

# TerrorismMonitor

In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror

Volume III, Issue 22 ♦ November 17, 2005

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49% of Zarqawi's targets are military, 36.2% political, 14.1% economic, and 0.6% ethno-religious.

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## Al-Zarqawi's Rise to Power: Analyzing Tactics and Targets

By Murad Batal al-Shishani

*This article is the first in a two-part series on Zarqawi's rising influence in the jihadist movement.*

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is attaining legendary status. Glorified by militant Salafists and jihadists the world over as an invincible warrior and vilified by Western governments as the most dangerous terrorist on the planet, Zarqawi currently occupies commanding heights among jihadi networks. While the Zarqawi phenomenon is largely a product of the invasion and occupation of Iraq, his disproportionate influence on the Iraqi insurgency is detrimental to the long-term interests of the Iraqi nationalist "resistance."

The Zarqawi network in its latest incarnation, namely the "Qaedat al-Jihad fi Bilad ar-Rafidain" (al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers) is often assumed to be the core component of the Iraqi insurgency. This erroneous assessment is largely due to the organization's carefully calibrated operations that are marked by suicide bombings (against hard and soft targets alike) that claim many victims and indiscriminately target civilians, high-profile kidnappings and the slaughtering of members of the new Iraqi security forces and any elements that are connected to the coalition presence in Iraq.

This article attempts to understand the Zarqawi network's size in relation to

the overall Iraqi resistance by analyzing the movement's military operations—its strategies and tactics and linking these to the organization's literature and Zarqawi's speeches—in order to shed new light on the motives and goals of Salafi-jihadists in Iraq.

## A Safe Haven and a Full-Fledged War

Being a Salafi-jihadist movement, al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers considers its struggle in Iraq as a cosmic conflict between “good and evil.” Their strategic vision includes the creation of a safe haven for al-Qaeda's operations in the region and beyond, which indicates that they have much more than political objectives in Iraq.

According to Zarqawi: “We do not fight for a fistful of dust or illusory boundaries drawn by ‘Sikes-Picot’. We are not fighting so that a Western evil would replace an Arab evil. Ours is a higher and more sublime fight. We are fighting so that Allah's word becomes supreme and religion is all for Allah. Anyone who opposes this goal or stands in the way of this aim is our enemy and will be a target for our swords, regardless of their name or lineage ... a Muslim American is our dear brother: an infidel Arab is our hated enemy, even if we both come from the same womb” [1]. He also says, “We have revived the jurisprudence of our good ancestors in fighting heretics and enforcing Allah's law on them. Jihad will be continuous, and will not distinguish between Western infidels or heretic Arabs until the rule of caliphate is restored or we die in the process.”

In order to develop a better understanding of al-Zarqawi's “enemies” and his organization's military strategies, this article makes use of reliable information from different sources on the experience of two years of American occupation of Iraq (April 10, 2003 – April 10, 2005) [2]. There are eight types of tactics used by the Iraqi resistance: general attacks, arson attacks, bombings, shootings, suicide attacks, car bombs, assassinations and abductions [3].

Table 1 and Chart 1 (see below) provide several indications: Zarqawi and his faction constitute only 14% of the total Iraqi resistance, which clearly indicates that the network's size is limited and the international media is largely responsible for exaggerating their role. In addition, Zarqawi's tactics are dramatic as his faction routinely resorts to suicide attacks. Suicide bombings by the Zarqawi network, which make up 42.2% total suicide attacks in Iraq, have many advantages, the most

important of which are low cost, lack of need for escape plans and media coverage. The percentage of suicide attacks perpetrated by Zarqawi's faction to the overall number of victims of other operations is 70% dead and 83.7% injured (see table 2). The high rate of victims apparently proves the effectiveness of the terrorist act (table 2 indicates that civilian victims of this tactic are as high as 80%) and achieves a large media coverage.

## Objectives of the al-Zarqawi Network

There are two main indicators that illustrate the real objectives of Salafi-jihadists in Iraq: namely identifying the targets of the attacks, and the movement's literature, which reveals its vision for Iraq and the broader region in light of the American occupation. Each factor supports the other analytically.

49% of Zarqawi's targets are military (see chart 2). In addition, 76.2% of the overall military targets were Iraqi and only 23.8% were American. On the other hand, political targets (including national political figures, local officials, political offices such as embassies and UN facilities) come second to military ones (36.2%), followed by economic targets (collaborators and companies)—14.1%, and finally ethno-religious targets—0.6%.

Such quantitative data reveal that the “internal agenda” is of great significance to the network. Naturally, the “original enemy,” according to Salafi-jihadists, is the United States; however, attacking internal targets (Iraqi security forces, Iraqi politicians, collaborators, etc.) is also of great importance, as indicated by the growing number of civilian victims.

Zarqawi believes that by establishing an Iraqi government and training Iraqi police, the Americans are aiming to “keep themselves from being killed” and indirectly “occupying the nation and robbing its riches” [4]. In his letter, which was leaked by the American forces and published by the London-based Hayat newspaper, Zarqawi asserts that the “enemies” are the American forces and the Alliance—the Shi'ite (whom they call the *Rafida*, or renegades)—and the Kurds, who are represented by Talabani and Barazani. In that letter, Zarqawi calls for targeting the Shi'ites “because they have put on the military uniforms,” a direct reference to the domination of the new Iraqi security forces by the religious Shiites. Zarqawi sees the Shiites as a graver danger than the Americans and believes that this threat can most effectively galvanize Iraq's embattled Arab

Sunni community against the new Iraq [5].

