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# Afghanistan

## Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement

### *Hasan Mahsum*

Hasan Mahsum was born in 1964 in China's Xinjiang province.<sup>1</sup> Between 1984 and 1989, Mahsum was reportedly a student at an Islamic school in Karghalik established by Abdul Hakeem Makhdoom.<sup>2</sup> An ethnic Uyghur, Mahsum was arrested on multiple occasions during the 1990s<sup>3</sup> for engaging in militant activities and was sentenced on one occasion to three years to "re-education through labor."<sup>4</sup> In 1997, Mahsum reportedly fled from China to Afghanistan after being accused of planning a bombing attack in 1995.<sup>5</sup> Mahsum founded the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement in the late 1990s,<sup>6</sup> with the organization conducting its first attack in 1998.<sup>7</sup> Mahsum denied any links to al-Qaida and the Taliban, claiming his group did not seek to target the United States.<sup>8</sup> However, internal al-Qaida documents show that Mahsum participated in a thirty-day advanced security course in Kabul during September 1999 in the capacity of "Emir of the Turkestani brothers."<sup>9</sup> The United States sanctioned the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement under Executive Order 13224 in 2002.<sup>10</sup> However, this designation was revoked in 2020.<sup>11</sup> Mahsum was killed by Pakistani armed forces during a firefight in South Waziristan in late 2003.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> People's Daily Online, "FM Spokesman Confirms Death of Wanted Terrorist," December 25, 2003, [https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225\\_131190.shtml](https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225_131190.shtml).

<sup>2</sup> Mona and Vineet, "TIP in Their Own Words – An Interview with Abdusalam At-Turkistani, Deputy Leader of Turkistan Islamic Party," February 18, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Mona and Vineet, "TIP in Their Own Words – An Interview with Abdusalam At-Turkistani, Deputy Leader of Turkistan Islamic Party," February 18, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> People's Daily Online, "FM Spokesman Confirms Death of Wanted Terrorist," December 25, 2003, [https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225\\_131190.shtml](https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225_131190.shtml).

<sup>5</sup> Al Jazeera, "Pakistan Kills Uighur Independence Fighters," December 23, 2003, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2003/12/23/pakistan-kills-uyghur-independence-fighter>.

<sup>6</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, "The East Turkestans Islamic Movement (ETIM)," September 4, 2014, [https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/east-turkestan-islamic-movement-etim#:~:text=The%20East%20Turkestan%20Islamic%20Movement%20\(ETIM\)%20is%20a%20Muslim%20separatist,in%20northwest%20China's%20Xinjiang%20province](https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/east-turkestan-islamic-movement-etim#:~:text=The%20East%20Turkestan%20Islamic%20Movement%20(ETIM)%20is%20a%20Muslim%20separatist,in%20northwest%20China's%20Xinjiang%20province).

<sup>7</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, "Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM)," (2015).

<sup>8</sup> Chris Zambelis, "Uighur Dissent and Militancy in China's Xinjiang Province," 3, no. 1 (January 2010): 16-19.

<sup>9</sup> Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan* (Cambridge University Press 2017).

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Executive Order 13224," <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>.

<sup>11</sup> Federal Register, "In the Matter of the Designation of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement Also Known as ETIM as a "Terrorist Organization" Pursuant to Section 212(a)(3)(B)(vi)(II) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as Amended," November 5, 2020, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/11/05/2020-24620/in-the-matter-of-the-designation-of-the-eastern-turkistan-islamic-movement-also-known-as-etim-as-a>.

<sup>12</sup> BBC, "Chinese Militant 'Shot Dead,'" December 23, 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3343241.stm>.

### *Abdul Haq al-Turkistani*

Abdul Haq al-Turkistani was born on October 10, 1971, in the Khuttan area, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China.<sup>13</sup> Alongside Hasan Mahsum, al-Turkistani reportedly helped run a training camp for several months in 2001 in the Tora Bora mountains.<sup>14</sup> Al-Turkistani succeeded Mahsum as leader of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement following the latter's death.<sup>15</sup> The United States designated al-Turkistani as the leader of a terrorist organization in 2009 for commanding "a terror group that sought to sow violence and fracture international unity at the 2008 Olympic Games in China."<sup>16</sup> Al-Turkistani was thought to have been killed in a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan in 2010. However, videos published years later showcased al-Turkistani.<sup>17</sup> In 2025, al-Turkistani reportedly remained emir of the organization.<sup>18</sup>

### *Abdul Shakoor Turkistani*

Abdul Shakoor Turkistani took command of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement/Turkistan Islamic Party in 2010 after Abdul Haq al-Turkistani was reportedly killed in a U.S. strike.<sup>19</sup> According to information released by the Chinese government, Turkistani (Emeti Yakuf) was born in China in March 1965.<sup>20</sup> He reportedly became involved with the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement in 1996 and "received terrorist training" after leaving China for "a South Asian country."<sup>21</sup> By 2001, Turkistani was reportedly in charge of "recruiting new members, organizing terrorism training, as well as planning and carrying out terrorist attacks," acting as the organization's military commander.<sup>22</sup> In August 2012, Turkistani was killed in a U.S. air strike on his training camp in the Shawal Valley in Pakistan.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Targets Leader of Group Tied to Al Qaida," April 20, 2009, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg92>.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "The Uighurs, In Their Own Words," *Long War Journal*, April 21, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement," [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/entity/eastern-turkistan-islamic-movement](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/entity/eastern-turkistan-islamic-movement).

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Targets Leader of Group Tied to Al Qaida," April 20, 2009, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg92>.

<sup>17</sup> Jacob Zenn, "Back from the Dead: The Turkistan Islamic Party's Abdul Haq al-Turkistani," *Jamestown Foundation*, August 31, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), "Detail of Terrorism Update," February 15, 2025, <https://www.satp.org/terrorism-update/turkistan-islamic-party-leader-directs-syrian-fighters-from-afghanistan-says-report>.

<sup>19</sup> Bill Roggio, "Turkistan Islamic Party Leader Thought Killed in U.S. Drone Strike," *Long War Journal*, August 25, 2012, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan\\_islamic\\_pa\\_1.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan_islamic_pa_1.php).

<sup>20</sup> Airwars, "Emeti Yakuf," <https://airwars.org/wp-content/themes/airwars-new/archives/bij-drone-war/namingthedead/people/nd513/index-lang=en.html>.

<sup>21</sup> Analysts note that this suggests he likely traveled to Pakistan and/or Afghanistan. Bill Roggio, "Turkistan Islamic Party Leader Thought Killed in U.S. Drone Strike," *Long War Journal*, August 25, 2012, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan\\_islamic\\_pa\\_1.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan_islamic_pa_1.php).

<sup>22</sup> Airwars, "Emeti Yakuf," <https://airwars.org/wp-content/themes/airwars-new/archives/bij-drone-war/namingthedead/people/nd513/index-lang=en.html>.

<sup>23</sup> Jacob Zenn, "September 2012 Briefs," *Jamestown Foundation*, September 28, 2012, <https://jamestown.org/september-2012-briefs/>; Zia Ur Rehman, "ETIM's Presence in Pakistan and China's Growing Pressure," *Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre* (August 2014); Airwars, "Emeti Yakuf,"

## *Abdullah Mansour*

Abdullah Mansour succeeded Abdul Shakoor Turkistani following the latter's death in 2012.<sup>24</sup> While Mansour is noted to be “a relative novice among more experienced international jihadists,” he brought significant media experience after serving as the editor of the *Islamic Turkistan* publication.<sup>25</sup> This quarterly publication highlighted Uyghur grievances against China and linked Xinjiang to other jihadist conflict zones.<sup>26</sup> Mansour continued to lead Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement/Turkistan Islamic Party until Abdul Haq al-Turkistani retook command of the organization in the spring of 2014.<sup>27</sup>

## Tawhid and Jihad

### *Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi*

Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, also known as Ahmad Fadhil Nazzal al-Khalaylah, was born in October 1966 in Zarqa, Jordan.<sup>28</sup> A high school dropout,<sup>29</sup> al-Zarqawi joined the military in 1984 for two years under Jordan's mandatory conscription laws.<sup>30</sup> During the 1980s, al-Zarqawi reportedly spent time in prison and was described by people who knew him during his teenage years as “a bully and a thug, a bootlegger and a heavy drinker, and even, allegedly, a pimp in Zarqa's underworld.”<sup>31</sup> In 1989, al-Zarqawi left for Afghanistan and “is believed to have taken part in some fighting, but he mainly worked as a correspondent for a radical Islamist magazine during this period.”<sup>32</sup> In Afghanistan, al-Zarqawi used this time “to begin the process of cultivating friendships that would eventually lead to the formation of an international support network for his activities.”<sup>33</sup> Al-Zarqawi returned to Jordan in 1993 and was subsequently arrested.<sup>34</sup> Working with Abu

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<https://airwars.org/wp-content/themes/airwars-new/archives/bij-drone-war/namingthedead/people/nd513/index-lang=en.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Mona and Vineet, “TIP IN THEIR OWN WORDS – AN INTERVIEW WITH ABDUSALAM AT-TURKISTANI, DEPUTY LEADER OF TURKISTAN 'ISLAMIC PARTY,” February 18, 2023,

<https://dreyfus1894.substack.com/p/tip-in-their-own-words-an-interview>.

<sup>25</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Beijing, Kunming, Urumqi and Guangzhou: The Changing Landscape of Anti-Chinese Jihadists,” *Jamestown Foundation* 14, no. 10 (2014), <https://jamestown.org/beijing-kunming-urumqi-and-guangzhou-the-changing-landscape-of-anti-chinese-jihadists/>.

<sup>26</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Beijing, Kunming, Urumqi and Guangzhou: The Changing Landscape of Anti-Chinese Jihadists,” *Jamestown Foundation* 14, no. 10 (2014), <https://jamestown.org/beijing-kunming-urumqi-and-guangzhou-the-changing-landscape-of-anti-chinese-jihadists/>.

<sup>27</sup> Bill Roggio, “Turkistan Islamic Party Emir Thought Killed in 2010 Reemerged to Lead Group in 2014,” *Long War Journal*, June 1, 2015, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/06/turkistan-islamic-party-emir-thought-killed-in-2010-reemerged-to-lead-group-in-2014.php>.

<sup>28</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>30</sup> Muhammad Abu Rumman and Hassan Abu Haniyeh, *The Islamic Solution in Jordan* (2012), <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/amman/09373.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>32</sup> Gary Gambill, “Abu Musab al-Zarqawi: A Biographical Sketch,” *Jamestown Foundation*, May 5, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>34</sup> Muhammad Abu Rumman and Hassan Abu Haniyeh, *The Islamic Solution in Jordan* (2012), <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/amman/09373.pdf>.

Muhammad al-Maqdisi, al-Zarqawi “flourished” in prison, building his militant network and jihadist credentials.<sup>35</sup> Al-Maqdisi was released from prison in 1999 under a general amnesty and returned to Afghanistan.<sup>36</sup> Reportedly receiving a small amount of seed money from al-Qaida’s leaders,<sup>37</sup> al-Zarqawi set up a training camp in Herat and became the leader of Jama’at al-Tawhid wal Jihad.<sup>38</sup> Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, al-Zarqawi operated in Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan and, by 2003, had established his organization's presence in Arab cities in Iraq.<sup>39</sup> In 2004, al-Zarqawi pledged fealty to al-Qaida and changed his organization’s name to al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>40</sup> Al-Zarqawi died following a U.S. airstrike in 2006.<sup>41</sup> The United States had previously designated al-Zarqawi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2003<sup>42</sup> and al-Qaida in Iraq as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2004.<sup>43</sup>

## Algeria

### Armed Islamic Group

#### *Abd al-Haqq Layada*

Abd al-Haqq Layada, also known as Abu Adlan, became the first emir of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in 1992, the year of the organization’s announcement.<sup>44</sup> Layada was born in 1959 in Algeria.<sup>45</sup> Layada worked as an auto mechanic and had little experience in armed operations before his appointment as the GIA’s leader.<sup>46</sup> Layada’s appointment reportedly did not sit well with some members of the nascent group who had participated in the Afghan jihad.<sup>47</sup> At the same time, the organization “stepped up its paramilitary activity and clarified its ideology” under Layada’s

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<sup>35</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>36</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>37</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>38</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Islamic State.” Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>39</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Islamic State.” Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>41</sup> Fred Barbash and Daniela Deane, “U.S. Says Zarqawi Died from Blast,” *The Washington Post*, June 11, 2006, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/business/technology/2006/06/12/us-says-zarqawi-died-from-blast/61897968-c052-4a3a-bce3-c1e41d5e2285/?isMobile=1>.

<sup>42</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury Designates Six Al-Qaida Terrorists,” September 24, 2003, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js757>.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>44</sup> Camille Tawil, “Secrets and Internal Liquidations Part III,” October 30, 2007, <https://camilletawil.blogspot.com/2007/10/secrets-and-internal-liquidations-part.html>.

<sup>45</sup> S. Doukalli, “عبد الحق لعيادة: مخبر الجيش الذي تزعم الجيا,” <https://www.maghribtimes.com/2023/02/blog-post.html>.

<sup>46</sup> Mohammad Moukaddem, “لقاء المغرب ومحاوله انقلاب "الأفغان" على أمير “ الجماعة المسلحة الحلقة الثالثة” <https://www.sauress.com/alhayat/31070377>.

<sup>47</sup> Mohammad Moukaddem, “لقاء المغرب ومحاوله انقلاب "الأفغان" على أمير “ الجماعة المسلحة الحلقة الثالثة” <https://www.sauress.com/alhayat/31070377>.

leadership.<sup>48</sup> According to Abu Hamza al-Masri, “When Abu Adlan took over control of the group, this caused the formation of the core of the GIA, although it didn’t have the name yet. This group then did quite a few difficult operations that annoyed the government and... forced other groups to reunite and others to join them or to try to unite the other groups into one mass in other areas.”<sup>49</sup> Layada remained the leader of the GIA until 1993, when Algerian intelligence tracked him down in Morocco.<sup>50</sup> He was subsequently extradited to Algeria and sentenced to death; however, he was later released in 2006 under Algeria’s amnesty agreement.<sup>51</sup>

### *Benameur Benaissa*

Benameur Benaissa succeeded Abd al-Haqq Layada as leader of the GIA in 1993.<sup>52</sup> However, Benaissa, who was also known as “the executioner,” lasted only a month in charge of the organization before Djafar al-Afghani took command of the GIA in August 1993.<sup>53</sup>

### *Djafar al-Afghani*

Djafar al-Afghani, also known as Seif Allah, led the GIA from August 1993 to February 1994.<sup>54</sup> He was reportedly 30 years old in 1993 and “had not been educated beyond primary school and had made his living from trading in contraband. Like his predecessors and successors, he was an underprivileged youth from the city.”<sup>55</sup> Al-Afghani was a member of *Dawa’a wa Tabligh* in 1982 before traveling to Afghanistan to fight in 1989.<sup>56</sup> In 1992, he returned to Algeria as “a high-caliber fighter.”<sup>57</sup> After taking control of the GIA, al-Afghani’s time in power “was distinguished by an escalation of violence.”<sup>58</sup> In February 1994, Algerian security forces announced that al-Afghani died during a firefight.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of Al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi, 2011).

<sup>49</sup> Quoted in Evan F. Kohlmann, “Two Decades of Jihad in Algeria: The GIA, the GSPC, and Al-Qaida,” *The NEFA Foundation* (May 2007).

<sup>50</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of Al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi, 2011).

<sup>51</sup> BBC, “Islamist Leader Freed in Algeria,” March 13, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4801318.stm>.

<sup>52</sup> Yahia H. Zoubir, “Civil Strife, Politics, and Religion in Algeria,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (February 2019).

<sup>53</sup> Yahia H. Zoubir, “Civil Strife, Politics, and Religion in Algeria,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (February 2019).

<sup>54</sup> Anneli Botha, *Terrorism in the Maghreb: The Transnationalisation of Domestic Terrorism* (ISS Monograph Series, June 2008).

<sup>55</sup> Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 263.

<sup>56</sup> Anneli Botha, *Terrorism in the Maghreb: The Transnationalisation of Domestic Terrorism* (ISS Monograph Series, June 2008).

<sup>57</sup> Camille Tawil, “Secrets and Internal Liquidations Part III,” October 30, 2007, <https://camilletawil.blogspot.com/2007/10/secrets-and-internal-liquidations-part.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 263.

<sup>59</sup> Los Angeles Times, “World IN BRIEF : ALGERIA : Leader of Extremist Algeria Group Slain,” February 28, 1994, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-02-28-mn-28263-story.html>.

