC reports. The simple and advanced search features are implemented in the TOC-s. The simple search enables the researcher to explore the chosen entity by given keyword or part of an entity name. The advances search feature is implemented for each entity. It is performed by using different properties: alias, belongs to organization, belongs to group, leader, religion, in relation with, type or actors of the attack, etc. All search results are presented together with the basic information on the found subjects, enabling in-depth search to be performed as well. An important feature of the TOCs is the fact that links between the mentioned terrorist-related categories are stored and classified in the data base. The results of both simple and advance search provide information whether there is a link (active or inactive) from a particular item. The in-depth search feature gives more information on the found link. This is a unique feature of the TOC-s which no other terrorist database has had up to this point.

One of the key advantages of the TOC-s is the fact that its basic data source is verified information from the reports prepared and provided by George C Marshall European Center for Security Studies. The PTSS Reports are produced by special newsletter service supporting the counterterrorism course at The George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, and it is created for educational purposes only. The newsletter is produced from the open-source media reports by GMC postgraduate students and verified by senior experts and counter terrorism officers. This is the main reason why PTSS has been chosen as the main data source for TOC-s. Besides PTSS Reports, GMC also publishes several other reports based on different open source data, such as: Department of Homeland Security Report (DHS), Terrorism Open Source Intelligence Report (TOSIR), Insurgency Literature Review (ILR) and Terrorism Literature Report (TLR).

The incoming reports are sorted and stored by date in GMC section of the TOC-s database. The George Marshall Center provided us with their GMC reports archive and they keep sending us the daily PTSS and other GMC reports In this way, a constant refreshment of the base with up-to-date information has been provided.
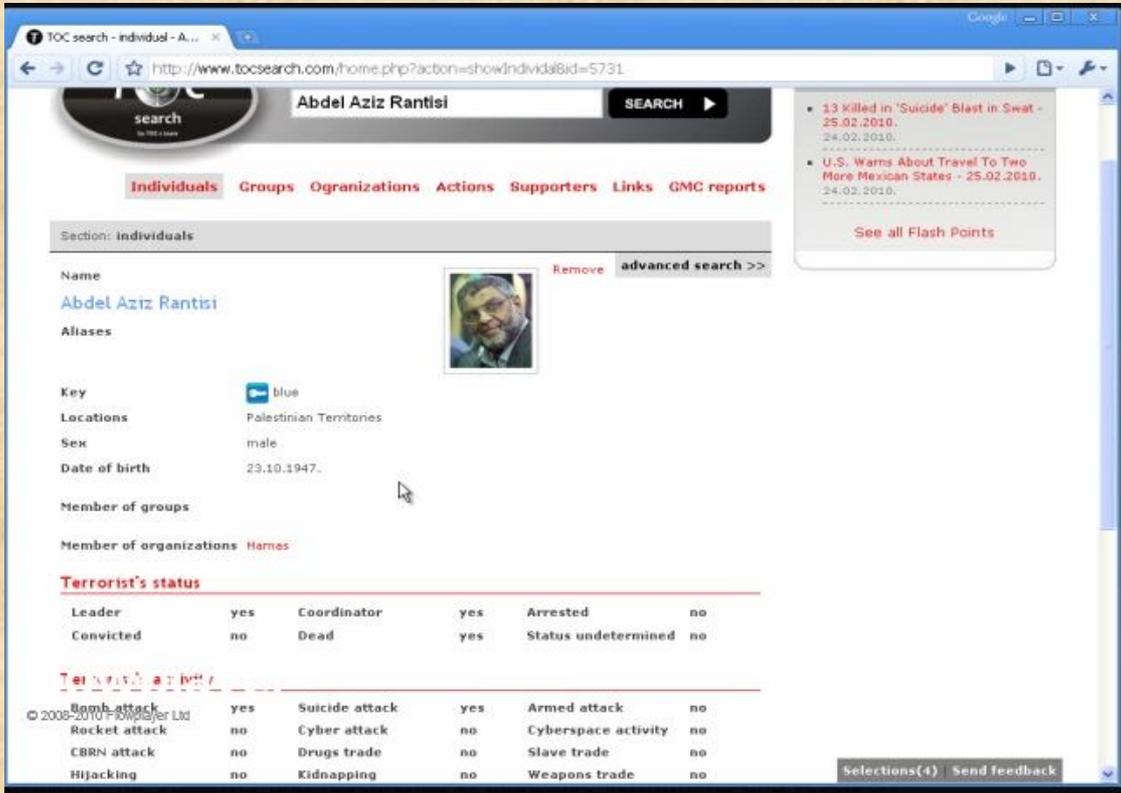
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The TOC-s simple search feature through GMC reports is implemented, which enables the exploration of GMC section by using keywords.