Establishing a safe haven for al-Qaeda depends on foiling the American plan that aims, according to Salafi-jihadists, to plant “puppets” in the new Iraqi government. As a result, the Zarqawi network has identified a range of targets that consist mostly of collaborators and companies (transport and contractors), which contrasts sharply with the targets of the nationalist Iraqi “resistance” that focus on oil facilities and the broader economic infrastructure that aim to show that the American project in Iraq is failing [6]. The divergence in tactics is rooted in wholly divergent strategic objectives. The nationalist Iraqi “resistance” has a realizable political aim: they want to end the occupation and participate in ruling the country. Meanwhile, al-Qaeda in Iraq sees the Iraq conflict as a temporary (albeit the most important) arena in which the greater struggle between the Salafi-jihadists and the United States unfolds.

In regards to targeting Shi’ites and Kurds, it is clear that despite the network’s literature, which is full of extreme threats against Shiites and to a lesser extent the Kurds, the declared operations against the former are almost non-existent. It is important to understand that in their public literature, al-Qaeda in Iraq justify targeting Shi’ites on the basis of this community’s open and wide-ranging cooperation with the occupation, and not on their supposedly “heretical” beliefs. This is the case with the religious Shi’ite political organizations, whose militias, in particular the highly effective al-Badr paramilitary organization (labeled as “al-Ghadr,” or “treachery” by the Salafi-jihadists) largely dominate the new Iraqi security structures. The Zarqawi network is mindful of the harmful effect of targeting Shi’ites insofar as global Muslim public opinion is concerned, and hence it tries to justify the targeting of Shi’ite security elites on political rather than religious grounds.

The Zarqawi network is also mindful of the level of support it enjoys amongst local Iraqi communities. This not only creates problems insofar as targeting Shi’ites is concerned, but also has implications for targeting the new security forces in their entirety. Zarqawi mentioned this point in his letter and talked of the difficulty of inciting people to fight the police, with whom they share kinship and have other relationships. This creates a dilemma for the faction: they either force their local Iraqi recruits to fight their relatives or “pack their bags and search for another land that would repeat the sad story in the fields of Jihad” [7].

Irrespective of these daunting challenges, Zarqawi still declared war on the Iranian-backed Badr Brigades (better known as the Badr Corps and now formally referred to as the Badr Organization) and even proposed establishing “Omar” Brigades to assassinate the leaders of the Badr paramilitary organization and the skilful and influential politicians of Hizb ad-Dawa, thus masking his war against the rising religious Shi’ite power in Iraq with overly-ambitious political goals.

## Conclusion

While the Salafi-jihadists have inevitably become embroiled in the treacherous politics of occupied Iraq, they have not retreated even an inch from their ideological beliefs and strategic objectives. The Salafi-jihadists in Iraq, led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, see the Iraq conflict as part of their jihad, first and foremost, and secondly as a springboard for a wider regional conflict that has as its central aim uprooting the current political order in the region. This clearly demonstrates how the Salafi-jihadist way has a radically different agenda from that of national- or ethnic-based resistance movements in unstable regions in which they have arrived (usually uninvited), thus imposing a daunting burden on these local resistance movements. Whether the wider nationalist Iraqi “resistance” can overcome the challenge of the Salafi-jihadists and reach some form of truce with the new Iraqi state remains to be seen.

*Murad B. Al-Shishani is a Jordanian-Chechen writer. He has an M.A degree in Political Science specializing in Islamic Movements in Chechnya. He is also author of the book The Islamic Movement in Chechnya and the Chechen-Russian Conflict 1990-2000, Amman, 2001 (in Arabic).*

TABLES (Data compiled from author from various sources, see note 2 in endnotes)

Table 1

The Operations of Zarqawi's Faction Compared to Overall Iraqi Resistance Operations

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Overall Resistance Operations</b>	<b>Zarqawi's Operations</b>	<b>% of Zarqawi's Operations to Iraqi Resistance Operations</b>
Attacks	342	33	9.6%
Arson Attacks	62	18	29%
Bombings	235	5	2.1%
Shootings	139	4	2.9%
Suicide attacks	188	71	42.2%
Car bombs	84	14	16.6%
Assassinations	103	7	6.8%
Abductions	86	19	22.1%
Total	1219	171	14%

Chart 1

Percentage of al-Zarqawi's Attacks to entire Resistance



**Table 2**

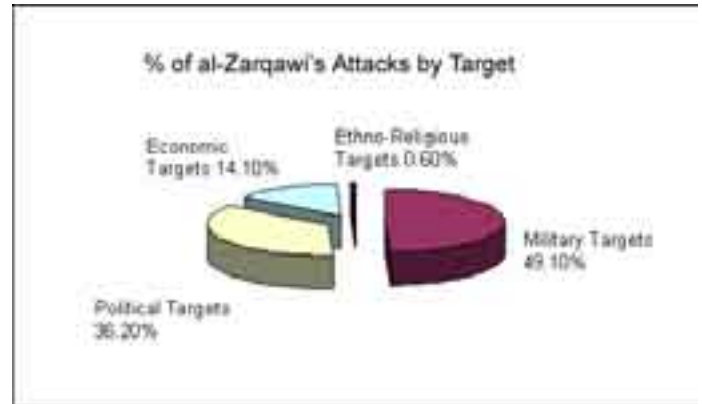
Percentage of Victims of Zarqawi's Suicide Attacks to Victims of other Tactics