## *Cherif Gousmi*

Cherif Gousmi, also known as Abu Abdullah Ahmed, succeeded Djafar al-Afghani as the leader of the GIA in 1994.<sup>60</sup> Gousmi began his career as an imam in the Birkhadem suburb of Algeria.<sup>61</sup> Gousmi was also “a graduate of Arab mujahideen training camps in Afghanistan” and was “considered a charismatic figure.”<sup>62</sup> “Although only in his twenties,” Barak Mendelsohn writes that Gousmi “already had a strong reputation as religiously knowledgeable and a skillful operator. His previous links with FIS and his experiences as a detainee in one of the regime’s notorious Sahara prisons put him in a good position to advance unity beyond the confines of the *Salafi-jihadist* milieu.”<sup>63</sup> Gousmi was killed following an ambush by Algerian security forces in September 1994<sup>64</sup> at the age of 26.<sup>65</sup>

## *Djamel Zitouni*

Djamel Zitouni became the GIA’s leader in 1994 following Cherif Gousmi’s death.<sup>66</sup> Zitouni was born in 1964 in the Birkhadem suburb of Algiers.<sup>67</sup> Zitouni reportedly received “a francophone secondary education” and was potentially “the best French-speaker of any GIA leader.”<sup>68</sup> Zitouni also worked as a chicken vendor.<sup>69</sup> Zitouni became involved with the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) but later joined the jihadist movement following his imprisonment in 1991.<sup>70</sup> Within the GIA, Zitouni rose to prominence within the Green Battalion: “By fall 1994, Zitouni and the Green Battalion had gained widespread fame among the GIA rank and file as daring operators.”<sup>71</sup> As Evan Kohlmann contends: “Zitouni’s two-year reign of power would see some of the most impressive achievements by the GIA—such as the unprecedented Air France hijacking. However, Zitouni’s rise to power also marked the beginning of the end for the GIA, which had become

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<sup>60</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of Al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi, 2011).

<sup>61</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>62</sup> Evan F. Kohlmann, “Two Decades of Jihad in Algeria: The GIA, the GSPC, and Al-Qaida,” *The NEFA Foundation* (May 2007).

<sup>63</sup> Barak Mendelsohn, “The Battle for Algeria: Explaining Fratricide among Armed Nonstate Actors,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 44, no. 9 (2021): 776-798.

<sup>64</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of Al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi, 2011).

<sup>65</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Algerian Forces Kill Extremist Leader,” September 27, 1994.

<sup>66</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Groupe Islamique Armé.” Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/382/>.

<sup>67</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>68</sup> Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 266-267.

<sup>69</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>70</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>71</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 42.

ideologically strained and a target for Islamist competitors.”<sup>72</sup> Zitouni was killed in 1996 by rival non-state actors.<sup>73</sup>

### *Antar Zouabri*

Antar Zouabri was born in 1970 in Algeria’s Blida Province.<sup>74</sup> Before becoming involved in the jihadist movement in the early 1990s, Zouabri reportedly did not express Islamist leanings or signs of religious devotion.<sup>75</sup> Zouabri also had few military credentials and relied on the fame of his brother, Ali, who was one of the GIA’s founders.<sup>76</sup> In the GIA, Zouabri was a junior member of the organization’s Shura council<sup>77</sup> and part of the GIA’s Green Battalion, with some reports indicating he founded this group.<sup>78</sup> Zouabri’s rise to power led to greater violence by the GIA: “Zitouni’s death only served to push the GIA towards ever greater excesses. He was succeeded by Antar Zouabri, commander of the Green Battalion; and no sooner had he taken over the helm of the GIA than he began to surpass his predecessor’s bloodstained record. It was under Zouabri that the GIA declared the entire Algerian people infidels, paving the way for acts of wholesale carnage in which thousands of ordinary civilians died in 1997 and 1998.”<sup>79</sup> Shortly after Zouabri rose to power, the United States designated the GIA as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997.<sup>80</sup> Algerian security forces killed Zouabri in February 2002 during a two-and-a-half-hour gun battle in Boufarik, 15 miles south of Algiers.<sup>81</sup> As Alexander Thurston notes, Zouabri was “the GIA’s last major leader.”<sup>82</sup>

### *Rachid Oukali*

Rachid Oukali, also known as Abou Tourab, succeeded Antar Zouabri as the leader of the Armed Islamic Group in 2002.<sup>83</sup> Oukali remained the GIA’s leader until July 2004, when he was allegedly

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<sup>72</sup> Evan F. Kohlmann, “Two Decades of Jihad in Algeria: The GIA, the GSPC, and Al-Qaida,” *The NEFA Foundation* (May 2007), 8.

<sup>73</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 50.

<sup>74</sup> Hussam Haddad, “عنتر زوابري.. 'ذباح' جماعة 'جيا' الجزائرية,” <https://www.islamist-movements.com/28316>.

<sup>75</sup> Hussam Haddad, “عنتر زوابري.. 'ذباح' جماعة 'جيا' الجزائرية,” <https://www.islamist-movements.com/28316>.

<sup>76</sup> Evan F. Kohlmann, “Two Decades of Jihad in Algeria: The GIA, the GSPC, and Al-Qaida,” *The NEFA Foundation* (May 2007).

<sup>77</sup> Barak Mendelsohn, “The Battle for Algeria: Explaining Fratricide among Armed Nonstate Actors,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 44, no. 9 (2021): 776-798.

<sup>78</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>79</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of Al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi, 2011), 131.

<sup>80</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>81</sup> Abdelmalek Touati, “Algerian Terrorist Reported Slain: Leader of Radical Islamic Group Was Nation’s ‘Most Wanted,’” *The Washington Post*, February 10, 2002.

<sup>82</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 31.

<sup>83</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Groupe Islamique Armé.” Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/382/>.

killed by close associates.<sup>84</sup> However, a video surfaced in 2005 of Oukali stating that reports of his death were mistaken and that Algerian intelligence had confused him with another militant.<sup>85</sup>

### *Nourredine Boudiafi*

Nourredine Boudiafi succeeded Rachid Oukali as the GIA's leader in 2004.<sup>86</sup> However, in January 2005, Algerian authorities announced that Algerian security services had detained Boudiafi in November 2004 in the eastern Algiers suburb of Bab Ezzouar.<sup>87</sup> Boudiafi is recognized as the last known GIA leader.<sup>88</sup>

## Jund al-Khilafa - Algeria/Wilayat Jazair

### *Abdelmalek Gouri*

Abdelmalek Gouri was the founding leader of Jund al-Khilafa in Algeria. Gouri was born in 1977 in Si-Mustapha, Algeria.<sup>89</sup> Gouri joined the Armed Islamic Group during the Algerian Civil War, fighting for the organization until his arrest in 1997.<sup>90</sup> Gouri was released from prison in 1999 under Bouteflika's amnesty program and joined the recently created Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat.<sup>91</sup> Gouri also reportedly traveled to Lebanon and fought with Fatah al-Islam in 2007 before returning to Algeria later that year.<sup>92</sup> Within the rebranded al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Gouri rose to prominence and became the leader of AQIM's "Central" sector; however, Jason Warner and co-authors write that Gouri grew "dissatisfied with Droukdel's leadership and disagreed with him over how to pursue the increasingly difficult fight with security forces in northern Algeria. Believing Droukdel was presiding over AQIM's decline and was incapable of reversing it, Gouri thought himself the man to revive the insurgency in northern Algeria, perhaps

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<sup>84</sup> Le Monde, "Selon Alger, le chef du GIA Abou tourab a été tué par ses proches en juillet," January 3, 2005, [https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/2005/01/03/selon-alger-le-chef-du-gia-abou-tourab-a-ete-tue-par-ses-proches-en-juillet\\_392799\\_1819218.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/2005/01/03/selon-alger-le-chef-du-gia-abou-tourab-a-ete-tue-par-ses-proches-en-juillet_392799_1819218.html).

<sup>85</sup> Kyle Orton, "Algeria's 'Years of Blood': Not Quite What They Seem," March 21, 2014, <https://kyleorton.co.uk/2014/03/21/algerias-years-of-blood-not-quite-what-they-seem/>; Jamestown Foundation, "Algerian GIA Group Decapitated," May 5, 2005, <https://jamestown.org/algerian-gia-group-decapitated/>.

<sup>86</sup> Kyle Orton, "Algeria's 'Years of Blood': Not Quite What They Seem," March 21, 2014, <https://kyleorton.co.uk/2014/03/21/algerias-years-of-blood-not-quite-what-they-seem/>.

<sup>87</sup> BBC, "Algeria Reveals Rebel Crackdown," January 4, 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4144265.stm>.

<sup>88</sup> Kyle Orton, "Algeria's 'Years of Blood': Not Quite What They Seem," March 21, 2014, <https://kyleorton.co.uk/2014/03/21/algerias-years-of-blood-not-quite-what-they-seem/>.

<sup>89</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>90</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>91</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>92</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

by aligning with a transnational movement whose ideology was not predicated on the rejection of the GIA's bloody tactics, as AQIM's had become."<sup>93</sup> In September 2014, Gouri, alongside approximately 30 militants from AQIM, defected from the organization and announced their allegiance to the Islamic State.<sup>94</sup> Shortly thereafter, Jund al-Khilafa released a video in which it beheaded a recently kidnapped French citizen, Herve Gourdel.<sup>95</sup> In December 2014, the Algerian military announced that it had killed "the dangerous murderer Gouri" in the Boumerdès region during an ambush.<sup>96</sup>

### *Abdullah al-Asimi*

Abdullah al-Asimi succeeded Abdelmalek Gouri as the leader of Jund al-Khilafa.<sup>97</sup> Al-Asimi was born in 1974 in Algiers and participated in the Algerian civil war with the Armed Islamic Group.<sup>98</sup> Al-Asimi later joined the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat and was the chief jurist for al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb's "Central" sector.<sup>99</sup> Following Gouri's lead, al-Asimi splintered from AQIM to join Jund al-Khilafa; he was reportedly the executioner of Herve Gourdel.<sup>100</sup> In May 2015, Algerian security forces killed al-Asimi during a firefight in the Boumerdès region.<sup>101</sup> The United States sanctioned Jund al-Khilafa/Wilayat Jazair in October 2015 under Executive Order 13224.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021), 71-72.

<sup>94</sup> Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Nathaniel Barr, "Neither Remaining Nor Expanding: The Islamic State's Global Expansion Struggles," *War on the Rocks*, February 23, 2016, <https://warontherocks.com/2016/02/neither-remaining-nor-expanding-the-islamic-states-global-expansion-struggles/>.

<sup>95</sup> Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Nathaniel Barr, "Neither Remaining Nor Expanding: The Islamic State's Global Expansion Struggles," *War on the Rocks*, February 23, 2016, <https://warontherocks.com/2016/02/neither-remaining-nor-expanding-the-islamic-states-global-expansion-struggles/>.

<sup>96</sup> Amir Jalal Zerdoumi, "Algerian Army Kills Militant Leader Linked to Beheading of French Hostage," *The New York Times*, December 23, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/24/world/africa/algerian-army-kills-militant-leader-linked-to-beheading-of-french-hostage.html>.

<sup>97</sup> Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Nathaniel Barr, "Neither Remaining Nor Expanding: The Islamic State's Global Expansion Struggles," *War on the Rocks*, February 23, 2016, <https://warontherocks.com/2016/02/neither-remaining-nor-expanding-the-islamic-states-global-expansion-struggles/>.

<sup>98</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>99</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>100</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>101</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>102</sup> Federal Register, "In the Matter of the Designation of Jund al-Khilafah in Algeria, aka Jak-A, aka Jund al-Khalifa fi Ard al-Jazayer, aka Jund al-Khilafah fi Ard al-Jaza'ir, aka Soldiers of the Caliphate in Algeria, aka Caliphate Soldiers of Algeria, aka Soldiers of the Caliphate in the Land of Algeria, aka Jund al Khalifa-Algeria, aka Jund al-Khalifa, aka Jund al-Khilafa Group as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist Pursuant to Section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224, as Amended," October 1, 2015, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/10/01/2015-25004/in-the-matter-of-the-designation-of-jund-al-khilafah-in-algeria-aka-jak-a-aka-jund-al-khalifa-fi-ard>.

# Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat/al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb

## *Hassan Hattab*

Hassan Hattab became the founding leader of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) after splintering from the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in Algeria. Hattab was born in 1967 in Algeria.<sup>103</sup> After receiving some university education, Hattab reportedly joined the Algerian Armed Forces.<sup>104</sup> Hattab received formal military training, serving as a paratrooper before becoming a mechanic.<sup>105</sup> After serving as the GSPC's leader for years, the Council of Notables mobilized against Hattab in 2003. As Alexander Thurston states: "The coup against Hattab was organized by the very structures meant to ensure that the organization ran smoothly."<sup>106</sup> During Hattab's time in power, the GSPC had no pledge of allegiance to al-Qaida.

## *Nabil Sahrawi*

Nabil Sahrawi, also known as Abu Ibrahim, succeeded Hassan Hattab as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat's (GSPC) leader in August 2003.<sup>107</sup> Sahrawi was born in 1966 in Batna, Algeria.<sup>108</sup> Sahrawi attained a post-secondary degree in engineering, with a specialization in thermal energy.<sup>109</sup> Sahrawi served as commander of "Zone 5" in the GIA before splintering to join the GSPC.<sup>110</sup> In the GSPC, Sahrawi served in various positions, including being assigned a military command, serving as head of external relations, and participating as a member of the Council of Notables (*majlis al-A'yan*).<sup>111</sup> Sahrawi pledged the GSPC's loyalty to al-Qaida, Taliban, and jihadists in other conflict zones in 2003, indicating the group's expanding external ties. However, this Arabic-language statement was not a formal pledge of allegiance (*bay'a*) but rather a statement

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<sup>103</sup> Hussam Haddad, "حسن خطاب المؤسس "التائب" للجماعة السلفية للدعوة والقتال بالجزائر," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/33033>.

<sup>104</sup> Hussam Haddad, "حسن خطاب المؤسس "التائب" للجماعة السلفية للدعوة والقتال بالجزائر," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/33033>.

<sup>105</sup> Gregory A. Smith, "Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb," *Journal of Strategic Security* 2, no. 2 (May 2009).

<sup>106</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 70.

<sup>107</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb." Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>108</sup> Hussam Haddad, "أبو إبراهيم مصطفى (الأمير الثاني) للجماعة السلفية للدعوة والقتال بالجزائر," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/31421>.

<sup>109</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>110</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>111</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

of broad solidarity (*wala'*).<sup>112</sup> In June 2004, Sahrawi was killed in a firefight with the Algerian army.<sup>113</sup>

### *Abdelmalek Droukdel*

Abdelmalek Droukdel, also known as Abu Musab 'Abd al-Wadud, replaced Sahrawi in June 2004 as the GSPC's third leader.<sup>114</sup> Droukdel was born in the Blid Province of Algeria in 1970.<sup>115</sup> Droukdel attained a post-secondary degree in mathematics,<sup>116</sup> becoming an engineer by trade.<sup>117</sup> Droukdel reportedly traveled to Afghanistan before returning to fight in Algeria.<sup>118</sup> In the early 1990s, Droukdel joined the Movement for the Islamic State and later became the GIA's commander of "Zone 2" and a distinguished bombmaker.<sup>119</sup> In the GSPC, he joined the Council of Notables and replaced Sahrawi as the head of the Council.<sup>120</sup> Droukdel formally pledged the GSPC's allegiance to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida in 2006, with the organization changing its name to al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in January 2007.<sup>121</sup> Droukdel oversaw the organization's expansion into Mali and other regional states.<sup>122</sup> In 2020, Droukdel was killed during a raid by French forces in Mali.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> For a link to the statement, see Aaron Zelin's [jihadology.net](http://jihadology.net). Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, "Statement from al-Jama'ah al-Salafiyyah Li-l-Da'wah Wa-l-Qital: Support for the Jihadi Groups," September 11, 2003, <https://jihadology.net/2003/09/11/statement-from-al-jamaah-al-salafiyyah-li-l-dawah-wa-l-qital-support-for-the-jihadi-groups/>.

<sup>113</sup> Jean-Pierre Filiu, "Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Algerian Challenge or Global Threat?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* 104 (October 2009).

<sup>114</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb." Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>115</sup> Sidi Ahmed Ould Al Amir, "تداعيات مقتل عبد المالك دروكدال على منطقة الساحل," <https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/article/4717>.

<sup>116</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>117</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb." Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>118</sup> BBC, "Al-Qaeda Chief in North Africa Abdelmalek Droukdel Killed - France," June 5, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-52943692>.

<sup>119</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>120</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>121</sup> Jean-Pierre Filiu, "Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Algerian Challenge or Global Threat?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* 104 (October 2009).

<sup>122</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb." Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>123</sup> Wassim Nasr, "Implications of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb's New Leadership," *News Lines Institute*, February 8, 2021, <https://newlinesinstitute.org/nonstate-actors/transnational-criminal-networks/implications-of-al-qaeda-in-the-islamic-maghrebs-new-leadership/>.

## *Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Annabi*

In November 2020, AQIM announced Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Annabi as the successor to Droukdel.<sup>124</sup> Al-Annabi was born in January or February 1969 in Annaba, Algeria.<sup>125</sup> Al-Annabi holds a university degree in economics.<sup>126</sup> Al-Annabi reportedly became an active member at the age of 19 in the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) before participating in the Algerian Civil War.<sup>127</sup> There is little information to suggest that al-Annabi traveled to Afghanistan like other Algerian jihadists. As Wassim Nasr writes: “It is improbable that he participated in the Afghan jihad or visited Afghanistan or Pakistan in those early years. Instead, he likely joined one of the very small, local groups active in his native region that orbited around” the GIA.<sup>128</sup> Within AQIM, al-Annabi served as the organization's media chief and head of the Council of Notables.<sup>129</sup> As of October 2024, al-Annabi remains AQIM’s leader.

## **Bangladesh**

### **Ansarullah Bangla Team**

#### *Muhammad Jasimuddin Rahmani*

Muhammad Jasimuddin Rahmani was the founding leader of Ansarullah Bangla Team. Born in Bangladesh,<sup>130</sup> Rahmani reportedly received religious education in Bangladesh and abroad.<sup>131</sup> Rahmaji taught at numerous madrasas across Bangladesh<sup>132</sup> and gathered followers as a “fiery local preacher” in Dhaka’s Basile neighborhood.<sup>133</sup> In early 2013, organizational militants inspired

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<sup>124</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Anabi,” <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/abu-ubaydah-yusuf-al-anabi/>.