At each moment of using TOC-s, one can immediately start a new search or switch to

It is also important to provide the protection of data stored in the base. In this scope, two levels of data access are implemented in the TOC-s. The first level is named "blue key" and it is available for students and researchers in academic institutions and research centers.

advanced search tool. While exploring the data base, a researcher usually performs multiple search. In order to help the user of the TOC-s, we have implemented the "select tool". This tool enables the user to put all the important results obtained from different search. In this way, all the data that are essential in the research are available during the further TOC-s exploration. The data in the "selection" tool are easily added or removed. By using option "Feedback" the user may send a message on TOC-s administrator on different topics (site bugs, error data, comments, suggestions, etc.) The information in the TOC-s database has been constantly updated from the GMC reports and other publicly available, open-source materials. These include electronic news archives, existing data sets, secondary source materials such as books and journals, and legal documents. TOCs team performs constant verification of the data by comparing it with other sources and by internal checking of the data and related records.

The "blue key" enables the access to all open-source data stored in the base. The second level of data access, named "red key" is reserved for legal authorities, state institutions, and state government. The "red key" opens the part of the TOC-s with confidential data. The owner of the "red key" also has access to the open source data, as the "blue key" owner. Only state institutions and agencies which have a contract with TOC-s have an access to the red key data and they are red key members.

In the next phase of the TOC-s project, several analytical features are to be incorporated in the database. Analytical tools will provide statistical information analysis of the global terrorist network. The researcher will be able to analyze terrorism trends over time and to compare different aspects of terrorism between countries, regions and terrorist groups (for example: type of terrorist attacks, level of organization, tactics, communication level, size of a terrorist group, age or race of its members, and many others). The results of statistical

analysis will be presented graphically in various charts, showing the dependencies and/or the comparisons of the chosen aspects. The chart type can also be chosen by the user.

An analytical-purpose system will be used to understand the structure of different terrorist organizations with respect to particular attack types or regions of their activity. By using this system, the intelligence analysts will be able to develop hypotheses and then validate them (or not) against the data in the TOC-s information space. In this way, it will be possible to provide certain predictions of international terrorism trends, seasonality, and periodicity of terrorist events.

In the future phase of the TOC-search project, we also plan to implement the image search feature. This tool will enable to search the image data base for related photographs of individuals or terrorist attacks by using keywords (individual's name, group/ organization name, or the part of the name, specific terrorist incident, date, etc.).

Regarding the practical aspects of the TOC-s database, we emphasize the fact that the TOC-s data were primarily collected by academic groups. This means that TOC-s team was under no political or government pressure in terms of how to collect the data or how to classify them. Although the TOC-s is still in its construction phase, it has already been used in the purpose of Security of the Olympic Games in Beijing 2008, and for Security of the World Championship in Football 2010 and World Expo in China 2010.

Who can access TOC-s database?

There are two levels of data access are implemented in the TOC-s. The first level is named "blue key" and it is available for students and researches in academic institutions and research centers. The "blue key" enables the access to all open-source data stored in the base. The second level of data access, named "red key" is reserved for legal authorities, state institutions and state government. The "red key" opens the part of the TOC-s with confident data. The owner of the "red key" also has access to the open source data, as the "blue key" owner. Only institutions and agencies which have a contract with TOC-search have an access to the red key data and they are red key members. If you want to become a red key member please contact us.

Security Threats in the Sahel and Beyond: AQIM, Boko Haram and al Shabaab

Source:https://www.cimicweb.org/cmo/medbasin/Holder/Documents/r013%20CFC%20Monthly%20Thematic%20Report%20%2818-APR-12%29.pdf

NEW TERRORISM HOT SPOT: AFRICA'S SAHEL

ICTS – International Center for Terrorism Studies, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies – January 2012

CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – April 2012

Afghanistan: Terrorism attack thwarted in Kabul
Source: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10800575

Afghan security forces have arrested five militants with 11 tons of explosives that they planned to use to carry out a massive attack in Kabul.

Shafiqullah Tahiry, who is a spokesman for the National Director for Security, told a news conference that three of the men were Pakistanis and two were Afghans.

He did not say when the arrests took place, nor what their intended target was.

Tahiry said the explosives were brought from Pakistan to Kabul and that three of the men were members of the Pakistani Taliban, while the other two belonged to the Afghan Taliban. He said they were taking orders from two Pakistani Taliban commanders who he claimed have ties to that country's intelligence agency.

"Imagine if 10,000 kilograms of explosives, which was already inside Kabul" had exploded, "what a disaster could have happened," Tahiry said.

Militants reportedly from a Pakistan-based group launched coordinated assaults last week in the Afghan capital and other eastern cities.

Afghan and U.S. officials have blamed those attacks on the Haqqani network, an insurgent group that is allied with the Taliban and al-Qaeda and has been described by American officials as the most dangerous militant force in the Afghan war.

Last Sunday's coordinated assaults included

near-simultaneous attacks in the three parts of the capital and three other eastern cities. Eight policemen and three civilians were killed in 18 hours of fighting, along with 36 militants, according to Afghan officials.

Tahiry said the captured explosives were in 400 bags and hidden under potatoes loaded in a truck with Pakistani license plates.

According to Tahiry, the men confessed that they "had planned to carry out a terrorist attack in a key point in Kabul city."

"If history repeats itself, and the unexpected always happens, how incapable must Man be of learning from experience."
-George Bernard Shaw