% of al-Zarqawi's Attacks by Targets

Victims	Dead	Wounded
Alliance Forces	12%	8.9%
Iraqi Forces	57.9%	82.1%
Iraqi Civilians	80.4%	89.6%
Foreign Civilians	56%	100%
Total	70%	83.7%

**Chart 2**

Percentage of al-Zarqawi's Attacks by Targets



**Notes**

1. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's letter, "*Mawqifuna al-shar'i min hukumat 'Karzai al-Iraq'*" (Our legal standpoint on Karzai's Iraqi government – meaning Iyad Allawi), which is undated, can be accessed at: <http://www.tawhed.ws/a?i=249&PHPSESSID=188f2726a191775a8030ca93ceab4e3e>
2. This analysis is based on a daily follow-up of the Guardian's Iraq section: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/page/0,12438,793802,00.html>, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/page/0,12438,1151021,00.html>  
al-Ghad Newspaper [www.alghad.jo](http://www.alghad.jo); Patrick B. Baetjer, Iraqi Security and Military Force Developments: A Chronology, CSIS, May 13, 2005; [www.tbk.org](http://www.tbk.org) that offers important statistics on the majority of terrorist groups in the world; and data from Qaedat al-Jihad fi Bilad ar-Rafidain/ Jama'at at-Tawhid wal Jihad.
3. Forthcoming study by the author, the Iraqi Resistance: between Terrorism & National Liberation movement: a Quantitative Study, Gulf Research Center-Dubai.
4. See Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's letter, "*Mawqifuna ash-shar'i min hokumat Karzai al-Iraq*" (Our religious standpoint from the government of Iraq's Karzai) – meaning Iyad Allawi.
5. Zarqawi's letter on the sectarian war in Iraq, the London-based al-Hayat newspaper, Feb. 12, 2004, p. 14. Also notice how Zarqawi talks about the triangular diabolic alliance between Americans, Kurds (Barazani and Talabani) and Shiites (the Ghadr "treachery" Brigades Hizb ad-Dawa lil Shaytan "Party of the Call for the Devil") along with Allawi, in his posted letter "Ain Ahl Al-Moru'at" (Where are the People of Valor).
6. See Insurgents Wage Precise Attacks on Baghdad Fuel, the New York Times, 21, February, 2005..
7. Zarqawi's letter - op. cit.

\* \* \*



## **Terrorism and Human Smuggling Rings in South and Central America**

By Thomas S. Davidson II

The road to the “American Dream” for many illegal immigrants usually leads from home countries through Mexico and then into the U.S. Although almost all of these illegal immigrants are merely looking for a better life for themselves and their families, world-wide human trafficking routes provide ample opportunity for those wishing harm to the U.S. easy access into America. In spite of international efforts in the Americas to break up these human smuggling routes, there are still a number of avenues available whereby the potential terrorist can enter the United States.

### **Muslim and Middle Eastern Illegal Immigrants and Activities in Central and South America**

During 2004 and 2005, a number of individual Muslim and Middle Eastern illegal immigrants were captured in Central and South America. Some of the more unusual cases include:

- A Turkish citizen with a false Dutch passport is arrested in Managua, Nicaragua on September 22, 2004. He had lived in Costa Rica for ten months and entered via Russia and Cuba. While attempting to board a flight to Canada, he was arrested by Nicaraguan authorities. [1]

- Two Jordanians with false European passports were arrested at the San José International Airport in Costa Rica. Their route of travel included Cuba and Guatemala. The two attempted to bribe the Costa Rican authorities with a “large sum of money” [2]. Almost all newspaper reports place the illegal immigrants as having passed through Moscow and/or Cuba.

- In early 2005, Spanish and Italian intelligence and police agencies informed Argentine authorities that members of the fundamentalist Jamaat Tabligh Movement were in Argentina after having attended a meeting in Chile. Spanish authorities believe that members of the European wing of the Movement had been recruited by al-Qaeda to participate in the Madrid bombings. The arrival of 26 members of the movement was confirmed by Argentine Muslim authorities. Members who had entered Argentina included citizens of Malaysia, Syria, Egypt, Qatar, Pakistan and South Africa. Argentine

authorities believe that the Islamic fundamentalists are in Argentina in order to recruit members with Argentine passports. When traveling, such individuals will receive considerably less scrutiny by security personnel than those from obviously Muslim countries.

### **Defunct Smuggling Rings in Mexico and the Americas**

Mexican, Honduran, and Peruvian authorities were able to break up three major human smuggling rings. The Mexican and Peruvian rings specialized in transporting Middle Easterners and the Honduran Ring specialized in transporting Chinese into the U.S. All of these individuals were brought into Central or South America and then through Mexico into the U.S.