<sup>125</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Anabi,” <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/abu-ubaydah-yusuf-al-anabi/>.

<sup>126</sup> The North Africa Journal, “Profile: Abu Ubaidah Youssef al-Annabi,” March 20, 2023, [https://north-africa.com/profile-abu\\_ubaidah\\_youssef\\_al-annabi/](https://north-africa.com/profile-abu_ubaidah_youssef_al-annabi/).

<sup>127</sup> Akram Khariief, “Qui est le nouveau chef d’Aqmi, Abou Obeida Yousouf al-Annabi?” November 24, 2020, <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1079608/politique/qui-est-le-nouveau-chef-daqmi-abou-obeida-yousouf-al-annabi/>.

<sup>128</sup> Wassim Nasr, “Implications of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb’s New Leadership,” *News Lines Institute*, February 8, 2021, <https://newlinesinstitute.org/nonstate-actors/transnational-criminal-networks/implications-of-al-qaeda-in-the-islamic-maghrebs-new-leadership/>.

<sup>129</sup> Wassim Nasr, “Implications of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb’s New Leadership,” *News Lines Institute*, February 8, 2021, <https://newlinesinstitute.org/nonstate-actors/transnational-criminal-networks/implications-of-al-qaeda-in-the-islamic-maghrebs-new-leadership/>.

<sup>130</sup> Counter Extremism Project, “Jasimuddin Rahmani,” <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/jasimuddin-rahmani>.

<sup>131</sup> Julfikar Ali Manik, “Preaching Militancy, Building Network,” *The Daily Star*, August 14, 2013, <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/preaching-militancy-building-network>.

<sup>132</sup> Cage International, “Religious Scholar Jasimuddin Rahmani released in Bangladesh after 11 Years imprisonment,” August 29, 2024, <https://www.cage.ngo/articles/religious-scholar-jasimuddin-rahmani-released-in-bangladesh-after-11-years-imprisonment>.

<sup>133</sup> International Crisis Group, “Countering Jihadist Militancy in Bangladesh,” *Asia Report* 295 (2018).

by Rahmani hacked to death a secular blogger, Ahmed Rajib Haider.<sup>134</sup> Rahmani was 43 in August 2013 when Bangladeshi authorities arrested him in connection with the killings.<sup>135</sup> Around this period, Ansarullah Bangla Team started to refer to itself as Ansar al-Islam in public statements.<sup>136</sup> Rahmani was a follower of Anwar al-Awlaki, and, in mid-2015, Ansar al-Islam began referring to itself as the Bangladeshi wing of al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent.<sup>137</sup>

## Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB)

### *Abdur Rahman*

Shaikh Abdur Rahman was born in January 1959 in Jamalpur, Bangladesh.<sup>138</sup> Rahman attended his father's madrasa for early schooling and later received a scholarship to study at Medina University in Saudi Arabia from 1980 to 1985.<sup>139</sup> In Saudi Arabia, he developed a business renting apartments to Bangladeshi pilgrims to Mecca.<sup>140</sup> Rahman also established close contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood in Saudi Arabia and reportedly fought in Afghanistan against the USSR.<sup>141</sup> Becoming more interested in politics, Rahman joined a chapter of the Islamic Chatra Shabir but became disillusioned with working through a democratic system to achieve an Islamic state.<sup>142</sup> He subsequently joined Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B) but was expelled in 1997 following disputes with the organization's leadership.<sup>143</sup> Rahman subsequently traveled to Pakistan and met with leaders of Lashkar-e-Taiba, receiving training in explosives, strategy, and intelligence.<sup>144</sup> He then formed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh in April 1998.<sup>145</sup> A.S.M. Ali Ashraf and Mohammed Islam note that Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh is the organization that introduced suicide bombings to Bangladesh.<sup>146</sup> Bangladeshi security forces arrested Rahman in

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<sup>134</sup> Animesh Roul, "How Bangladesh Became Fertile Ground for al-Qa'ida and the Islamic State," 9, no. 5 (2016): 27-34.

<sup>135</sup> Julfikar Ali Manik, "Ansarulla Bangla Team: Preaching Militancy, Building Network," August 14, 2013, <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/preaching-militancy-building-network>.

<sup>136</sup> Animesh Roul, "How Bangladesh Became Fertile Ground for al-Qa'ida and the Islamic State," 9, no. 5 (2016): 27-34.

<sup>137</sup> Animesh Roul, "How Bangladesh Became Fertile Ground for al-Qa'ida and the Islamic State," 9, no. 5 (2016): 27-34.

<sup>138</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>139</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>140</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>141</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>142</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>143</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>144</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>145</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>146</sup> A.S.M. Ali Ashraf and Mohammed Saiful Islam, "Islamist Militant Groups and Crime-Terror Nexus in Bangladesh," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 46, no. 9 (2023): 1678-1701.

Sylhet city on March 2, 2006, following a siege of more than 24 hours.<sup>147</sup> Rahman was executed in jail on March 30, 2007.<sup>148</sup>

### *Maulana Saidur Rahman*

Maulana Saidur Rahman succeeded Abdur Rahman as leader of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh.<sup>149</sup> Saidur Rahman was a cleric by profession,<sup>150</sup> working as a madrasa teacher.<sup>151</sup> He was also reportedly a leader for Jamaat-e-Islami, which was legally established in 1979 and grew into Bangladesh's largest and most influential Islamist party, in the Habiganj district, but was expelled in 1989 for his "extremist" views.<sup>152</sup> After taking control of the organization in 2007, Saidur Rahman cooperated with Indian arms smugglers and stockpiled hand grenades.<sup>153</sup> Bangladeshi authorities arrested Saidur Rahman on May 26, 2010.<sup>154</sup>

## **Burkina Faso**

### **Ansaroul Islam**

#### *Ibrahim Malam Dicko*

Ibrahim Malam Dicko founded Ansaroul Islam in Burkina Faso in 2016. Dicko was reportedly born around 1970 in a Fulani community in Burkina Faso.<sup>155</sup> Dicko first attended a traditional public school before undertaking religious studies in Burkina Faso and abroad.<sup>156</sup> Utilizing his

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<sup>147</sup> South Asian Terrorism Portal, "Incidents and Statements involving JMB: 2005-2012," <https://www.satp.org/satporgetp/countries/bangladesh/terroristoutfits/jmb12.htm>.

<sup>148</sup> South Asian Terrorism Portal, "Incidents and Statements involving JMB: 2005-2012," <https://www.satp.org/satporgetp/countries/bangladesh/terroristoutfits/jmb12.htm>.

<sup>149</sup> Md. Nurul Momen, "Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh: Analysis of Organizational Design and Activities," *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways Toward Terrorism and Genocide* 13, no. 3 (2020): 245-257.

<sup>150</sup> A.S.M. Ali Ashraf and Mohammed Saiful Islam, "Islamist Militant Groups and Crime-Terror Nexus in Bangladesh," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 46, no. 9 (2023): 1678-1701.

<sup>151</sup> Kailash Sarkar and Mukhlesur Rahman, "From Jamaat Dist Ammer to JMB Boss," *The Daily Star*, May 26, 2010, <https://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-140107>.

<sup>152</sup> International Crisis Group, "The Threat from Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh," *Asia Report* 187 (2010).

<sup>153</sup> A.S.M. Ali Ashraf and Mohammed Saiful Islam, "Islamist Militant Groups and Crime-Terror Nexus in Bangladesh," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 46, no. 9 (2023): 1678-1701.

<sup>154</sup> Animesh Roul, "Jamaatul Mujahidin Bangladesh: Weakened, But Not Destroyed," 4, no. 11 (2011): 16-18.

<sup>155</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>; Koudbi Kaboré, "The Modernity of Islam in Burkina Faso: Contrasting Strategies in Two Emergent Movements," in Abdoulaye Sounaye and André Chappatte (eds.), *Islam and Muslim Life in West Africa: Practices, Trajectories and Influences* (De Gruyter, 2022): 39-62.

<sup>156</sup> Morgane Le Cam, "Comment est né Ansaroul Islam, premier groupe djihadiste de l'Histoire du Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, April 11, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/04/11/comment-est-ne-ansaroul-islam-premier-groupe-djihadiste-de-l-histoire-du-burkina-faso\\_5109520\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/04/11/comment-est-ne-ansaroul-islam-premier-groupe-djihadiste-de-l-histoire-du-burkina-faso_5109520_3212.html); Koudbi Kaboré, "The Modernity of Islam in Burkina Faso: Contrasting Strategies in Two Emergent Movements," in Abdoulaye Sounaye

religious education to become a cleric, Dicko taught as an Imam in Niger before returning to Burkina Faso in 2009.<sup>157</sup> In 2012, Dicko reportedly joined the jihadist struggle in Mali before being arrested by French troops in 2013 and subsequently transported to Bamako.<sup>158</sup> He was released in 2015 due to a lack of incriminating evidence and returned to Burkina Faso to form Ansaroul Islam.<sup>159</sup> According to *Le Monde*, Dicko died of natural causes in 2017.<sup>160</sup>

### *Jafar Dicko*

Jafar Dicko succeeded his brother as the leader of Ansaroul Islam.<sup>161</sup> Born in Soboulé, Dicko was reportedly 38 years old when he assumed power in 2017.<sup>162</sup> In a similar fashion to his brother, Jafar was influenced by Amadou Koufa, the leader of the Macina Liberation Front.<sup>163</sup> However, Jafar reportedly lacked his brother's leadership skills: "Known for his brutal temper...Jafar purportedly lacks his brother's charisma."<sup>164</sup> The United States designated Ansaroul Islam as a terrorist organization under Executive Order 13224 in 2018 and sanctioned Dicko in 2024.<sup>165</sup>

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and André Chappatte (eds.), *Islam and Muslim Life in West Africa: Practices, Trajectories and Influences* (De Gruyter, 2022): 39-62.

<sup>157</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>158</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>159</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>160</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html).

<sup>161</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html); Héni Nsaibia and Caleb Weiss, "Ansaroul Islam and the Growing Terrorist Insurgency in Burkina Faso," *CTC Sentinel* 11, no. 3 (2018): 21-26; Mapping Militants Project. "Ansaroul Islam." Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/2980/>; Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>162</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html).

<sup>163</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html).

<sup>164</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>165</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "U.S. Targets West African Hostage Takers," April 23, 2024, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2293>.

# China

## Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement

### *Hasan Mahsum*

Hasan Mahsum was born in 1964 in China's Xinjiang province.<sup>166</sup> Between 1984 and 1989, Mahsum was reportedly a student at an Islamic school in Karghalik established by Abdul Hakeem Makhdoom.<sup>167</sup> An ethnic Uyghur, Mahsum was arrested on multiple occasions during the 1990s<sup>168</sup> for engaging in militant activities and was sentenced on one occasion to three years to "re-education through labor."<sup>169</sup> In 1997, Mahsum reportedly fled from China to Afghanistan after being accused of planning a bombing attack in 1995.<sup>170</sup> Mahsum founded the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement in the late 1990s,<sup>171</sup> with the organization conducting its first attack in 1998.<sup>172</sup> Mahsum denied any links to al-Qaida and the Taliban, claiming his group did not seek to target the United States.<sup>173</sup> However, internal al-Qaida documents show that Mahsum participated in a thirty-day advanced security course in Kabul during September 1999 in the capacity of "Emir of the Turkestani brothers."<sup>174</sup> The United States sanctioned the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement under Executive Order 13224 in 2002.<sup>175</sup> However, this designation was revoked in 2020.<sup>176</sup> Mahsum was killed by Pakistani armed forces during a firefight in South Waziristan in late 2003.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> People's Daily Online, "FM Spokesman Confirms Death of Wanted Terrorist," December 25, 2003, [https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225\\_131190.shtml](https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225_131190.shtml).

<sup>167</sup> Mona and Vineet, "TIP in Their Own Words – An Interview with Abdusalam At-Turkistani, Deputy Leader of Turkistan Islamic Party," February 18, 2023.

<sup>168</sup> Mona and Vineet, "TIP in Their Own Words – An Interview with Abdusalam At-Turkistani, Deputy Leader of Turkistan Islamic Party," February 18, 2023.

<sup>169</sup> People's Daily Online, "FM Spokesman Confirms Death of Wanted Terrorist," December 25, 2003, [https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225\\_131190.shtml](https://en.people.cn/200312/25/eng20031225_131190.shtml).

<sup>170</sup> Al Jazeera, "Pakistan Kills Uighur Independence Fighters," December 23, 2003, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2003/12/23/pakistan-kills-ughur-independence-fighter>.

<sup>171</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, "The East Turkestani Islamic Movement (ETIM)," September 4, 2014, [https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/east-turkestan-islamic-movement-etim#:~:text=The%20East%20Turkestan%20Islamic%20Movement%20\(ETIM\)%20is%20a%20Muslim%20separatist,in%20northwest%20China's%20Xinjiang%20province](https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/east-turkestan-islamic-movement-etim#:~:text=The%20East%20Turkestan%20Islamic%20Movement%20(ETIM)%20is%20a%20Muslim%20separatist,in%20northwest%20China's%20Xinjiang%20province).

<sup>172</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, "Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM)," (2015).

<sup>173</sup> Chris Zambelis, "Uighur Dissent and Militancy in China's Xinjiang Province," 3, no. 1 (January 2010): 16-19.

<sup>174</sup> Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan* (Cambridge University Press 2017).

<sup>175</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Executive Order 13224," <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>.

<sup>176</sup> Federal Register, "In the Matter of the Designation of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement Also Known as ETIM as a "Terrorist Organization" Pursuant to Section 212(a)(3)(B)(vi)(II) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as Amended," November 5, 2020, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/11/05/2020-24620/in-the-matter-of-the-designation-of-the-eastern-turkistan-islamic-movement-also-known-as-etim-as-a>.

<sup>177</sup> BBC, "Chinese Militant 'Shot Dead,'" December 23, 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3343241.stm>.

### *Abdul Haq al-Turkistani*

Abdul Haq al-Turkistani was born on October 10, 1971, in the Khuttan area, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China.<sup>178</sup> Alongside Hasan Mahsum, al-Turkistani reportedly helped run a training camp for several months in 2001 in the Tora Bora mountains.<sup>179</sup> Al-Turkistani succeeded Mahsum as leader of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement following the latter's death.<sup>180</sup> The United States designated al-Turkistani as the leader of a terrorist organization in 2009 for commanding "a terror group that sought to sow violence and fracture international unity at the 2008 Olympic Games in China."<sup>181</sup> Al-Turkistani was thought to have been killed in a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan in 2010. However, videos published years later showcased al-Turkistani.<sup>182</sup> In 2025, al-Turkistani reportedly remained emir of the organization.<sup>183</sup>

### *Abdul Shakoor Turkistani*

Abdul Shakoor Turkistani took command of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement/Turkistan Islamic Party in 2010 after Abdul Haq al-Turkistani was reportedly killed in a U.S. strike.<sup>184</sup> According to information released by the Chinese government, Turkistani (Emeti Yakuf) was born in China in March 1965.<sup>185</sup> He reportedly became involved with the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement in 1996 and "received terrorist training" after leaving China for "a South Asian country."<sup>186</sup> By 2001, Turkistani was reportedly in charge of "recruiting new members, organizing terrorism training, as well as planning and carrying out terrorist attacks," acting as the organization's military commander.<sup>187</sup> In August 2012, Turkistani was killed in a U.S. air strike on his training camp in the Shawal Valley in Pakistan.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Targets Leader of Group Tied to Al Qaida," April 20, 2009, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg92>.

<sup>179</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "The Uighurs, In Their Own Words," *Long War Journal*, April 21, 2009.

<sup>180</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement," [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/qa\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/entity/eastern-turkistan-islamic-movement](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/qa_sanctions_list/summaries/entity/eastern-turkistan-islamic-movement).

<sup>181</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Targets Leader of Group Tied to Al Qaida," April 20, 2009, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg92>.

<sup>182</sup> Jacob Zenn, "Back from the Dead: The Turkistan Islamic Party's Abdul Haq al-Turkistani," *Jamestown Foundation*, August 31, 2016.

<sup>183</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), "Detail of Terrorism Update," February 15, 2025, <https://www.satp.org/terrorism-update/turkistan-islamic-party-leader-directs-syrian-fighters-from-afghanistan-says-report>.

<sup>184</sup> Bill Roggio, "Turkistan Islamic Party Leader Thought Killed in U.S. Drone Strike," *Long War Journal*, August 25, 2012, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan\\_islamic\\_pa\\_1.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan_islamic_pa_1.php).

<sup>185</sup> Airwars, "Emeti Yakuf," <https://airwars.org/wp-content/themes/airwars-new/archives/bij-drone-war/namingthedead/people/nd513/index-lang=en.html>.

<sup>186</sup> Analysts note that this suggests he likely traveled to Pakistan and/or Afghanistan. Bill Roggio, "Turkistan Islamic Party Leader Thought Killed in U.S. Drone Strike," *Long War Journal*, August 25, 2012, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan\\_islamic\\_pa\\_1.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/08/turkistan_islamic_pa_1.php).

<sup>187</sup> Airwars, "Emeti Yakuf," <https://airwars.org/wp-content/themes/airwars-new/archives/bij-drone-war/namingthedead/people/nd513/index-lang=en.html>.

<sup>188</sup> Jacob Zenn, "September 2012 Briefs," *Jamestown Foundation*, September 28, 2012, <https://jamestown.org/september-2012-briefs/>; Zia Ur Rehman, "ETIM's Presence in Pakistan and China's Growing Pressure," *Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre* (August 2014); Airwars, "Emeti Yakuf,"

## *Abdullah Mansour*

Abdullah Mansour succeeded Abdul Shakoor Turkistani following the latter's death in 2012.<sup>189</sup> While Mansour is noted to be “a relative novice among more experienced international jihadists,” he brought significant media experience after serving as the editor of the *Islamic Turkistan* publication.<sup>190</sup> This quarterly publication highlighted Uyghur grievances against China and linked Xinjiang to other jihadist conflict zones.<sup>191</sup> Mansour continued to lead Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement/Turkistan Islamic Party until Abdul Haq al-Turkistani retook command of the organization in the spring of 2014.<sup>192</sup>

# Democratic Republic of the Congo

## Allied Democratic Forces

### *Jamil Mukulu*

In 1995, Jamil Mukulu became the founding leader of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).<sup>193</sup> Mukulu was born in 1964 in Uganda.<sup>194</sup> Mukulu was reportedly a Christian cleric before converting to Islam.<sup>195</sup> Mukulu received a diploma in Business Management in Kenya and studied Islamic theology in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Sudan.<sup>196</sup> He later returned home to Uganda and became involved in the Tabligh movement.<sup>197</sup> In 1991, Mukulu reportedly led as many as a thousand Tabligh activists and stormed the offices of the Ugandan Muslim Supreme Council.

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<https://airwars.org/wp-content/themes/airwars-new/archives/bij-drone-war/namingthedead/people/nd513/index-lang=en.html>.

<sup>189</sup> Mona and Vineet, “TIP IN THEIR OWN WORDS – AN INTERVIEW WITH ABDUSALAM AT-TURKISTĀNI, DEPUTY LEADER OF TURKISTĀN ‘ISLĀMIC PARTY,” February 18, 2023, <https://dreyfus1894.substack.com/p/tip-in-their-own-words-an-interview>.

<sup>190</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Beijing, Kunming, Urumqi and Guangzhou: The Changing Landscape of Anti-Chinese Jihadists,” *Jamestown Foundation* 14, no. 10 (2014), <https://jamestown.org/beijing-kunming-urumqi-and-guangzhou-the-changing-landscape-of-anti-chinese-jihadists/>.

<sup>191</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Beijing, Kunming, Urumqi and Guangzhou: The Changing Landscape of Anti-Chinese Jihadists,” *Jamestown Foundation* 14, no. 10 (2014), <https://jamestown.org/beijing-kunming-urumqi-and-guangzhou-the-changing-landscape-of-anti-chinese-jihadists/>.

<sup>192</sup> Bill Roggio, “Turkistan Islamic Party Emir Thought Killed in 2010 Reemerged to Lead Group in 2014,” *Long War Journal*, June 1, 2015, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/06/turkistan-islamic-party-emir-thought-killed-in-2010-reemerged-to-lead-group-in-2014.php>.

<sup>193</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss,” *The Islamic state in Congo* (GW Program on Extremism, 2021).

<sup>194</sup> Daily Monitor, “Who is ADF’s Jamil Mukulu?” August 7, 2015, [https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google\\_vignette](https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google_vignette).

<sup>195</sup> Daily Monitor, “Who is ADF’s Jamil Mukulu?” August 7, 2015, [https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google\\_vignette](https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google_vignette).

<sup>196</sup> Daily Monitor, “Who is ADF’s Jamil Mukulu?” August 7, 2015, [https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google\\_vignette](https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google_vignette).

<sup>197</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O’Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

Mukulu was subsequently imprisoned until 1993.<sup>198</sup> After his release, Mukulu formed his own armed group, the Salafi Foundation, and clashed with the clerical establishment and former Tabligh colleagues.<sup>199</sup> After leading the ADF since 1995, Mukulu was arrested in 2015 by Tanzanian authorities and extradited to Uganda.<sup>200</sup>

### *Seka Baluku*

Seka Bakulu, also known as Seka Musa Baluku or Musa Baluku, was born between 1975 and 1977 in Uganda.<sup>201</sup> Baluku reportedly received little formal education in Uganda's schooling system.<sup>202</sup> However, he completed studies at the Bugembe Islamic Institute and worked as an Imam at a Tabligh mosque.<sup>203</sup> Baluku was an early member of the Allied Democratic Forces: "While it is not known how Baluku became connected to the ADF, he joined the rebel outfit in 1994 and soon after departed for their camps. This makes Baluku part of the first wave of ADF members who joined in the 1990s and was with the group when it moved from Uganda to DRC in the late 1990s." After serving as Mukulu's second in command, Baluku took over the ADF following Mukulu's arrest in 2015.<sup>204</sup> Under Baluku's rule, the ADF pledged fealty to the Islamic State's leaders.<sup>205</sup> In 2021, the United States designated Baluku as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist and also designated ISIS-DRC as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>199</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>200</sup> Jared Thompson, "Examining Extremism: Allied Democratic Forces," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, July 29, 2021, <https://www.csis.org/blogs/examining-extremism/examining-extremism-allied-democratic-forces>.

<sup>201</sup> The U.S. State Department notes that Baluku was born sometime between 1975 and 1976 while the U.N. Security Council estimates that Bakulu was born around 1977. Adopting the middle ground, we coded Bakulu's year of birth as 1976. U.S. Department of State, "Seka Musa Baluku," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/seka-musa-baluku/>; United Nations Sanctions Committee, "Sanctions Committee Concerning Democratic Republic of Congo Adds One Individual to Its Sanctions List," <https://press.un.org/en/2020/sc14101.doc.htm>.

<sup>202</sup> NTVUganda, "Who is Musa Baluku? - ADF Commander Took Over After Mukulu's Arrest," December 2, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsaF8Xpei0s>.

<sup>203</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss, "The Islamic state in Congo (GW Program on Extremism, 2021).

<sup>204</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss, "The Islamic state in Congo (GW Program on Extremism, 2021).

<sup>205</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss, "The Islamic state in Congo (GW Program on Extremism, 2021); Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>206</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Seka Musa Baluku," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/seka-musa-baluku/>.

# Egypt

## Ajnad Misr

### *Hamam Attiya*

Hamam Attiya was the founding leader of Ajnad Misr in Egypt. While reports vary surrounding his exact age, Attiya was reportedly in his mid-30s by 2015.<sup>207</sup> Attiya was born in the El Marg district of Cairo.<sup>208</sup> Attiya reportedly traveled as a teenager to France to be with his father, who had moved to France in the 1970s to work as a cook.<sup>209</sup> Also working as a cook, Attiya later met al-Qaida's followers who convinced him to travel to Afghanistan.<sup>210</sup> In Afghanistan, Attiya reportedly joined al-Qaida officially and received explosives and weapons manufacturing training.<sup>211</sup> Attiya would later travel to Iraq in 2011, working with the nascent Islamic State before deciding to return to Egypt in 2012.<sup>212</sup> In Egypt, Attiya reportedly joined Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, later leaving the organization to establish Ajnad Misr.<sup>213</sup> Officially announcing its formation in January 2014, Ajnad Misr claimed attacks dating back to 2013.<sup>214</sup> Such attacks would lead the United States to designate Ajnad Misr as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2014.<sup>215</sup> Attiya was later killed during a firefight with Egyptian police forces in 2015.<sup>216</sup>

<sup>207</sup> While some reports place Attiya at 36 at the time of his death in 2015, others claim that he was younger. However, his father reportedly traveled to France in the late 1970s to live for work. Given this, we followed reporting that claimed Attiya was 36 at the time of his death. For information on different reporting dates, see Yousry Elbadry and Hamdy Dabash, "مصر من هو همام عطية في مسلسل «الاختيار2».. وقصة 26 عملية إرهابية لـ«أجناد»," Al-Masry Al-Youm (2021) <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2311409>; "Zatmasr "ذات مصر" # (من الداخل) # أجناد مصر (الحلقة 24 من برنامج "من هو زعيم تنظيم "أجناد مصر" الإرهابي" Al Arabiya <https://www.alarabiya.net/arab-and-world/egypt/2015/04/06/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%B3%D8%B3-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%9F>.

<sup>208</sup> Yousry Elbadry and Hamdy Dabash, "مصر من هو همام عطية في مسلسل «الاختيار2».. وقصة 26 عملية إرهابية لـ«أجناد»," Al-Masry Al-Youm (2021) <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2311409>.

<sup>209</sup> Yousry Elbadry and Hamdy Dabash, "مصر من هو همام عطية في مسلسل «الاختيار2».. وقصة 26 عملية إرهابية لـ«أجناد»," Al-Masry Al-Youm (2021) <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2311409>.

<sup>210</sup> Yousry Elbadry and Hamdy Dabash, "مصر من هو همام عطية في مسلسل «الاختيار2».. وقصة 26 عملية إرهابية لـ«أجناد»," Al-Masry Al-Youm (2021) <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2311409>.

<sup>211</sup> Yousry Elbadry and Hamdy Dabash, "مصر من هو همام عطية في مسلسل «الاختيار2».. وقصة 26 عملية إرهابية لـ«أجناد»," Al-Masry Al-Youm (2021) <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2311409>.

<sup>212</sup> Yousry Elbadry and Hamdy Dabash, "مصر من هو همام عطية في مسلسل «الاختيار2».. وقصة 26 عملية إرهابية لـ«أجناد»," Al-Masry Al-Youm (2021) <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2311409>.

<sup>213</sup> Ahram Online, "Founder of Islamist Militant Group Ajnad Misr Killed: Police Spokesman," April 5, 2015, <https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/126984/Egypt/Politics-/Founder-of-Islamist-militant-group-Ajnad-Misr-kill.aspx>.

<sup>214</sup> The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, "Ajnad Misr," (2014), <https://timep.org/2014/07/22/ajnad-misr/>.

<sup>215</sup> <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/12/235386.htm>.

<sup>216</sup> Yousry Elbadry and Hamdy Dabash, "مصر من هو همام عطية في مسلسل «الاختيار2».. وقصة 26 عملية إرهابية لـ«أجناد»," Al-Masry Al-Youm (2021) <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2311409>.

## al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya

### *Omar Abdel Rahman*

Omar Abdel Rahman was born in El-Gamaleya City along the Niger Delta in 1938.<sup>217</sup> He lost his eyesight due to diabetes at ten months old.<sup>218</sup> Abdel Rahman focused on religious studies, receiving an undergraduate degree as well as a doctorate from al-Azhar University.<sup>219</sup> After graduation, Abdel Rahman was appointed as an imam in a village of al-Faiyum, southwest of Cairo.<sup>220</sup> In 1973, Abdel Rahman began teaching in the Department of Theology at the University of Aysut in Upper Egypt,<sup>221</sup> staying for four years in the position.<sup>222</sup> Subsequently, he taught at the Girls' College in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, returning to Egypt in 1980.<sup>223</sup> Abdel Rahman spent time in Egyptian prisons on multiple occasions. He was arrested in 1970 after the death of Gamal Abdel Nasser, spending months in prison.<sup>224</sup> Abdel Rahman later spent three years in prison following the death of Anwar al-Sadat.<sup>225</sup> In the late 1980s, reportedly using a body double to escape house

<sup>217</sup> BBC Arabic, "عمر عبد الرحمن: أشهر إسلامي في السجون الأمريكية," <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-39016271>.

<sup>218</sup> Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>219</sup> Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>220</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "عمر عبد الرحمن.. الزعيم الروحي للجماعة الإسلامية بمصر," <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2017/2/19/%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%A9>.

<sup>221</sup> Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>222</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "عمر عبد الرحمن.. الزعيم الروحي للجماعة الإسلامية بمصر," <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2017/2/19/%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%A9>.

<sup>223</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "عمر عبد الرحمن.. الزعيم الروحي للجماعة الإسلامية بمصر," <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2017/2/19/%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%A9>.

<sup>224</sup> Sky News Arabic, "عمر عبد الرحمن.. الزعيم الروحي لـ الإرهاب," <https://www.skynewsarabia.com/middle-east/919747-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%80%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%95%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8>.

<sup>225</sup> Sky News Arabic, "عمر عبد الرحمن.. الزعيم الروحي لـ الإرهاب," <https://www.skynewsarabia.com/middle-east/919747-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%80%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%95%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8>.

arrest, Abdel Rahman traveled to Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Sudan, and Afghanistan, with these travels bringing him “into contact not only with several influential Islamist activists and thinkers but also with what has been described as a CIA-sponsored ‘pipeline’ funneling training, arms, and financial support to Afghan fighters.”<sup>226</sup> While there are debates over the organization’s top leadership position, sources indicate that Abdel Rahman was appointed as the leader of the group.<sup>227</sup> Fawaz Gerges also writes that Abdel Rahman was the emir of the organization.<sup>228</sup> However, other jihadists, such as Ayman al-Zawahiri, opposed Abdel Rahman’s leadership and the “rule of the blind” on operational and doctrinal grounds.<sup>229</sup> Abdel Rahman was arrested in 1993 and is serving a life sentence in the United States for his role in plotting to bomb landmarks in New York.<sup>230</sup>

## Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis/Wilayat Sinai

### *Mohamed Freij*

Mohamed Freij was reportedly the founding leader of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis.<sup>231</sup> Freij, an Egyptian jihadist,<sup>232</sup> engaged in militant activities during the 2000s. According to his obituary published by Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, Freij had “unique fingerprints in the history of the jihadi work in Sinai.”<sup>233</sup> Sources indicate that Freij “likely” received militant training in Gaza and masterminded the tactic of targeting gas pipelines between Israel and Egypt.<sup>234</sup> Reports differ over Freij’s death. In December 2013, the Egyptian military claimed it had killed Freij during an operation in the

[%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%80%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%95%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8.](#)

<sup>226</sup> Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 347.

<sup>227</sup> Ashraf Abdel Hamed, “تجل عمر عبدالرحمن للعربية: والدي أوصى أن يدفن في مصر,” *Al Arabiya*, [<sup>228</sup> Fawaz Gerges, \*The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global\* \(Cambridge University Press, 2009\).](https://www.alarabiya.net/arab-and-world/egypt/2017/02/18/%D9%86%D8%AC%D9%84-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%80-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%86%D8%AA-%D9%87%D8%B0%D9%87-%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%AF%D9%81%D9%86%D9%87-%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%B7%D8%B1-%D9%88%D9%88%D8%B5%D9%8A%D8%AA%D9%87.</a></p>
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<sup>229</sup> Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>230</sup> Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>231</sup> Zack Gold, “Salafi Jihadist Violence in Egypt’s North Sinai: From Local Insurgency to Islamic State Province,” *ICCT Research Paper* (April 2016).

<sup>232</sup> Zack Gold, “Salafi Jihadist Violence in Egypt’s North Sinai: From Local Insurgency to Islamic State Province,” *ICCT Research Paper* (April 2016).

<sup>233</sup> David Barnett, “Ansar Jerusalem Confirms Death of 2 Members, Including Founder,” *Long War Journal*, March 16, 2014.

<sup>234</sup> Zack Gold, “Salafi Jihadist Violence in Egypt’s North Sinai: From Local Insurgency to Islamic State Province,” *ICCT Research Paper* (April 2016).

northern Sinai.<sup>235</sup> However, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis claims that Freij died months later when a bomb he was transporting detonated prematurely.<sup>236</sup>

### *Shadi al-Meneai*

Shadi al-Meneai reportedly assumed leadership of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis following Freij's death.<sup>237</sup> Al-Meneai was born in a military hospital in Amman, Jordan, to an Egyptian father and Palestinian mother.<sup>238</sup> Al-Meneai moved with his father to the Sinai and completed his early education in southern Rafah.<sup>239</sup> He started at the al-Farabi High School but did not finish his studies due to his living situation.<sup>240</sup> Al-Meneai worked for years smuggling goods into Gaza and later moved to Palestine for two years.<sup>241</sup> After returning to the Sinai, Egyptian intelligence services captured him and transferred him to Cairo to question him over his participation in attacks launched by the Tawhid and Jihad group against Israel inside the Sinai.<sup>242</sup> His time in prison reportedly influenced al-Meneai's road to militancy.<sup>243</sup> Al-Meneai played a key role in the early operations of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, including the kidnapping of 25 Chinese cement workers in Egypt in 2012.<sup>244</sup> While disputes exist over his death,<sup>245</sup> the Egyptian military announced the death

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<sup>235</sup> [https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2013/12/131209\\_sinai\\_abu\\_sohaib](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2013/12/131209_sinai_abu_sohaib).

<sup>236</sup> David Barnett, "Ansar Jerusalem Confirms Death of 2 Members, Including Founder," *Long War Journal*, March 16, 2014.

<sup>237</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic State - Sinai Province." Last modified June 17, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/408/>.

<sup>238</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شادي المنيعي" <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A>.

<sup>239</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شادي المنيعي" <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A>.

<sup>240</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شادي المنيعي" <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A>.

<sup>241</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شادي المنيعي" <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A>.

<sup>242</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شادي المنيعي" <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A>.

<sup>243</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شادي المنيعي" <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A>.