In mid-2003, one of the Mexican smuggling rings was run by an individual named Salim Boughader Mucharraffile. Boughader is identified only as an Arab. The ring worked primarily out of Tijuana, Mexico. Mexican authorities believed that the ring consisted of 14 individuals, seven of whom have been captured. The Mexican Foreign Ministry employee Imelda Ortiz allegedly worked with this gang while stationed with the Mexican Consulate in Lebanon. She is alleged to have provided a visa to Mexico for Al Afani Sghir, an alleged Shi’ite extremist [3].

In late 2003, the second Mexican ring was run by a Pakistani National Ali Ganzafar Houssein. Ganzafar’s ring operated from the Mexican Southern states of Chiapas and Tabasco through Veracruz up to Matamoros, Tamaulipas on the border with Brownsville, Texas. Ganzafar is alleged to have had numerous connections to Central and South American human trafficking rings. In November 2003, he was arrested at the Mexico City International Airport attempting to board an aircraft for Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

In April 2005, the Honduran Director for Immigration Affairs was arrested for involvement in human trafficking. He worked with Chinese “mafias” to smuggle Chinese, Afghan, and Pakistani citizens into Honduras and then into the U.S. One of the most common routes for the illegal aliens was through Havana, Cuba where they would be provided with false documents such as Honduran or European passports [4].

In September 2005, Peruvian and U.S. authorities were able to smash a human smuggling ring which ran from Peru to the U.S. A Jordanian citizen was apprehended in Peru and three Iraqi-born U.S. citizens were arrested

in Chicago. The Jordanian arrived in Peru from Amsterdam in June 2004. This ring allegedly specialized in smuggling Arab and Middle Easterners into the U.S.

## Illegal Immigrants in Mexico

The chart below compares the number of illegal immigrants detained in Mexico by the *Instituto Nacional de Migración* (INM - Mexican National Immigration Institute) in 2004 and 2005.

In 2004, the number of Ethiopians was not significant enough to be on the official statistical chart; yet in 2005, there were a total of 128. In addition, Eritreans are known to use Ethiopian passports. The number of Chinese detained in 2005 nearly doubled from 2004. The number of “all others” increased by more than 100. Statistics for the capture of illegal immigrants in other Central and South American countries are not available.

Illegal Immigrants Detained by INM [5]		
Nationality	2004	2005
South American	5,087	5,802
Central American/Caribbean	163,911	160,948
Ethiopian	Not Provided	128
Chinese	261	513
All Others	854	968
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>172,117</b>	<b>170,365</b>

## Islamist Activities in Mexico and Central America

One of the active Salafi organizations in Mexico is run by Omar Weston. Born Mark Weston, he is a British subject who converted to Islam in Orlando, FL, and established the *Centro Cultural Islámico de México* (Islamic Cultural Center of Mexico) in Mexico City. Weston has a master's degree in Shari'ah law from Medina University and is currently running an Islamic retreat on Lake Tequesquitengo near Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico. The original center in Mexico City has been renamed *Centro Salafi de México* (Salafi Center of Mexico) and is now being run by Muhammad Abdullah Ruiz, a Mexican convert and former deputy to Weston. Although the actual size of the retreat is not known, from photos it appears to encompass at least four acres. The retreat is directly on the lake shore and is accessible by road, boat, and two airports. These two organizations maintain contact and are affiliated with Salafi groups and/or individuals in the Mexican states of Coahuila, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Jalisco, Nuevo León, Sinaloa, and Veracruz.

The Mexican Secretary of Governance (Interior) stated that there are a number of international terrorist cells active in Mexico, including ETA, FARC, and Islamic groups. In a report issued by *Centro de Investigación y Seguridad Nacional* (CISEN - National Center for Investigation and Security), these three groups are allegedly operating primarily in the Federal District and the states of Distrito Federal, Querétaro, México State, Oaxaca, Nuevo León, and Coahuila. Although there are Muslim communities in the states of Coahuila, Veracruz, Morelos, Mexico City, Jalisco, Chiapas, Nuevo León, Quintana Roo, and Yucatán, Mexican authorities believe that there are radical support cells only in Torreón, Coahuila and Mexico City. These federal authorities believe that these support groups are involved in human trafficking, telephone fraud, and automobile theft [6].

In May 2004, Said Ould Bah, representative of the Islamic Organization for Culture, Science, and Education in Honduras sponsored a meeting of Muslims from 24 Latin American nations. The original meeting was to have taken place in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. However, for reasons of “pressure in Honduras” from unidentified sources, the meeting was moved to Guatemala City and scheduled for late June 2004 [7].

In late June 2004, Omar Weston scheduled an international meeting with Islamic speakers from all over the world to include the UK, Pakistan, Panama, and the U.S. at the retreat on Lake Tequesquitengo. The meeting was originally scheduled for late June or early July 2004. The meeting was postponed until July 24 through August 8, 2004 [8].

## Possible Involvement of Transnational Gangs

According to Central American authorities, the transnational gang Mara Salvatrucha may have become involved with Islamic militants [9]. The Mexican train routes (both east and west) are the primary means for illegal immigrants to transit Mexico on their way to the U.S. Up to 99% of these are freight and not passenger trains. The Mara Salvatrucha are controlling the eastern Mexican train route *Transportación Ferroviaria Mexicana* (TFM - Mexican Rail Line Transportation) which runs from Chiapas to Tabasco through Veracruz to northern Mexico. Rumors are that they are also beginning to control the west coast train route *Transportación Marítima Mexicana* (TMM - Mexican Maritime Transport) [10]. Salvatrucha members extort sexual favors or money from the illegal immigrants in

order to allow them to board the empty freight cars. If the “taxes” are not paid, the immigrant could be beaten, thrown off the train, or even killed [11]. In addition to their control of the train routes, Salvatrucha members are known to be working as protection for drug cartels as they smuggle their contraband into the U.S. [12].