<sup>244</sup> Zack Gold, "Salafi Jihadist Violence in Egypt's North Sinai: From Local Insurgency to Islamic State Province," *ICCT Research Paper* (April 2016).

<sup>245</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شادي المنيعي" <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/1/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A>.

of al-Meneai during a firefight in 2014.<sup>246</sup> Prior to al-Meneai's death, the United States designated Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on April 10, 2014.<sup>247</sup>

### *Abu Duaa Al-Ansari*

There are debates surrounding Abu Duaa al-Ansari's role in Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, with the organization often keeping the identity of its leader secret.<sup>248</sup> According to the Egyptian military, al-Ansari was the leader of the group until 2016.<sup>249</sup> While "there is a dearth of information in public news accounts" about al-Ansari,<sup>250</sup> he reportedly played a key role in the organization's oath of allegiance to the Islamic State in November 2014.<sup>251</sup> In 2016, the Egyptian military stated that it killed al-Ansari in a series of airstrikes in Arish.<sup>252</sup>

### *Abu Osama al-Masri*

Abu Osama al-Masri reportedly took command of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, which had rebranded to Wilayat Sinai, in 2016.<sup>253</sup> Al-Masri was born to a prominent family in Arish, Egypt.<sup>254</sup> While there is uncertainty surrounding his exact age,<sup>255</sup> an *Asharq al-Awsat* article stated that al-Masri was 42

<sup>246</sup> BBC, "Egypt: Sinai Islamist Leader Shadi al-Menei Shot Dead," May 23, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27533169>.

<sup>247</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>248</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic State - Sinai Province." Last modified June 17, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/408/>.

<sup>249</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic State - Sinai Province." Last modified June 17, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/408/>.

<sup>250</sup> Steve Visser, "ISIS Leader Killed in Sai, Egypt Says," *CNN*, August 6, 2016, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/04/middleeast/egypt-kills-isis-leader>.

<sup>251</sup> Muhammad Reda, "2016 الشهادة: التنظيم يلفظ أنفاسه الأخيرة.. وتطهير سيناء بالكامل من الإرهاب نهاية وسائل إعلام داعش تتكتم على خبر سقوط أبو دعاء الأنصاري.. على حفظة: ضربة قاسمة للإرهاب في سيناء.. تامر" <https://www.youm7.com/story/2016/8/5/%D9%88%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%84-%D8%A5%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%AA%D8%AA%D9%83%D8%AA%D9%85-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D8%B3%D9%82%D9%88%D8%B7-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AF%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%89/2830561>.

<sup>252</sup> France 24, "Egyptian Military 'Kills Leader of Islamic State Group in Sinai,'" (2016), <https://www.france24.com/en/20160804-egypt-military-says-killed-leader-islamic-state-group-sinai>.

<sup>253</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>254</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو أسامة المصري.. المتهم بإسقاط الطائرة الروسية," <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/11/9/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>255</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو أسامة المصري.. المتهم بإسقاط الطائرة الروسية," <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/11/9/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

years of age in 2015.<sup>256</sup> Al-Masri reportedly enrolled in courses at al-Azhar University<sup>257</sup> and worked as a preacher.<sup>258</sup> Al-Masri was also noted to have received military training in Gaza and Syria.<sup>259</sup> Internally, he was the spokesperson for Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis before taking control of the organization.<sup>260</sup> Al-Masri also reportedly traveled to Syria to meet with the Islamic State about allying with the organization.<sup>261</sup> The United States designated al-Masri as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2017.<sup>262</sup> In 2018, Wilayat Sinai announced al-Masri's death in an airstrike.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Mohamed Elshafey, "مصادر بريطانية: أبو أسامة المصري العقل المدبر والمخطط لإسقاط الطائرة"،

<https://aawsat.com/home/article/492896/%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%82%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%B7%D8%B7-%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%B1%D8%A9>.

<sup>257</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو أسامة المصري.. المتهم بإسقاط الطائرة الروسية"،

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/11/9/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>258</sup> Mohamed Elshafey, "مصادر بريطانية: أبو أسامة المصري العقل المدبر والمخطط لإسقاط الطائرة"،

<https://aawsat.com/home/article/492896/%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%82%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%B7%D8%B7-%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%B1%D8%A9>.

<sup>259</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو أسامة المصري.. المتهم بإسقاط الطائرة الروسية"،

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/11/9/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>260</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>261</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>262</sup> Federal Register, "E.O. 13224 Designation of Muhammad Ahmad 'Ali al-Isawi, aka Abu Osama al-Masri, aka Abu Usamah al-Masri as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist," May 26, 2017,

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/05/26/2017-10939/eo-13224-designation-of-muhammad-ahmad-ali-al-isawi-aka-abu-osama-al-masri-aka-abu-usamah-al-masri>.

<sup>263</sup> Mada Masr, "Province of Sinai Video Claims Former Police and Military Personnel among Its Ranks, Confirms Death of Islamic State Sinai Leader," November 17, 2018,

<https://www.madamasr.com/en/2018/11/17/news/u/province-of-sinai-video-claims-former-police-and-military-personnel-among-its-ranks-confirms-death-of-islamic-state-sinai-leader/>.

## Egyptian Islamic Jihad

### *Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj*

Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj was born in the early 1950s in Egypt.<sup>264</sup> Faraj graduated from the College of Engineering at the University of Cairo<sup>265</sup> and worked as an electrical engineer.<sup>266</sup> Faraj also reportedly worked as an imam in the Omar Ibn Abdel Aziz Mosque in his spare time.<sup>267</sup> Faraj is noted to have been a member of the Muslim Brotherhood who formed Egyptian Islamic Jihad in response to the Muslim Brotherhood's pledge of nonviolence in 1979.<sup>268</sup> Faraj was influenced by the writing of ideologues such as Sayyid Qutb and Abu al-Al'a al-Mawdudi.<sup>269</sup> Following the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat, he was arrested and later executed by the Egyptian regime in 1982. Although Faraj had not assassinated al-Sadat, his recently published *The Absent Duty* provided ideological justifications for the utilization of violence to overthrow apostate Muslim rulers.<sup>270</sup>

### *About El-Zomor*

About El-Zomor succeeded Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj as the leader of Egyptian Islamic Jihad following the latter's execution in 1982.<sup>271</sup> El-Zomor was born in the village of Nahya in 1947.<sup>272</sup> After high school, El-Zomor enrolled in the Egyptian Military College in 1965, graduating in 1967.<sup>273</sup> Subsequently, El-Zomor joined the military intelligence and participated in the 1973 October War, rising eventually to the rank of Major.<sup>274</sup> El-Zomor later joined the Egyptian jihadist

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<sup>264</sup> There are disputes surrounding al-Faraj's date of birth, with some sources listing it as 1942, 1952, and 1954. For instance, see Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton University Press, 2009); Hussam Haddad, "محمد عبد السلام فرج.. قاتل"، <https://www.islamist-movements.com/3613>; and Mark Juergensmeyer and Wade Clark Roof, eds. *Encyclopedia of Global Religion* (Sage Publications, 2011).

<sup>265</sup> Hussam Haddad, "محمد عبد السلام فرج.. قاتل بدرجة مفتي"، <https://www.islamist-movements.com/3613>.

<sup>266</sup> Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>267</sup> Hussam Haddad, "محمد عبد السلام فرج.. قاتل بدرجة مفتي"، <https://www.islamist-movements.com/3613>.

<sup>268</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Egyptian Islamic Jihad." <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/371/>.

<sup>269</sup> Hussam Haddad, "محمد عبد السلام فرج.. قاتل بدرجة مفتي"، <https://www.islamist-movements.com/3613>.

<sup>270</sup> Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>271</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Egyptian Islamic Jihad." <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/371/>.

<sup>272</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "عبود الزمر"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/10/2/%D8%B9%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D9%85%D8%B1>.

<sup>273</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "عبود الزمر"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/10/2/%D8%B9%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D9%85%D8%B1>.

<sup>274</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "عبود الزمر"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/10/2/%D8%B9%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B2%D9%85%D8%B1>.

movement and was arrested for his role in the 1981 assassination of Anwar al-Sadat.<sup>275</sup> El-Zomor remained in prison until 2011.<sup>276</sup>

### *Abd al-Qadir Ibn Abd al-Aziz*

Abd al-Qadir Ibn Abd al-Aziz, also known as Sayyid Imam al-Sharif and Dr. Fadl, reportedly became the leader of Egyptian Islamic Jihad during the 1980s.<sup>277</sup> Abd al-Aziz was born in 1950 in the city of Beni Suef in Upper Egypt.<sup>278</sup> He went to a traditional school (*kuttab*) and enrolled as a medical student at Cairo University after high school, graduating in 1974 and joining the surgery department of the Qasr al-‘Ayni Faculty of Medicine.<sup>279</sup> Abd al-Aziz also joined Maadi Group, which was a thirteen-member group created by Ayman al-Zawahiri that is considered to be a precursor to al-Jihad.<sup>280</sup> In 1981, Abd al-Aziz was tried in absentia and acquitted in a trial of Islamist suspects following the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat.<sup>281</sup> He subsequently spent time in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.<sup>282</sup> In 1986, Abd al-Aziz reportedly left Saudi Arabia<sup>283</sup> to offer his medical expertise to the Afghan jihad.<sup>284</sup> In Pakistan, he worked for a Kuwaiti Red Crescent hospital in Peshawar.<sup>285</sup> According to Lawrence Wright, “the jihadis who came to Peshawar revered Fadl for his encyclopedic knowledge of the Koran and the Hadith—the sayings of the Prophet. Usama Ayub, who was in Peshawar at the time, remembered, ‘He would say, Get this book, volume so-and-so, and he would quote it perfectly—without the book in his hand!’”<sup>286</sup>

<sup>275</sup> Mahmoud Sami, “‘بين الإعدام والسجن والمطاردة.. أين من قتلوا السادات’” Al Jazeera Arabic,

<https://www.aljazeera.net/politics/2021/10/5/%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%AC%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%86>.

<sup>276</sup> Dina Samak, “Q&A: About El-Zomor on Sadat, Mubarak and the Future of Egypt,” *Ahram Online*, October 6, 2011. <https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/1/23436/Egypt/QA-About-ElZomor-on-Sadat,-Mubarak-and-the-future-.aspx>.

<sup>277</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Egyptian Islamic Jihad.” <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/371/>.

<sup>278</sup> Khalil Al-Anani, “Jihadi Revisionism: Will It Save the World?” *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* no. 35 (2009).

<sup>279</sup> Khalil Al-Anani, “Jihadi Revisionism: Will It Save the World?” *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* no. 35 (2009).

<sup>280</sup> Khalil Al-Anani, “Jihadi Revisionism: Will It Save the World?” *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* no. 35 (2009).

<sup>281</sup> Human Rights Watch, “The Rendition to Egypt of Sayyid Imam al-Sharif,” (2005), [https://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/egypt0505/10.htm#\\_ftn154](https://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/egypt0505/10.htm#_ftn154).

<sup>282</sup> Human Rights Watch, “The Rendition to Egypt of Sayyid Imam al-Sharif,” (2005), [https://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/egypt0505/10.htm#\\_ftn154](https://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/egypt0505/10.htm#_ftn154).

<sup>283</sup> Al Jarida, “سيد إمام... أخطر الشخصيات في تاريخ حركات العنف الإسلامي أعضاء الجهاد بايعوا د. فضل وهم يظنونهم الظواهرى,” <https://www.aljarida.com/articles/1461158815924505400>.

<sup>284</sup> Khalil Al-Anani, “Jihadi Revisionism: Will It Save the World?” *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* no. 35 (2009).

<sup>285</sup> Tom Kellogg and Hossam el-Hamalawy, “The Rendition to Egypt of Sayyid Imam al-Sharif,” *Human Rights Watch* (May 2005), [https://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/egypt0505/10.htm#\\_ftn154](https://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/egypt0505/10.htm#_ftn154).

<sup>286</sup> Lawrence Wright, “The Rebellion Within,” *The New Yorker*, May 23, 2008.

Although reports differ over the exact year Abd al-Aziz left Egyptian Islamic Jihad,<sup>287</sup> Khalil Al-Anani states: “The initial ideological rupture between him [Abd al-Aziz] and al-Zawahiri occurred in 1993, when al-Sharif left his command of al-Jihad to protest the killings carried out by the group in Egypt.”<sup>288</sup> Abd al-Aziz later went on to publish significant revisionist work criticizing the behavior of jihadists.<sup>289</sup>

### *Ayman al-Zawahiri*

Ayman al-Zawahiri was born in Cairo in 1951.<sup>290</sup> Al-Zawahiri came from a well-respected family that consisted of doctors, politicians, and senior religious figures. For instance, al-Zawahiri’s grandfather was the grand imam of al-Azhar, and one of his uncles was the first secretary-general of the Arab League.<sup>291</sup> Al-Zawahiri graduated from Cairo University’s medical school.<sup>292</sup> He also obtained a master’s degree in general surgery<sup>293</sup> and later earned a PhD in Pakistan.<sup>294</sup> Al-Zawahiri was engaged in militant activities in his youth. As a teenager, he was reportedly arrested for joining the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>295</sup> Al-Zawahiri stated that the execution of Sayyid Qutb and the crackdown by Gamal Abdel Nasser’s regime were “the first spark to ignite the jihadi movement in Egypt against the government.”<sup>296</sup> Supporting his militant efforts, al-Zawahiri reportedly formed the Maadi group, which was “considered to be the first kernel of al-Jihad.”<sup>297</sup> In 1981, al-Zawahiri was arrested and remained in prison until 1984<sup>298</sup> or 1985.<sup>299</sup> “The prison years left deep scars on Zawahiri and changed him forever...In their attempt to make sense of Zawahiri’s subsequent descent into confrontation with the Egyptian regime, his former associates say that ultimately the

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<sup>287</sup> The Mackenzie Institute, “Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ),” <https://mackenzieinstitute.com/terrorism-profile-egyptian-islamic-jihad-eij/>.

<sup>288</sup> Khalil Al-Anani, “Jihadi Revisionism: Will It Save the World?” *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* no. 35 (2009), 3.

<sup>289</sup> Khalil Al-Anani, “Jihadi Revisionism: Will It Save the World?” *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* no. 35 (2009).

<sup>290</sup> BBC, “Ayman al-Zawahiri: Who Was al-Qaeda Leader Kill by US?” August 2, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13789286>.

<sup>291</sup> BBC, “Ayman al-Zawahiri: Who Was al-Qaeda Leader Kill by US?” August 2, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13789286>.

<sup>292</sup> BBC, “Ayman al-Zawahiri: Who Was al-Qaeda Leader Kill by US?” August 2, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13789286>.

<sup>293</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “أيمن الظواهري.. الطبيب المصري الذي خلف بن لادن في زعامة القاعدة واغتالته واشنطن,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/4/20/%D8%A3%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B8%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>294</sup> Donald Holbrook (ed.), *Al-Qaeda 2.0: A Critical Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>295</sup> Al Jazeera, “Who Was al-Qaeda’s Leader Ayman al-Zawahiri,” August 2, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/2/al-zawahiri-from-cairo-doctor-to-al-qaeda-leader>.

<sup>296</sup> Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 91.

<sup>297</sup> Khalil Al-Anani, “Jihadi Revisionism: Will It Save the World?” *Crown Center for Middle East Studies* no. 35 (2009), 3.

<sup>298</sup> Donald Holbrook (ed.), *Al-Qaeda 2.0: A Critical Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>299</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “أيمن الظواهري.. الطبيب المصري الذي خلف بن لادن في زعامة القاعدة واغتالته واشنطن,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/4/20/%D8%A3%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B8%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

prison experience, particularly the abuse and torture, had a lasting effect on his future conduct.”<sup>300</sup> After his release, al-Zawahiri traveled to Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and also spent time in Sudan and Afghanistan.<sup>301</sup> Al-Zawahiri eventually took control of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and led the organization as it grew increasingly closer to al-Qaida. In early 2001, al-Zawahiri formally merged his group with Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida,<sup>302</sup> as the “merger formally sealed a well-cemented alliance.”<sup>303</sup> Al-Zawahiri was sanctioned by the United States under Executive Order 13224 on September 23, 2001.<sup>304</sup>

## India

### Hizb-ul Mujahideen

#### *Muhammad Ahsan Dar*

Muhammad Ahsan Dar was born in India during the early 1950s.<sup>305</sup> Dar was a former Jamaat schoolteacher<sup>306</sup> before reportedly turning to militancy in the mid-1980s and joining Ansur-ul-Islam.<sup>307</sup> He was arrested by Indian authorities in 1988 but escaped after eight months of incarceration. Hizb-ul Mujahideen was established in the Kashmir Valley in 1989, with Dar serving as its founding leader.<sup>308</sup> In 1991, Dar was expelled from the organization “in favor of imposing the command of a JI-dominated shura council.”<sup>309</sup>

#### *Syed Salahuddin*

Syed Salahuddin, also known as Muhammad Yusuf Shah, was born in 1946 in Jammu and Kashmir, India.<sup>310</sup> Salahuddin graduated from SP College in Srinagar and subsequently attained a

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<sup>300</sup> Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 93.

<sup>301</sup> Donald Holbrook (ed.), *Al-Qaeda 2.0: A Critical Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>302</sup> Donald Holbrook (ed.), *Al-Qaeda 2.0: A Critical Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>303</sup> Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 142.

<sup>304</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Executive Order 13224,” <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>.