## Conclusion

A number of Arabs, Middle Easterners, and other Muslims are still using Central America and parts of South America as jumping off points. With the break-up of a number of human trafficking organizations specializing in Middle Easterners and Arabs, illegal immigrants (to include potential terrorists) have had to look for other avenues for entering the U.S. Two conceivable avenues of entry are: 1) the current Salafi network in Mexico which currently runs from the southernmost state of Chiapas to the northern Mexican border (many of the elements of this Islamic network are located at or near the train lines of the TMM and the TFM. These elements could provide any needed support to potential terrorists traveling via rail); and 2) The Mara Salvatrucha are a violent gang with no allegiance to any country or cause except their gang. As they control the rail lines through Mexico, terrorists wishing to use the trains as a way of entering the U.S. would have to do via the Mara Salvatrucha.

Of further interest was the postponement of the two international Islamic conferences. Both conferences took place in rather isolated areas and occurred approximately one month before the al-Qaeda operative Adnan El Shukrijumah was alleged to have been seen in the northern Mexican state of Sonora. Part of the Salafi network includes several Muslims in Hermosillo, Sonora, not far from the U.S. Border [13].

The number of illegal immigrants detained by Mexican authorities in 2005 decreased as compared to 2004. However, the number of South Americans, Ethiopians, Chinese, and “all others” increased significantly. This increase, in all probability, included a significant number of Arabs. South America, especially in the Tri-Border area, has a very large Arab/Muslim population. This combined with the recruitment efforts of the Jamaat Tabligh Movement in Argentina and the significant increase of Ethiopians and “all others” increases exponentially the possibility that terrorists are making their way from South and Central America through Mexico and into the U.S.

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## Notes

1. [http://www-ni.laprensa.com.ni/archivo\\_/2004/septiembre\\_/22/nacionales\\_/nacionales-20040922-17.html](http://www-ni.laprensa.com.ni/archivo_/2004/septiembre_/22/nacionales_/nacionales-20040922-17.html)
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10. <http://www.am.com.mx/notap.asp?ANIOX=2005&ID=62373>
11. [http://www.univision.com/content/content.jhtml?ch\\_id=3&schid=181&secid=182&cid=666912](http://www.univision.com/content/content.jhtml?ch_id=3&schid=181&secid=182&cid=666912)
12. <http://www.cronica.com.mx/nota.php?idc=195064>
13. <https://secure.milenio.com/nota.asp?id=148425>

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## The Re-Orientation of Kashmiri Extremism: A Threat to Regional and International Security

By Peter Chalk and C. Christine Fair

Since the onset of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the activities of foreign jihadists in Pakistan have been a major source of concern for both Washington and Islamabad. However, an equally if not more serious problem that has emerged over the last four years has been the progressive reorientation of Kashmiri Islamist *tanzeems* (organizations) toward an increasingly explicit anti-Musharraf agenda. These developments not only directly threaten the stability of a key U.S. ally in South Asia, but also appear to raise serious concerns about



wider regional and even global security.

### Catalysts for Kashmiri Reorientation

Historically, jihadist tanzeems operating in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) have fallen into two categories: (a) those that are comprised of primarily Kashmiri cadres, for example Al Badr and Hizbol Mujahadeen (HM); and (b) those that are predominantly non-Kashmiri in composition, including, the Ahle-e-Hadith tanzeem Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and the prominent Deobandi groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Harkat-ul-Mujahadeen (HuM), and Harakat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami (HUJI). While most of the indigenous groups have retained their focus on Indian-administered Kashmir, many of the Deobandi outfits are now targeting Musharraf and other elements of the Pakistani state. This recent reorientation of prominent jihadist tanzeems constitutes a serious threat to Islamabad and is a phenomenon that stems from two main factors.

First was the Government of Pakistan (GOP)'s decision to ally itself with the United States in the Global War on Terror (GWOT). JeM was one of the earliest Kashmiri outfits to bridle at this relationship and, in fact, specific elements within the group wanted to immediately attack American interests in Pakistan after the launch of OEF in Afghanistan. This internal demand was initially denied by Jaish's then-chief Masood Azhar, who favored compliance with the GOP's new policy direction as politically expedient. Other group leaders such as Maulana Abdul Jabbar (alias Umar Farooq) vociferously disagreed, however, and have since managed to seize the reins of power within the organization. These militants are currently at the forefront of many of the anti-government attacks [1].

Second is what Pakistan-based analysts describe as the GOP's adoption of a "moderated jihad" strategy, which has involved the imposition of tighter limits upon Islamists seeking to operate in J&K and the Indian hinterland. In large part, pursuit of this calibrated approach stems from external compulsions that became increasingly prominent in the wake of the JeM- (and possibly LeT-) backed assault on the Indian National Parliament (*Lok Sabha*) in December 2001. Prompting a yearlong standoff with Delhi, this attack brought Pakistan's policy of proxy warfare under renewed scrutiny, not least because it raised the potential to spark a full nuclear exchange in South Asia. Reflecting western concerns, then-Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage went to Islamabad

in June 2002, during which he managed to extract a promise from the GOP to both abandon its reliance on Kashmiri militants and cease their infiltration across the Line of Control (LoC).

According to commentators in Islamabad, the strategy of a moderated jihad approach has acted as a double-edged sword for Pakistan. On the positive side, it has significantly reduced international pressure on the GOP as well as allowed Musharraf to continue the peace process with Delhi while simultaneously giving him the option of resuming militant activities should negotiations collapse or fail to produce tangible results. On the negative side, however, moves to limit jihadist attacks have clearly been interpreted by groups such as JeM and HuJI as a sell-out of the Kashmiri cause and confirmation that Islamabad, under the present government, is no more than a puppet of Washington. Certain analysts also believe that the strategy has prompted renegade factions within the armed forces and intelligence services—whose *raison d'être* for most of their existence has been wresting control of J&K from India—to side with and actively support organizations seeking to redirect their ideological fervor against the Pakistani state.

### Target Musharraf

The reorientation of Kashmiri groups toward an internal agenda has been particularly apparent with JeM and HuJI. As noted, Jaish was one of the first tanzeems to advocate the targeting of American interests in Pakistan and over the last four years has systematically moved to expand this focus to an explicit anti-GOP footing. This evolutionary tract has been mirrored by HuJI, which now routinely defines its operational priorities in terms of overthrowing the incumbent Musharraf regime. Both organizations have been directly implicated in high-level attacks on institutional pillars of the Pakistani establishment, including assassination attempts against the President (December 14 and December 25, 2003), Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and the Karachi Corps Commander General Ahsan Hayat [2].

Somewhat more worrying are indications that JeM and HuJI are acting in concert with enlisted cadres as well as junior and non-commissioned officers in the armed forces. The December 2003 attack on Musharraf, for instance, is widely thought to have involved lower ranking members of the military in addition to at least one commando drawn from the Special Services Group (SSG). Moreover, one of the key persons who infiltrated

the army and trained the hit-men for the earlier attempt on the President's life was Amjad Hussain Farooqui, a former member of JeM who is known to have sheltered Khalid Sheikh Mohammad until his capture in March 2003 [3].

## A Globalized LeT?

Besides JeM and HuJI, U.S. officials have further suggested the possibility that "globalized" elements within LeT have taken on explicit non-Kashmiri designs and are moving to extend their operations beyond this theater and India proper. If confirmed, this would represent an especially dangerous development given that Lashkar has traditionally been one of the strongest and disciplined groups operating in J&K.

American concerns are predicated upon, *inter alia*, recent Pakistani reports of the group's annual three-day *ijtimah* (convention), during which speakers are described as making virulently anti-Western proclamations as well as the "internationalist" content of LeT web-based materials. U.S. commentators fear these rhetorical signposts may be indicative of Lashkar leaning toward a more explicit global jihadist outlook, which, at least certain analysts assert, has been reflected in the establishment of residual logistical contacts with al-Qaeda, facilitation with Islamic recruitment drives for the Iraqi insurgency and readiness to provide military training for foreigners wishing to carry out attacks well beyond the Kashmiri theater (for example, Jack Roche, who has been linked to alleged terror strikes in Australia, and Shehzad Tanweer, one of the British Muslims involved in the July 7 bombings in London).

Long-time observers of the LeT, however, believe U.S. concerns are misplaced, arguing that Washington's current perception of the group is based on a fallacious understanding of its historical lineage and reflects more post-9/11 biases than any genuine reorientation of the organization's intentions. Analysts within Pakistan similarly reject the notion of a globalized LeT, noting that Lashkar is one of the more ideologically unified groups that has fought in J&K, and is therefore not as prone to the type of wider, non-Kashmiri metastasization that JeM and HuJI have undergone. They also point out that there is currently no evidence to substantiate claims about LeT's supposed internationalist activities, further arguing that anti-Western rhetoric is nothing new and certainly not something that has translated into assaults outside J&K and India [4].

Yet it is important to stress that LeT does not have to be global to be of great significance for South Asia and beyond. The group is known to have been behind the attack on India's Red Fort in December 2000 and it may have been deeply involved in the strike against India's parliament in December 2001—an event that nearly precipitated all-out war between India and Pakistan. The potential to initiate such conflict, with the attendant specter of nuclear escalation, readily underscores the latent threat LeT poses to regional and international security that is irrespective of the actual bounds of its physical presence. Most recently, Indian officials believe that LeT may have been involved with the October 2005 serial blasts in New Delhi. The Islamic Inquilabi Mahaz (Islamic Revolutionary Movement) claimed responsibility for the blast, but some Indian analysts speculate that the Mahaz is tied to LeT.

## Conclusion

The reorientation of Kashmiri Islamist terrorism has had a decisive impact on Pakistan's internal stability. As noted, President Musharraf has already been the target of two concerted assassination attempts. Moreover, many Pakistanis believe entities such as JeM and HuJI are directly contributing to a noticeable expansion of radical Islamist sentiment across the country and that, unless constrained, will result in a highly polarized state that lacks any effective middle ground of political compromise. The 2002 elections that brought the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) to prominence in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Baluchistan are often singled out as a salient case in point. This multi-party religious alliance, which is vigorously opposed to the GWOT and the modernist leanings of the Musharraf regime, has caused Islamabad a number of problems, not least by undermining efforts aimed at reforming madrassas and curtailing the activities of militants on the ground.