<sup>305</sup> We estimated Dar’s birth year as 1952 as a new article published in December 2012 stated that he was sixty years old. Kashmir Times (India), “From Guns to Peaceful Resistance,” December 26, 2012.

<sup>306</sup> Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018).

<sup>307</sup> Yelena Biberman, *Gambling with Violence: State Outsourcing of War in Pakistan and India* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>308</sup> Surinder Kumar Sharma and Anshuman Behera, *Militant Groups in South Asia* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2014); South Asia Terrorism Portal, “Hizb-ul-Mujahideen,”

[https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/terrorist\\_outfits/hizbul\\_mujahideen.htm](https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/terrorist_outfits/hizbul_mujahideen.htm).

<sup>309</sup> Paul Staniland, “Organizing Insurgency: Networks: Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia,” *International Security*, 37, no. 1 (2012), 167.

<sup>310</sup> Animesh Roul, “Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad,” *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

master's degree in political science from the Kashmir University in 1971.<sup>311</sup> Salahuddin worked as a teacher and preacher and was an active member of Jamaat-e-Islami.<sup>312</sup> Salahuddin's "knowledge of Islamic religious scriptures and command of English, Urdu and various local languages earned him much popularity among college and university students."<sup>313</sup> Salahuddin lost his election bid as a candidate for the Muslim United Front in assembly elections in Kashmir 1987.<sup>314</sup> He reportedly became "more disgruntled and radical" and was jailed for anti-India activities and hate speeches.<sup>315</sup> In 1991, Salahuddin traveled to Afghanistan to make arrangements to train Kashmiri fighters.<sup>316</sup> In Afghanistan, Salahuddin met with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who reportedly advised Salahuddin "to eliminate all of Hizbul Mujahideen's rivals."<sup>317</sup> Salahuddin became the second leader of Hizb-ul Mujahideen in 1991.<sup>318</sup> Salahuddin's time in Afghanistan was critical to subsequent actions: "His training in Afghanistan and Pakistan and knowledge of the local geography helped him immensely in many attacks on communication networks and bridges as well as ambushes on Indian security force convoys in Kashmir."<sup>319</sup> The United States designated Salahuddin as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in June 2017, coinciding with a visit by Indian Prime Minister Modi to Washington;<sup>320</sup> Hizb-ul Mujahideen was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in August 2017.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Abhishek Saha, "Syed Salahuddin: From Political Science Student in Kashmir to 'Global Terrorist,'" *Hindustan Times*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/syed-salahuddin-kashmiri-islamic-preacher-to-global-terrorist/story-IJuoHxTv5Tvd1SKpeIJDeP.html>.

<sup>312</sup> Abhishek Saha, "Syed Salahuddin: From Political Science Student in Kashmir to 'Global Terrorist,'" *Hindustan Times*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/syed-salahuddin-kashmiri-islamic-preacher-to-global-terrorist/story-IJuoHxTv5Tvd1SKpeIJDeP.html>; The Indian Express, "Syed Salahuddin: Teacher to Terror Commander," June 28, 2017, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/salahuddin-teacher-to-terror-commander-4725290/>.

<sup>313</sup> Animesh Roul, "Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad," *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>314</sup> Aijaz Hussain, "AP Explains: Who is Salahuddin, Rebel Named Terrorist by US?" *Associated Press*, June 27, 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/35475eceb25e40a3b08f61bcaf530536>.

<sup>315</sup> Animesh Roul, "Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad," *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>316</sup> Arif Jamal, *Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir* (New York: Melville House, 2009).

<sup>317</sup> Arif Jamal, *Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir* (New York: Melville House, 2009).

<sup>318</sup> Abhishek Saha, "Syed Salahuddin: From Political Science Student in Kashmir to 'Global Terrorist,'" *Hindustan Times*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/syed-salahuddin-kashmiri-islamic-preacher-to-global-terrorist/story-IJuoHxTv5Tvd1SKpeIJDeP.html>; Aijaz Hussain, "AP Explains: Who is Salahuddin, Rebel Named Terrorist by US?" *Associated Press*, June 27, 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/35475eceb25e40a3b08f61bcaf530536>.

<sup>319</sup> Animesh Roul, "Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad," *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>320</sup> Aijaz Hussain, "AP Explains: Who is Salahuddin, Rebel Named Terrorist by US?" *Associated Press*, June 27, 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/35475eceb25e40a3b08f61bcaf530536>.

<sup>321</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

## Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)

### *Masood Azhar*

Masood Azhar was born in July 1968 in Pakistan's Punjab Province.<sup>322</sup> Azhar received his education at Jamia Uloom-i-Islami, a prominent religious university in Pakistan.<sup>323</sup> Despite reportedly failing to complete his 40-day military training in Afghanistan due to physical weakness, Azhar joined the war against the USSR.<sup>324</sup> After suffering injuries, he began editing Urdu and Arabic jihadist magazines.<sup>325</sup> Azhar reportedly taught classes and worked as a preacher,<sup>326</sup> giving sermons as far as the United Kingdom during the 1990s.<sup>327</sup> He also traveled across multiple regions on recruitment and fund-raising missions.<sup>328</sup> Due to his growing prominence, he assumed a high-ranking position in Harkat ul-Ansar, which was led by Maulana Saadatullah Khan. In 1994, Indian authorities arrested Azhar for being a member of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.<sup>329</sup> Azhar was eventually released in 1999 in exchange for 155 individuals being held hostage on an Indian Airlines flight that was hijacked to Afghanistan.<sup>330</sup> After being released from prison, Azhar created Jaish-e-Mohammad in 2000.<sup>331</sup> Azhar was held under house arrest in 2002 but was released after the Lahore High Court stated there were insufficient grounds to keep him detained.<sup>332</sup> The United States designated Jaish-e-Mohammad as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2001 and Azhar as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2010.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Targets Pakistan-Based Terrorist Organizations Lashkar-E Tayyiba and Jaish-E Mohammed," November 4, 2010, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg944>.

<sup>323</sup> Hindustan Times, "A Profile of Maulana Masood Azhar," December 9, 2008, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/a-profile-of-maulana-masood-azhar/story-SgfdaU2uSP7iOi6GH0UGqM.html>.

<sup>324</sup> Kashmir Herald, "Maulana Masood Azhar," (January 2002), <https://web.archive.org/web/20081211065030/http://www.kashmirherald.com/profiles/masoodazhar.html>.

<sup>325</sup> Kashmir Herald, "Maulana Masood Azhar," (January 2002), <https://web.archive.org/web/20081211065030/http://www.kashmirherald.com/profiles/masoodazhar.html>.

<sup>326</sup> Hindustan Times, "A Profile of Maulana Masood Azhar," December 9, 2008, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/a-profile-of-maulana-masood-azhar/story-SgfdaU2uSP7iOi6GH0UGqM.html>.

<sup>327</sup> BBC, "Masood Azhar: The Man Who Brought Jihad to Britain," April 5, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35959202>.

<sup>328</sup> Kashmir Herald, "Maulana Masood Azhar," (January 2002), <https://web.archive.org/web/20081211065030/http://www.kashmirherald.com/profiles/masoodazhar.html>.

<sup>329</sup> Hindustan Times, "A Profile of Maulana Masood Azhar," December 9, 2008, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/a-profile-of-maulana-masood-azhar/story-SgfdaU2uSP7iOi6GH0UGqM.html>.

<sup>330</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Mohammed Masood Azhar Alvi," <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/mohammed-masood-azhar-alvi>.

<sup>331</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jaish-e-Mohammad." Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/411/>.

<sup>332</sup> BBC, "Indian Fury over Freed Militant," December 14, 2002, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/2575199.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2575199.stm).

<sup>333</sup> U.S. Department of State, "United Nations 1267 Sanctions Committee Designation of Masood Azhar," May 1, 2019, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/united-nations-1267-sanctions-committee-designation-of-masood-azhar/>.

## Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)

### *Hafiz Muhammad Saeed*

Hafiz Muhammad Saeed was born in 1950 to a Punjabi family in Sargodha, Pakistan.<sup>334</sup> Saeed pursued graduate education at Lahore University and also studied at King Saud University in Riyadh.<sup>335</sup> He also reportedly taught in higher education and received an appointment to Lahore's University of Engineering and Technology.<sup>336</sup> Saeed traveled to Afghanistan in the late 1970s or early 1980s to receive military training<sup>337</sup> and became close contacts with Abdullah Azzam and Osama bin Laden.<sup>338</sup> Saeed formed Lashkar-e-Taiba in 1990, with the organization being linked to numerous militant operations, such as the 2008 Mumbai attacks.<sup>339</sup> Over recent decades, Pakistani authorities arrested Saeed on multiple occasions; Saeed was eventually convicted in 2020 and 2022 on charges of terrorism financing.<sup>340</sup> The United States designated Lashkar-e-Taiba as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2001<sup>341</sup> and Saeed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2008.<sup>342</sup>

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<sup>334</sup> The Times of India, "Who is Hafiz Saeed?" April 4, 2012,

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/Who-is-Hafiz-Saeed/articleshow/12529918.cms>.

<sup>335</sup> Suhasini Haidar, "Hafiz Saeed: The 'Professor' Who Runs Terrorist Networks," November 29, 2020,

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/hafiz-saeed-the-professor-who-runs-terrorist-networks/article33201614.ece>.

<sup>336</sup> Praveen Swami, "Pakistan and the Lashkar's Jihad in India," *The Hindu*, December 9, 2008,

<https://web.archive.org/web/20081212111914/http://www.hindu.com/2008/12/09/stories/2008120955670800.htm>.

<sup>337</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Hafiz Muhammad Saeed," December 19, 2023,

[https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/hafiz-muhammad-saeed](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/hafiz-muhammad-saeed).

<sup>338</sup> Bruce Riedel, Hafiz Saeed, Pakistani Extremist with a \$10 Million Price on his Head, Is al Qaeda's Ally," *Brookings*, April 3, 2012.

<sup>339</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Lashkar-e-Taiba." Last modified November 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/440/>.

<sup>340</sup> Al Jazeera, "Pakistan: Hafiz Saeed Gets 31 Years in Jail for Terror Financing," April 9, 2022,

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/9/pakistan-hafiz-saeed-gets-31-years-in-jail-for-terror-financing>.

<sup>341</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>342</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Hafiz Saeed," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/hafiz-saeed/>.

# Indonesia

## Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI)

### *Habib Rizieq Shihab*

Habib Rizieq Shihab was born in 1965 in Jakarta.<sup>343</sup> He studied at the Saudi-funded Institute for the Study of Islam and Arabic in Jakarta, where he was exposed to “true Islamic teachings.”<sup>344</sup> Shihab subsequently earned a scholarship to continue his religious studies at King Saud University in Saudi Arabia.<sup>345</sup> He later reportedly pursued doctoral studies at the Islamic University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.<sup>346</sup> During the 1990s, he was the principal of the Aliyah Jam’iat Kheir Madrasah and taught in the fields of jurisprudence and inheritance.<sup>347</sup> After the fall of the Suharto regime, Shihab founded the Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI) in 1998.<sup>348</sup> In 2002, Shihab was arrested and sentenced to seven months in jail; he was also re-arrested in April 2003 and released again in 2003.<sup>349</sup> He was arrested again in 2020 for holding large public gatherings during pandemic lockdowns.<sup>350</sup>

## Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD)

### *Aman Abdurrahman*

Aman Abdurrahman, also known as Oman Rochman, was born in January 1972 in West Java.<sup>351</sup> After elementary school, Abdurrahman enrolled in Islamic *pesantren* boarding schools in Sumedang, West Java.<sup>352</sup> He also graduated from the Arabic-language Institute for the Study of

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<sup>343</sup> Siti Chuzaemah, JM. Muslimin, and Hamka Hasan, “The Concept of *Nahy Munkar* and *Islam*; Study on Habib Rizieq’s Legal Thought,” *International Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies* (2019).

<sup>344</sup> Ihsan Yilmaz and Greg Barton, “Populism, Violence, and Vigilantism in Indonesia: Rizieq Shihab and His Far-Right Islamist Populism,” *European Center for Populism Studies* (2021), 7.

<sup>345</sup> Ihsan Yilmaz and Greg Barton, “Populism, Violence, and Vigilantism in Indonesia: Rizieq Shihab and His Far-Right Islamist Populism,” *European Center for Populism Studies* (2021).

<sup>346</sup> Siti Chuzaemah, JM. Muslimin, and Hamka Hasan, “The Concept of *Nahy Munkar* and *Islam*; Study on Habib Rizieq’s Legal Thought,” *International Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies* (2019).

<sup>347</sup> Siti Chuzaemah, JM. Muslimin, and Hamka Hasan, “The Concept of *Nahy Munkar* and *Islam*; Study on Habib Rizieq’s Legal Thought,” *International Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies* (2019).

<sup>348</sup> Ihsan Yilmaz and Greg Barton, “Populism, Violence, and Vigilantism in Indonesia: Rizieq Shihab and His Far-Right Islamist Populism,” *European Center for Populism Studies* (2021).

<sup>349</sup> Chaider S. Bamualim, “Islamic Militancy and Resentment Against Hadhramis in Post-Suharto Indonesia: A Case Study of Habib Rizieq Syihab and His Islamic Defenders Front,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 31, no. 2 (2011): 267-281.

<sup>350</sup> Ihsan Yilmaz and Greg Barton, “Populism, Violence, and Vigilantism in Indonesia: Rizieq Shihab and His Far-Right Islamist Populism,” *European Center for Populism Studies* (2021).

<sup>351</sup> Kumar Ramakrishna, *Extremist Islam: Recognition and Response in Southeast Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

<sup>352</sup> Kumar Ramakrishna, *Extremist Islam: Recognition and Response in Southeast Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

Islam and Arabic in Jakarta, which was set up via Saudi funding and served as a branch of the Imam Muhammad bin Saud University in Riyadh.<sup>353</sup> After graduation, Abdurrahman was appointed as an imam and taught religious classes in Jakarta.<sup>354</sup> In 2004, Abdurrahman was arrested for arranging a bomb-making class.<sup>355</sup> This time in prison marked a critical juncture: “Imprisonment was a turning point, transforming Abdurrahman from an unknown jihadist cell leader to the most sought after jihadist intellectual in the country.”<sup>356</sup> Following his release in 2008, he briefly joined Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid, but was viewed as a *takfiri* by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir.<sup>357</sup> Abdurrahman was re-arrested in 2010 and sentenced to nine years in prison for setting up a training camp in Aceh.<sup>358</sup> In 2014, Abdurrahman reportedly pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State.<sup>359</sup> Under Abdurrahman’s leadership, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah was established in 2015 as an umbrella organization for numerous pro-Islamic State organizations in Indonesia.<sup>360</sup>

## Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT)

### *Abu Bakar Ba’asyir*

Ba’asyir was born in East Java in August 1938.<sup>361</sup> In a similar fashion to Abdullah Sungkar, Ba’asyir’s family was of Yemeni/Hadramauti descent.<sup>362</sup> Ba’asyir received religious education at an early age and continued his studies at al-Irsyad Islamic University in Surakarta, graduating in 1963.<sup>363</sup> Alongside Abdullah Sungkar, Ba’asyir created a religious seminary (*pesantren*) in Ngruki and was an active supporter of the Darul Islam movement.<sup>364</sup> In 1978, Ba’asyir was arrested and remained in prison until 1982.<sup>365</sup> Reports indicate that “it was in prison that Baasyir and Sungkar

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<sup>353</sup> Kumar Ramakrishna, *Extremist Islam: Recognition and Response in Southeast Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

<sup>354</sup> Navhat Nuraniyah, “Aman Abdurrahman: Indonesia's Most Influential Extremist,” *Jamestown Foundation* 6, no. 12 (2015).

<sup>355</sup> Sidney Jones, “The Ongoing Extremist Threat in Indonesia,” *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2011): 91-104.

<sup>356</sup> Navhat Nuraniyah, “Aman Abdurrahman: Indonesia's Most Influential Extremist,” *Jamestown Foundation* 6, no. 12 (2015).

<sup>357</sup> Sidney Jones, “The Ongoing Extremist Threat in Indonesia,” *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2011): 91-104.

<sup>358</sup> Kumar Ramakrishna, *Extremist Islam: Recognition and Response in Southeast Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

<sup>359</sup> Navhat Nuraniyah, “Aman Abdurrahman: Indonesia's Most Influential Extremist,” *Jamestown Foundation* 6, no. 12 (2015).

<sup>360</sup> United Nations Security Council, “Jamaah Ansharut Daulah,” March 4, 2020, <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/jamaah-ansharut-daulah>.

<sup>361</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>362</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>363</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>364</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>365</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, “Jemaah Islamiyah,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

grew even more radical in their thinking and ambitions.”<sup>366</sup> After being released, Ba’asyir traveled with Sungkar to Malaysia to avoid future arrests in Indonesia.<sup>367</sup> Ba’asyir helped co-found Jemaah Islamiya while in exile.<sup>368</sup> The fall of President Suharto’s regime in 1998 allowed Sungkar and Ba’asyir to return to Indonesia.<sup>369</sup> However, Sungkar’s death in 1999 left Jemaah Islamiya “in the hands of Ba’asyir, whom many saw as a weak leader.”<sup>370</sup> Ba’asyir reportedly served as Jemaah Islamiya’s leader until his arrest in 2002<sup>371</sup> due to his connections to the 2002 Bali bombings.<sup>372</sup> In 2006, Ba’asyir was released from prison and reportedly formed Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid in 2008.<sup>373</sup> Ba’asyir was arrested again in 2010 over his connection to a militant training camp in Aceh and was sentenced to 15 years in prison.<sup>374</sup> Two years later, the United States designated Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.<sup>375</sup> According to the United Nations Security Council, Ba’asyir pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State.<sup>376</sup>

## Jemaah Islamiya

### *Abdullah Sungkar*

Abdullah Sungkar was born in 1937 to a prominent family of traders of Yemeni descent in Solo.<sup>377</sup> Sungkar received early religious education from his father, a religious teacher in Solo, and later

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<sup>366</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007), 3.