Beyond these national considerations, the various machinations of JeM, HuJI and LeT have significantly complicated Islamabad's external relations. This is particularly the case in relation to India, which has repeatedly portrayed Pakistan as a bastion of Islamist extremism that poses a fundamental threat to the stability of South Asia and even the world. More seriously, attacks such as Lok Sabha in December 2001 clearly underscore the potential of these groups to trigger a wider inter-state conflict on the sub-continent. That a situation of this sort should arise is especially unnerving given that both countries possess nuclear weapons and that India

has pursued an explicit war doctrine since 1999 and a “cold start” doctrine since 2002.

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#### Notes

1. Fair interviews with analysts of Pakistani militant organizations in Lahore, January 2005 and June 2005.
2. Massoud Ansari, “Divine Mission,” *Newsline* (Pakistan), June 2004; Zahid Hussain, “Al-Qaeda’s New Face,” *Newsline* (Pakistan), August 2004, Abbas, Zaffar. “The Pakistani Al-Qaeda,” *The Herald*, August 2004.
3. Zaffar Abbas. “What Happened,” *The Herald*, June 2005, p. 71; “Pearl murder plotter orchestrated bid to assassinate Musharraf,” *The Daily Times*, May 24, 2004; Amir Mir, “Uniform Subversion,” *South Asia Intelligence Review*, October 19, 2005; Zahid Hussain, “Al-Qaeda’s New Face,” *Newsline*, August 2004.
4. This judgment of LeT’s anti-western rhetorical orientation is based upon Fair’s collection of LeT materials since the mid-1990s. For more information about connections to the London bombings and Pakistan, see Massoud Ansari, “The Pakistan Connection,” *Newsline* (Pakistan), August 2005.

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## The Algerian 2005 Amnesty: The Path to Peace?

By Audra K. Grant

On September 29, Algerians voted in an unprecedented referendum to approve a charter for “peace and national reconciliation,” offering amnesty to Algerian insurgents in exchange for laying down their arms. The charter also extends the same offer of clemency to police and security agents involved in crimes during Algeria’s turbulent civil war. The charter marks a turning point in resolving Algeria’s conflict, as it recognizes for the first time the numerous claims of Algeria’s “disappeared” and considers reparations for relatives of those who suffered from the violence.

At least 150,000 Algerians are believed to have died during the country’s more than decade-long conflict, ignited in 1992 following nullification of the country’s first multiparty elections in which the populist Islamist party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) would likely have been victorious after a second round. Islamist oppositionists responded with brutal violence that was met with similar ferocity by the Algerian authorities. While those killed were mostly civilians, as many as 10,000 are among “the disappeared,” kidnapped by the security services or Islamic insurgents.

The peace plan, called the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation, was overwhelmingly approved (97 percent) in a referendum marked by high turnout (80 percent). The plan is a cornerstone of Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika’s political agenda, which seeks to end Algeria’s insurgency. Bouteflika assumed power in 1999, and pledged in October 2004 to submit an amnesty plan that would facilitate a reconciliation process first initiated by the 1999 Civil Harmony Law. Yet the amnesty is as much an effort to close the wounds of the insurgency, as it is a test of Bouteflika’s legitimacy. He was re-elected for a second term in 2004 in a landslide victory, and hopes to win a third election. Bouteflika’s political fortunes are firmly tied to the amnesty.

The charter ends judicial proceedings against Islamist insurgents, including those who disarm, who live abroad and are complicit in terrorism within Algeria, and who were convicted of crimes in absentia. The plan also offers reparations for families of the disappeared. Excluded from the amnesty are individuals involved in massacres, rapes, or bombings.

Yet the accord is not without controversial features. State assistance to insurgents’ families, rejection of claims that security forces participated in disappearances of Algerians, prohibition on disparaging Algerian institutions, and restrictions on political activity by perpetrators of terrorism have been lightening rods for commentary. Critics question whether the charter’s compensations will translate into justice for Algerian victims, asserting the amnesty lacks adequate mechanisms for debate, punishment and justice [1].

#### The Impact of the Amnesty on Violent Islamist Activity

Islamist violence has continued to subside since Bouteflika’s inauguration, even in areas such as Sidi Rais, known as the Triangle of Death at the height of the insurgency. Approximately 4,000 insurgents

surrendered from 1995 to 1998 under the clemency of former president Liamine Zeroual, with an additional 6,000 after Bouteflika's 1999 amnesty [2]. Tallies on active insurgents vary, but Algerian officials estimate that as many as 800 to 1,000 recalcitrant insurgents have managed to sustain operations throughout the country. This represents a notable decrease since the 1990s when insurgents possibly totaled 28,000. Improved ability of Algerian intelligence and security forces to eliminate insurgents, previous amnesty initiatives, and international assistance has contributed to the depletion in the ranks of violent Islamists.

Despite the decline in violence, Algeria is still plagued by bouts of attacks that continue to pose a challenge to national security. Significantly, the weeks preceding and following the charter referendum have been punctuated by a surge in insurgent violence that is attributed to the Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), an organization that remains in a bitter struggle with the state. The GSPC, now perhaps Algeria's most fortified Islamist group, has vehemently rejected the peace plan and vows to continue hostilities against the Algerian state.

Algerian security officials say remnant insurgents predominantly belong to the GSPC and they expect most members to accept the new amnesty. One prolific affiliate may include former GSPC leader Hassan Hattab, who has been negotiating with the Algerian government over his surrender. Hattab's compliance with the charter reportedly depends on a fatwa from a Saudi imam who would authorize Hattab to bargain with a government he considers impious. Rather than judge the legitimacy of surrender, the fatwa would only address whether Hattab can negotiate with a former enemy in a way that protects his credibility vis-à-vis his cadre of current supporters. If successful, Hattab could both come away with his position intact and with supporters willing to surrender under the amnesty [3].

Ultimately, however, Algerian officials offer tempered assessments of whether all violent Islamists will surrender under the charter. "The most important thing is to bring down their numbers," Prime Minister Ahmed Ouhiya told Algerian daily, *L'Expression*. "We don't have any illusions. ... There will always be the hard core who will never take up the offer of peace" [4].

If current GSPC statements are any indication of its reactions to the amnesty, some violence from the group can be expected. Firm in its opposition to the

charter and in its intention to wage violence against the Algerian establishment, the new leader of the GSPC, Abu Musab Abdelouadoud, allegedly posted an Internet communiqué reaffirming the organization's position. The statement issued just after the referendum said that Algeria "does not need a Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation, but instead a Charter for Islam. ... The jihad is going to continue" [5].

Indeed, such words appear to be backed by actions, which suggest the GSPC intends to follow through with its goals. In the weeks leading up to the referendum, the mayor of Ammal was allegedly killed by GSPC insurgents [6]. These attacks were accompanied by assaults on Algerian soldiers in the countryside. The aftermath of the vote has been even deadlier, as some 60 Algerians died during October in an escalation of hostilities that coincided with the holy month of Ramadan—20 people were killed in two days alone. On October 17<sup>th</sup>, security operations east of Algiers resulted in the deaths of eight GSPC militants and four soldiers [7]. The next day, GSPC insurgents killed four militia members west of Algiers, according to *El Watan*, and three civilians were killed by a bomb left at a GSPC hideout [8].

GSPC activities abroad also speak to the group's viability and capabilities. Evaluating GSPC activities in the West African Sahel, Nigerian authorities in October discovered an underground terrorist gang reportedly 10,000 strong in the Niger Delta that they say is linked to the GSPC. Nigerian intelligence officials assert that the GSPC, also an al-Qaeda affiliate, is involved in the ongoing recruiting and training of Nigerians in an effort to attack Nigerian interests [9]. The GSPC has also maintained ties in Europe, the U.S. and the Middle East.

However, the strength of the GSPC has eroded considerably over recent years, due to internal divisions and government efforts that have successfully localized and contained insurgents. Once boasting 4,000 members, the organization has been reduced to 300.

Other violent groups on the Algerian landscape are less active. The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), once the major terrorist entity in Algeria, has been substantially weakened by internal fracturing and surrenders under the earlier 1999 amnesty. The *Arme Islamiques du Salut* (AIS), the armed wing of the FIS, declared a cease-fire in 1997. The Free Salafist Group (GSL), which also opposed the amnesty, is active, but has been predominantly involved in crime and trafficking, rather



than terrorism.

### The Future of Islamist Politics in Algeria

Against the backdrop of changing developments in Algeria, it is difficult to precisely predict the future of legitimate Islamist politics. The civil war has produced rejectionists unwilling to cooperate with the establishment and advocate the use of violence against the state. Yet the conflict has, likewise, created a government deeply wary of Islamists. Algerian officials vowed that insurgents will never again be able to bring instability to the country and groups involved in the violence, chiefly the FIS, have been banned from participating in politics.

The isolation of the FIS also has important implications for the fate of moderate Islamist parties. Moderate groups have suffered a noticeable decline in popular support, a phenomenon that may be a consequence of FIS' call to boycott elections and Algerian disaffection with Islamists after years of conflict. For example, the Movement of Society for Peace (MSP) and Movement for National Reform (MRN), each with former FIS members, did not fare well in the recent 2002 election. MSP support dropped by half from 14 to 7 percent between the 1997 and 2002 votes, while the newer MRN earned 10 percent. The Islamic Renaissance Movement received four percent—half its previous share [10].

Critics of the state's staunch approach fear the restrictive policy toward political Islam does little to engender confidence in the government or in the future of democracy in Algeria. Some argue that the government's stance may only exacerbate discontent fanned by the war. With the existence of growing unemployment and poverty, the ground may once again become fertile for extremism.

Therefore, the extent to which political Islam will be kept at the periphery of Algerian politics and in what form are now unresolved issues. Algeria's mainstream party, the National Liberation Front (FLN) could adopt some moderate Islamic principles and bring select Islamist moderates into their fold. Since the banner of the amnesty is to encourage harmony, such a strategy may present some opportunities. However, it is a path that needs to be considered carefully as Algeria braces for the long-term impact of the amnesty.

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