<sup>367</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, “Jemaah Islamiyah,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

<sup>368</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>369</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihad in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 1 (2019): 1-13.

<sup>370</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, “Jemaah Islamiyah,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011), 3.

<sup>371</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>372</sup> Al Jazeera, “Indonesian Leader Behind 2002 Bali Bombings to be Freed: Lawyer,” January 18, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/1/18/indonesian-leader-behind-2002-bali-bombings-to-be-freed-lawyer>.

<sup>373</sup> BBC, “Abu Bakar Ba’asyir: The Radical Indonesian Cleric Linked to Bali Bombings,” January 8, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-10912588#:~:text=Following%20the%20Bali%20bombings%20in,Megawati%20Sukarnoputri%2C%20Indonesia's%20former%20president>.

<sup>374</sup> BBC, “Abu Bakar Ba’asyir: The Radical Indonesian Cleric Linked to Bali Bombings,” January 8, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-10912588#:~:text=Following%20the%20Bali%20bombings%20in,Megawati%20Sukarnoputri%2C%20Indonesia's%20former%20president>.

<sup>375</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>376</sup> United Nations Security Council, “Abu Bakar Ba’asyir,” April 6, 2021, [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/faq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abu-bakar-ba%27asyir](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/faq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abu-bakar-ba%27asyir).

<sup>377</sup> International Crisis Group, “Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operations,” December 11, 2002.

graduated from the Muhamadiyah Islamic University of Surakarta in 1957.<sup>378</sup> After graduating, Sungkar reportedly worked as a religious teacher and preacher and also became increasingly active in politics.<sup>379</sup> Sungkar was briefly detained in 1977 and was arrested again in 1978 on subversion charges for his alleged involvement in Darul Islam.<sup>380</sup> Sungkar was released from prison in 1982 and fled to Malaysia with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in 1985.<sup>381</sup> In Malaysia, Sungkar and Ba'asyir set up a religious school called Pondok Pesantren Lukmantul Hakiem.<sup>382</sup> This time in Malaysia witnessed the growth of their militant activities: "In exile, they expanded their network and began sending men to wage guerrilla war against the Soviet army in Afghanistan... Those who traveled to the training camps of Pakistan and the battlefields of Afghanistan gained important military skills, including instruction on explosives, mines, maps, and infantry tactics. The men were also exposed to new ideologies through their contact with Abdullah Azzam, the man most responsible for catalyzing the foreign fighter migration to Afghanistan."<sup>383</sup> During the 1990s, Sungkar and Ba'asyir co-founded Jemaah Islamiya, with Sungkar serving as the organization's top leader.<sup>384</sup> The fall of President Suharto's regime in 1998 allowed Sungkar to return to Indonesia.<sup>385</sup> Shortly after this return, however, Sungkar died of natural causes in 1999.<sup>386</sup>

### *Abu Bakar Ba'asyir*

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir succeeded Abdullah Sungkar as leader of Jemaah Islamiya.<sup>387</sup> Ba'asyir was born in East Java in August 1938.<sup>388</sup> In a similar fashion to Abdullah Sungkar, Ba'asyir's family was of Yemeni/Hadramauti descent.<sup>389</sup> Ba'asyir received religious education at an early age and

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<sup>378</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>379</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>380</sup> International Crisis Group, "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operations," December 11, 2002.

<sup>381</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>382</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>383</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, "Jemaah Islamiyah," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011), 2-3.

<sup>384</sup> The International Crisis Groups dates Jemaah Islamiya's formation to 1995. International Crisis Group, "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operations," December 11, 2002.

<sup>385</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, "Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihad in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 1 (2019): 1-13.

<sup>386</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>387</sup> Scott Atran, "The Emir: An Interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Alleged Leader of the Southeast Asian Jemaah Islamiyah Organization," December 16, 2005; David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, "Jemaah Islamiyah," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

<sup>388</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>389</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

continued his studies at al-Irsyad Islamic University in Surakarta, graduating in 1963.<sup>390</sup> Alongside Abdullah Sungkar, Ba'asyir created a religious seminary (*pesantren*) in Ngruki and was an active supporter of the Darul Islam movement.<sup>391</sup> In 1978, Ba'asyir was arrested and remained in prison until 1982.<sup>392</sup> Reports indicate that “it was in prison that Baasyir and Sungkar grew even more radical in their thinking and ambitions.”<sup>393</sup> After being released, Ba'asyir traveled with Sungkar to Malaysia to avoid future arrests in Indonesia.<sup>394</sup> Ba'asyir helped co-found Jemaah Islamiya while in exile.<sup>395</sup> The fall of President Suharto's regime in 1998 allowed Sungkar and Ba'asyir to return to Indonesia.<sup>396</sup> However, Sungkar's death in 1999 left Jemaah Islamiya “in the hands of Ba'asyir, whom many saw as a weak leader.”<sup>397</sup> Ba'asyir reportedly served as Jemaah Islamiya's leader until his arrest in 2002<sup>398</sup> due to his connections to the 2002 Bali bombings.<sup>399</sup> The United States designated Jemaah Islamiya as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2002.<sup>400</sup>

### *Abu Rusydan*

Abu Rusydan, also known as Thoriquddin, succeeded Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as leader of Jemaah Islamiya. Abu Rusydan was born in 1960 in Central Java, Indonesia.<sup>401</sup> He was reportedly inducted into the Darul Islam organization at 15 years of age<sup>402</sup> and was university-educated.<sup>403</sup> Abu Rusydan is also thought to have fought in Afghanistan.<sup>404</sup> According to the United Nations Security Council, Abu Rusydan traveled to Afghanistan for paramilitary training in 1986 and stayed until 1989.<sup>405</sup> As stated by the United Nations Security Council, Abu Rusydan became emir

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<sup>390</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>391</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>392</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, “Jemaah Islamiyah,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

<sup>393</sup> Farish A. Noor, “Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta,” No. 139 (October 2007), 3.

<sup>394</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, “Jemaah Islamiyah,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

<sup>395</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>396</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihad in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 1 (2019): 1-13.

<sup>397</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, “Jemaah Islamiyah,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011), 3.

<sup>398</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>399</sup> Al Jazeera, “Indonesian Leader Behind 2002 Bali Bombings to be Freed: Lawyer,” January 18, 2019,

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/1/18/indonesian-leader-behind-2002-bali-bombings-to-be-freed-lawyer>.

<sup>400</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>401</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury Designates Jemaah Islamiyah's Emir, Top Bomb Maker and Military Comma,” May 12, 2005, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js2441>.

<sup>402</sup> Julie Chernov Hwang and Kirsten E. Schulze, “Why They Join: Pathways into Indonesia Jihadist Organizations,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 30, no. 6 (2018): 911-932.

<sup>403</sup> Sian Powell, “New JI Terror Boss Tagged as ‘Very Dangerous,’” *The Australian* (2003).

<sup>404</sup> Julie Chernov Hwang and Kirsten E. Schulze, “Why They Join: Pathways into Indonesia Jihadist Organizations,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 30, no. 6 (2018): 911-932.

<sup>405</sup> United Nations Security Council, “Abu Rusdan,” February 2, 2023,

[https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan).

of Jemaah Islamiya after Ba'asyir's 2002 arrest.<sup>406</sup> In 2003, he was arrested in Indonesia on charges of harboring one of the masterminds of the 2002 Bali bombings and sentenced in February 2004 to three and a half years in prison.<sup>407</sup> Muhammad Naim reportedly took over the position of “caretaker” emir in 2004.<sup>408</sup>

### *Zarkasih*

Zarkasih, also known as Muhammad Naim, succeeded Abu Rusdyan as Jemaah Islamiya's leader.<sup>409</sup> Naim was reportedly born in December 1962.<sup>410</sup> While little information is available about his life, Naim is believed to have joined the mujahideen in Afghanistan.<sup>411</sup> Naim reportedly served as Jemaah Islamiya's “caretaker” emir until his arrest in Indonesia in 2007.<sup>412</sup>

### *Para Wijayanto*

Para Wijayanto reportedly succeeded Zarkasih as leader of Jemaah Islamiya.<sup>413</sup> Wijayanto was born in August 1964 and is the son of an Indonesian Air Force officer.<sup>414</sup> Wijayanto studied at the Faculty of Technology at Diponegoro University in Central Java and subsequently worked in the civil engineering division of the PT Pura Group.<sup>415</sup> Sources highlight that Wijayanto may have studied in Malaysia as well as traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>416</sup> In 2019, Indonesian authorities arrested Wijayanto in Bekasi, Indonesia.<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> United Nations Security Council, “Abu Rusdan,” February 2, 2023, [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan).

<sup>407</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>408</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>409</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>410</sup> Detik News, “Sidang Perdana Tersangka Teroris Zarkasih Digelar,” <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-867868/sidang-perdana-tersangka-teroris-zarkasih-digelar>.

<sup>411</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7140846.stm>.

<sup>412</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>413</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>414</sup> BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, “Indonesian Website Provides Info on Jemaah Islamiyah's Para Wijayanto,” September 3, 2009.

<sup>415</sup> BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, “Indonesian Website Provides Info on Jemaah Islamiyah's Para Wijayanto,” September 3, 2009.

<sup>416</sup> BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, “Indonesian Website Provides Info on Jemaah Islamiyah's Para Wijayanto,” September 3, 2009.

<sup>417</sup> ABC News, “Indonesia Arrests Alleged Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Leader Para Wijayanto,” July 1, 2019, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-02/indonesian-police-arrest-jemaah-islamiyah-network-leader/11269286>.

## Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia

### *Zainon Ismail*

Zainon Ismail was the founding leader of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia upon the organization's formation in October 1995.<sup>418</sup> Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia emerged from Halaqa Pakinda and had links to the Malaysian Islamist party Parti Islam Se-Malaysia.<sup>419</sup> The organization was established to “seek religious purity among Malay-Muslims” and implement “*syariah* laws in Malaysia and subsequently to establish an Islamic state.”<sup>420</sup> Ismail is noted to be a Malaysian from the state of Kedah who fought against the USSR in Afghanistan.<sup>421</sup> Ismail was reportedly replaced as leader of the group by Nik Adli Abdul Aziz in 1999 following internal organizational deliberations.<sup>422</sup>

### *Nik Adli Abdul Aziz*

Nik Adli Abdul Aziz reportedly assumed control of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia in 1999.<sup>423</sup> Abdul Aziz was born in the late 1960s<sup>424</sup> and was the son of Nik Aziz Nik Mat, the spiritual leader of Parti Islam Se-Malaysia.<sup>425</sup> Abdul Aziz received madrasa education in Pakistan and also fought against the USSR in Afghanistan.<sup>426</sup> In terms of employment, he was noted to be “a religious

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<sup>418</sup> Amira Jadoon, Nakissa Jahanbani, Elina Noor, Marley Carroll, and William Frangia, “Risks, Recruits, and Plots: Understanding and Mitigating the Influence of the Islamic State in Malaysia,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2022).

<sup>419</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

<sup>420</sup> Amira Jadoon, Nakissa Jahanbani, Elina Noor, Marley Carroll, and William Frangia, “Risks, Recruits, and Plots: Understanding and Mitigating the Influence of the Islamic State in Malaysia,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2022), 10.

<sup>421</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009).

<sup>422</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

<sup>423</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

<sup>424</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Son of Opposition Leader is Arrested in Sweep,” August 5, 2001, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-aug-05-mn-30840-story.html>.

<sup>425</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

<sup>426</sup> Therese Lee, “Malaysia and the International Security Act: The Insecurity of Human Rights After September 11,” *Singapore Journal of Legal Studies* (2002: 56-72).

teacher.”<sup>427</sup> In 2001, Malaysian authorities arrested Abdul Aziz and other suspected militants on the basis of the Internal Security Act that allowed for detention without trial.<sup>428</sup>

### *Zulkifli Abdhir*

Zulkifli Abdhir was born in January 1996 in Muar, Johor, Malaysia.<sup>429</sup> Zulkifli completed his secondary education in 1983 and subsequently secured a Malaysian government scholarship to study engineering in the United States.<sup>430</sup> Zulkifli gained expertise in explosives while fighting in Afghanistan for three years before returning to Malaysia.<sup>431</sup> In 2007, the United States designated Zulkifli as a Specifically Designated Global Terrorist.<sup>432</sup> Zulkifli reportedly succeeded Nik Adli Abdul Aziz as the leader of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia following the latter’s arrest.<sup>433</sup> In 2015, Zulkifli was killed during an assault by the Special Action Forces in the Philippines.<sup>434</sup>

## Mujahidin Indonesia Timur

### *Santoso*

Santoso, Abu Wardah, was born in August 1976<sup>435</sup> in central Sulawesi.<sup>436</sup> While little is known about Santoso’s childhood, reports indicate that he only completed junior high school.<sup>437</sup> Santoso is also noted to have received military training in Afghanistan and styled himself as the Indonesian Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi.<sup>438</sup> In the late 1990s, Santoso was reportedly detained by police following

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<sup>427</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Son of Opposition Leader is Arrested in Sweep,” August 5, 2001, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-aug-05-mn-30840-story.html>.

<sup>428</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Son of Opposition Leader is Arrested in Sweep,” August 5, 2001, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-aug-05-mn-30840-story.html>.

<sup>429</sup> Zachary Abuza, “Zulkifli bin Hir: JI’s U.S.-Trained Engineer,” *Jamestown Monitor*, April 5, 2007.

<sup>430</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009). Within this volume, see Ronan Gunaratna, “The Current and Emerging Extremist Threat in Malaysia,” (2009): 12-29.

<sup>431</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009).

<sup>432</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, “Specially Designated Global Terrorist and His Brother Indicted for Providing Material Support to Terrorists,” August 3, 2007, [https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2007/August/07\\_nsd\\_578.html](https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2007/August/07_nsd_578.html).

<sup>433</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009).

<sup>434</sup> Tim Hume, “FBI Confirms ‘Most Wanted’ Terror Suspect Marwan Killed after Philippines Raid,” *CNN*, April 3, 2015, <https://www.cnn.com/2015/04/03/world/philippines-marwan-confirmed-dead/index.html>.

<sup>435</sup> Herdi Sahrasad dan Al Chaidar, “Terorisme, Akhir Sejarah Santoso Dan Masa Depan Teror Di Indonesia,” *Jurnal Review Politik* 6, no. 2 (2016).

<sup>436</sup> Robi Sugara, “Santoso: The Terrorist Leader from Nowhere,” *Counter Terrorist Rends and Analyses* 6, no. 10 (2014): 23-26.

<sup>437</sup> Robi Sugara, “Santoso: The Terrorist Leader from Nowhere,” *Counter Terrorist Rends and Analyses* 6, no. 10 (2014): 23-26.

<sup>438</sup> Robi Sugara, “Santoso: The Terrorist Leader from Nowhere,” *Counter Terrorist Rends and Analyses* 6, no. 10 (2014): 23-26.

a robbery.<sup>439</sup> Santoso also engaged in rebel activity while being part of Jemaah Islamiyah and Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid.<sup>440</sup> Mujahidin Indonesia Timur was created under Santoso's command in 2012.<sup>441</sup> Two years later, Santoso became the first Indonesian leader to publicly pledge fealty to the Islamic State in 2014.<sup>442</sup> In July 2016, Indonesian authorities killed Santoso during a jungle gun battle.<sup>443</sup>

### *Ali Kalora*

Ali Kalora succeeded Santoso as leader of Mujahidin Indonesia Timur.<sup>444</sup> While little information is available regarding his background, Kalora was born in May 1981 in the Central Sulawesi province of Indonesia.<sup>445</sup> After assuming command of Mujahidin Indonesia Timur in 2016, Ali Kalora evaded capture for years. In 2021, however, he was killed during a jungle shootout by Indonesian security forces.<sup>446</sup> According to Central Sulawesi's regional military chief Brig. Gen. Farid Makruf, "Ali Kalora was the most wanted terrorist and leader of MIT."<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Herdi Sahrasad dan Al Chaidar, "Terorisme, Akhir Sejarah Santoso Dan Masa Depan Teror Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Review Politik* 6, no. 2 (2016).

<sup>440</sup> Robi Sugara, "Santoso: The Terrorist Leader from Nowhere," *Counter Terrorist Rends and Analyses* 6, no. 10 (2014): 23-26.

<sup>441</sup> Iris Malone, "Unmasking Militants: Organizational Trends in Armed Groups, 1970–2012." *International Studies Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (2022): sqac050.

<sup>442</sup> BBC, "Santoso: Indonesia Police 'Kill Most Wanted Militant,'" July 19, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36833933>.

<sup>443</sup> BBC, "Santoso: Indonesia Police 'Kill Most Wanted Militant,'" July 19, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36833933>.

<sup>444</sup> Al Jazeera, "Indonesia Police Kill ISIL-Linked Leader in Sulawesi Shoot-Out," September 19, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/19/indonesia-police-kill-is-linked-leader-in-sulawesi-shootout>.

<sup>445</sup> Ahmad Zuhad, "Profil Ali Kalora, Pimpinan Kelompok Teroris MIT yang Tewas usai Perburuan Bertahun-Tahun," *Kompas TV*, September 19, 2021, [kompas.tv/nasional/213070/profil-ali-kalora-pimpinan-kelompok-teroris-mit-yang-tewas-usai-perburuan-bertahun-tahun](https://kompas.tv/nasional/213070/profil-ali-kalora-pimpinan-kelompok-teroris-mit-yang-tewas-usai-perburuan-bertahun-tahun).

<sup>446</sup> NPR, "Security Forces Kill Indonesia's Most Wanted Militant in a Jungle Shootout," September 18, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/18/1038563859/indonesias-most-wanted-militant-killed-islamic-state>.

<sup>447</sup> NPR, "Security Forces Kill Indonesia's Most Wanted Militant in a Jungle Shootout," September 18, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/18/1038563859/indonesias-most-wanted-militant-killed-islamic-state>.

# Iran

## Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development

### *Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim*

Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim was born in 1939 in Najaf, Iraq.<sup>448</sup> Al-Hakim began his religious education at an early age and later taught various topics, such as *tafsir*.<sup>449</sup> He became a key opposition figure in the 1970s<sup>450</sup> and was first arrested by Iraqi authorities in 1972.<sup>451</sup> He was later arrested in 1977 and released in 1978 during a general amnesty.<sup>452</sup> Al-Hakim would leave Iraq in 1980, traveling to the newly formed Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>453</sup> During the Iran-Iraq War, al-Hakim reportedly founded the Badr Organization in 1983 as the military branch of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) with the support of Iranian intelligence.<sup>454</sup> As Guido Steinberg states: “The unit was founded as the Badr Corps...the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). It was an organization made up of Iraqi exiles who fled to Iran when the regime of Saddam Hussein intensified its persecution of Shiites in 1979. The leader of the Corps was the cleric Muhmmad Baqir al-Hakim whose family still dominates the Supreme Council today.”<sup>455</sup> In 2003, al-Hakim returned to Iraq and was killed by non-state actors in a car bombing outside the Imam Ali Mosque.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>448</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>449</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>450</sup> Muhammad Baqir al- Hakim. *Oxford Reference*. Retrieved 12 July. 2024,

<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095915975>.

<sup>451</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>452</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>453</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>454</sup> Hogr Tarkhani, “The Thin Line Between Militia and Terror Groups: The Case of Iraq’s Badr Organization,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (2024): 1-27.

<sup>455</sup> Guido Steinberg, “The Badr Organization: Iran’s Most Important Instrument in Iraq,” *SWP Comments* 26 (2017).

<sup>456</sup> CBS News, “Iraq Mosque Blast Kills 85,” August 29, 2003, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/iraq-mosque-blast-kills-85/>.

## *Hadi al-Amiri*

Hadi al-Amiri was born in 1954 in the Diyala province of Iraq.<sup>457</sup> He reportedly joined the Shi'i Islamic Movement in Iraq at an early age and was among the followers of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr.<sup>458</sup> Al-Amiri received a college education at Baghdad University, graduating with a degree in the mid-1970s.<sup>459</sup> He then worked in the Ministry of Education as a research assistant.<sup>460</sup> Al-Amiri left this job and reportedly spent two years among the ranks of Kurdish forces in northern Iraq before traveling to Syria and then Iran following the execution of al-Sadr.<sup>461</sup> Al-Amiri participated in the Iran-Iraq War on the side of Iran during the 1980s and became the military commander of the Badr Organization in the 1990s.<sup>462</sup> During the 1990s, Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim also tasked al-Amiri with overseeing resistance operations within Iraq.<sup>463</sup> Al-Amiri returned to Iraq in 2003 and later became the leader of the Badr Organization. As Tarkhani states: "Under Amiri's leadership, the Badr Organization carried out brutal massacres against Iraqi Sunnis in several cities, including Samarra, Diyala, Hawija, Al-Qaim, and Fallujah."<sup>464</sup> Al-Amiri has also held various posts in the Iraqi government, including Minister of Transportation and a member of the Iraqi parliament.<sup>465</sup>

## Jundallah

### *Abdolmalek Rigi*

While there are disputes in reporting surrounding his date of birth, Abdolmalek Rigi was reportedly 20 years of age when he launched Jundallah in 2003.<sup>466</sup> A member of the Baluch tribe, Rigi studied

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<sup>457</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. "جنرال" إيران في العراق", <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>458</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. "جنرال" إيران في العراق", <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>459</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. "جنرال" إيران في العراق", <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>460</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. "جنرال" إيران في العراق", <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>461</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. "جنرال" إيران في العراق", <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>462</sup> Guido Steinberg, "The Badr Organization: Iran's Most Important Instrument in Iraq," *SWP Comments* 26 (2017).

<sup>463</sup> Al Khanadeq, "رئيس تحالف الفتح في العراق هادي العامري," <https://alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=38>.

<sup>464</sup> Hogr Tarkhani, "The Thin Line Between Militia and Terror Groups: The Case of Iraq's Badr Organization," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (2024): 1-27.

<sup>465</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/342/>.

<sup>466</sup> Fatemeh Shayan, "A Critical Perspective on Terrorism: Case Study of Jundallah and Jeish ul-Adl in Iran," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 13, no. 3 (2020): 441-463.

in a Pakistani madrasa and came into contact with various Islamist militants.<sup>467</sup> Rigi also gained experience in armed combat and terrorism by participating in Mola Baksh Derakhshan's Lashkar Rasool'ulallah.<sup>468</sup> Rigi reportedly served time in prison for participating in a knife fight.<sup>469</sup> Rigi also reportedly traveled to Afghanistan, but the Afghan Taliban reportedly refused to deal with him over concerns that he was linked with U.S. intelligence.<sup>470</sup> In 2009, Rigi met with al-Qaida leaders in the Turbat district of Pakistani Baluchistan, receiving an agreement for al-Qaida support.<sup>471</sup> In 2010, Iranian authorities arrested Rigi and his deputy, Abu Hamza.<sup>472</sup> He was reportedly arrested while on a flight from Dubai to Kyrgyzstan.<sup>473</sup> Rigi was killed during a highly publicized execution.<sup>474</sup> The United States designated Jundallah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in November 2010.<sup>475</sup>

### *Muhammad Dhahrir Baluch*

Muhammad Dhahrir Baluch reportedly took control of Jundallah following Rigi's arrest and execution.<sup>476</sup> However, as Cappuccino writes, there is "very little" information about Baluch.<sup>477</sup> Baluch's reign was short-lived, with Jundallah becoming defunct in 2012.<sup>478</sup>

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<sup>467</sup> Sonia Ghaffari, "Baluchistan's Rising Militancy," *Middle East Report* 50 (2009).

<sup>468</sup> Fatemeh Shayan, "A Critical Perspective on Terrorism: Case Study of Jundallah and Jeish ul-Adl in Iran," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 13, no. 3 (2020): 441-463.

<sup>469</sup> BBC Monitoring Middle East, "Iran Website Gives Background on 'Terrorist' Jondollah Group," December 22, 2008.

<sup>470</sup> Zia Ur Rehman, "The Baluch Insurgency: Linking Iran to Pakistan," *Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre* (May 2014).

<sup>471</sup> Zia Ur Rehman, "The Baluch Insurgency: Linking Iran to Pakistan," *Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre* (May 2014).

<sup>472</sup> Zia Ur Rehman, "The Baluch Insurgency: Linking Iran to Pakistan," *Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre* (May 2014).

<sup>473</sup> BBC, "Iran Hangs Sunni Militant Leader Abdolmalek Rigi," June 20, 2010, <https://www.bbc.com/news/10359415>.

<sup>474</sup> Nicholas Cappuccino, "Baluch Insurgents in Iran," *The Iran Primer*, April 27, 2017.

<sup>475</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>476</sup> Nicholas Cappuccino, "Baluch Insurgents in Iran," *The Iran Primer*, April 27, 2017.

<sup>477</sup> Nicholas Cappuccino, "Baluch Insurgents in Iran," *The Iran Primer*, April 27, 2017.

<sup>478</sup> Matthew G. Elliott, *Counterinsurgency in Sistan-Baluchistan: Evaluating Iranian Effectiveness in Countering Ethnic Insurgency*, Naval Postgraduate School (2020).

# Iraq

## Ansar al-Islam

### *Najmuddin Faraj Ahmad*

Najmuddin Faraj Ahmad, more popularly known as Mullah Krekar, was the founding leader of Ansar al-Islam in Iraq.<sup>479</sup> Krekar was born in 1956 in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, and received his early education in Sulaymaniyah before completing his secondary education in Erbil.<sup>480</sup> He later studied in the Arabic Language Department at the University of Salah al-Din and earned his master's degree in Islamic jurisprudence and Hadith studies in Pakistan.<sup>481</sup> Krekar also studied in Pakistan under Abdullah Azzam and taught at the Islamic Studies University in Karachi.<sup>482</sup> In the early 1970s, he was a member of the Kurdistan Students Union, which was affiliated with the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).<sup>483</sup> Between 1974 and 1975, Krekar enrolled in a KDP military training camp and briefly joined the Peshmerga forces.<sup>484</sup> In the early 1980s, Krekar fled to Iran and worked as an Imam after failing to complete his studies in sociology at the University of Tehran.<sup>485</sup> In 1985, Krekar moved to Pakistan.<sup>486</sup> Following the Halabja attacks, Krekar sought donations in Pakistan to aid survivors of the attacks and reportedly met with Osama bin Laden.<sup>487</sup> In 1991, Krekar and his family left Iraq, receiving refugee status in Norway.<sup>488</sup> Krekar is also noted to have led the Reformist Group, which was a splinter of the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan,<sup>489</sup> and fought

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<sup>479</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Islam." Last modified December 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/325/>.

<sup>480</sup> European Observatory to Combat Radicalization, "من هو الملا كركار" <https://eocr.eu/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A7-%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%9F/>.

<sup>481</sup> European Observatory to Combat Radicalization, "من هو الملا كركار" <https://eocr.eu/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A7-%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%9F/>.

<sup>482</sup> Nathanael Johnson, "Norway's Dilemma: How to Deal With Mullah Krekar," *Frontline*, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/map/krekar.html>.

<sup>483</sup> European Observatory to Combat Radicalization, "من هو الملا كركار" <https://eocr.eu/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A7-%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%9F/>.

<sup>484</sup> European Observatory to Combat Radicalization, "من هو الملا كركار" <https://eocr.eu/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A7-%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%9F/>.

<sup>485</sup> Ashraf al-Khadra, "الملا كريكار يروي أمام القضاء النرويجي علاقته بالقاعدة والزندانى وعمر عبدالرحمن" <https://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2005/06/09/13803>.

<sup>486</sup> Ashraf al-Khadra, "الملا كريكار يروي أمام القضاء النرويجي علاقته بالقاعدة والزندانى وعمر عبدالرحمن" <https://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2005/06/09/13803>.

<sup>487</sup> Nathanael Johnson, "Norway's Dilemma: How to Deal With Mullah Krekar," *Frontline*, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/map/krekar.html>.

<sup>488</sup> Nathanael Johnson, "Norway's Dilemma: How to Deal With Mullah Krekar," *Frontline*, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/map/krekar.html>.

<sup>489</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Islam." Last modified December 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/325/>.

in Afghanistan.<sup>490</sup> In 2001, he returned to Iraq and became the leader of Ansar al-Islam: “Krekar clearly wanted to distance the new organization from the violent excesses associated with the previous Jund al-Islam, and stressed in media interviews and in his autobiography that AI was a quite different organisation, not simply a continuation of Jund al-Islam with some cosmetic changes.”<sup>491</sup> In September 2002, Krekar was arrested in Iran and deported to the Netherlands.<sup>492</sup> However, he was released in January 2003 after Dutch attorneys could not find proof of any crimes and Jordan could not provide enough evidence for their extradition request.<sup>493</sup> Norwegian police would arrest Krekar in March 2003 and again in January 2004.<sup>494</sup> Abu Abdallah al-Shafi’i likely replaced Krekar as the leader of Ansar al-Islam in early 2003.<sup>495</sup>

### *Abu Abdallah al-Shafi’i*

Abu Abdallah al-Shafi’i became the second leader of Ansar al-Islam in 2003.<sup>496</sup> Al-Shafi’i is from the Erbil Governorate of Iraq<sup>497</sup> and was reportedly in his thirties when he took command of Ansar al-Islam.<sup>498</sup> Al-Shafi’i was also reportedly a member of a light infantry unit that Saddam Hussein used to combat Kurdish forces before leaving Iraq to join the Mujahideen in Afghanistan in 1988.<sup>499</sup> He returned to Iraq in the 1990s and joined the Kurdistan Democratic Party before participating in the Kurdish Islamic Movement.<sup>500</sup> Al-Shafi’i was the leader of Jund al-Islam before becoming second in command of Ansar al-Islam following its formation in 2001.<sup>501</sup> Al-Shafi’i took command of Ansar al-Islam in 2003; he was later captured by Iraqi security forces in

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<sup>490</sup> David Romano, “Outline of Kurdish Islamist Groups in Iraq,” *Jamestown Foundation* (2007).

<sup>491</sup> Brynjar Lia, “A Kurdish al-Qaida? Making Sense of the Ansar al-Islam Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan in the Early 2000s,” *Religions* 13, no. 3 (2022): 203.

<sup>492</sup> Brynjar Lia, “A Kurdish al-Qaida? Making Sense of the Ansar al-Islam Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan in the Early 2000s,” *Religions* 13, no. 3 (2022): 203.

<sup>493</sup> Nathanael Johnson, “Norway’s Dilemma: How to Deal With Mullah Krekar,” *Frontline*, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/map/krekar.html>.

<sup>494</sup> Nathanael Johnson, “Norway’s Dilemma: How to Deal With Mullah Krekar,” *Frontline*, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/map/krekar.html>.

<sup>495</sup> Brynjar Lia, “A Kurdish al-Qaida? Making Sense of the Ansar al-Islam Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan in the Early 2000s,” *Religions* 13, no. 3 (2022): 203.

<sup>496</sup> Brynjar Lia, “A Kurdish al-Qaida? Making Sense of the Ansar al-Islam Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan in the Early 2000s,” *Religions* 13, no. 3 (2022): 203.

<sup>497</sup> Shirzad Sheikhan, “زعيم «أنصار الإسلام» ينتهي في قبضة الجيش الأميركي” <https://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?issueno=11700&article=568211>.

<sup>498</sup> Buratha News Agency, “أنصار الإسلام” الكردية.. من التأسيس حتى داعش” <https://burathanews.com/arabic/antipathy/281312>.

<sup>499</sup> Shirzad Sheikhan, “زعيم «أنصار الإسلام» ينتهي في قبضة الجيش الأميركي” <https://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?issueno=11700&article=568211>.

<sup>500</sup> Shirzad Sheikhan, “زعيم «أنصار الإسلام» ينتهي في قبضة الجيش الأميركي” <https://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?issueno=11700&article=568211>.

<sup>501</sup> Brynjar Lia, “A Kurdish al-Qaida? Making Sense of the Ansar al-Islam Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan in the Early 2000s,” *Religions* 13, no. 3 (2022): 203.

May 2010.<sup>502</sup> Ansar al-Islam announced al-Shafi'i's successor in December 2011.<sup>503</sup> The United States had previously designated Ansar al-Islam as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2004.<sup>504</sup>

### *Abu Hashim al-Ibrahim*

Abu Hashim al-Ibrahim became the third leader of Ansar al-Islam in 2011.<sup>505</sup> Al-Ibrahim is from Baghdad and was born to a Shi'a family, though he later converted.<sup>506</sup> Al-Tamimi writes that al-Ibrahim "has great Shari'i knowledge. He studied Shari'i knowledge at the hands of a number of sheikhs of Baghdad, and studied hadith at the hands of the distinguished scholar Sabhi al-Samarra'i."<sup>507</sup> Al-Ibrahim joined Ansar al-Islam in 2006 and rose through the organization's ranks, eventually taking over the Sharia Committee.<sup>508</sup> Al-Ibrahim was announced as Ansar al-Islam's leader on December 5, 2011.<sup>509</sup> Al-Ibrahim was arrested in 2014,<sup>510</sup> the year that significant numbers of the organization's leaders and members in Iraq merged with the Islamic State.<sup>511</sup>

### Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq

#### *Qais al-Khazali*

Qais al-Khazali founded Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) in 2006.<sup>512</sup> Al-Khazali was born in 1974 in Iraq.<sup>513</sup> He completed his primary and secondary education in Baghdad and studied geology in the

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<sup>502</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Islam." Last modified December 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/325/>.

<sup>503</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Islam." Last modified December 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/325/>.

<sup>504</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>505</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Islam." Last modified December 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/325/>.

<sup>506</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Complete History of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam – Translation," *Middle East Forum*, December 15, 2015, <https://www.meforum.org/jamaat-ansar-alislam>.

<sup>507</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Complete History of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam – Translation," *Middle East Forum*, December 15, 2015, <https://www.meforum.org/jamaat-ansar-alislam>.

<sup>508</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Complete History of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam – Translation," *Middle East Forum*, December 15, 2015, <https://www.meforum.org/jamaat-ansar-alislam>.

<sup>509</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Islam." Last modified December 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/325/>.

<sup>510</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Complete History of Jamaat Ansar al-Islam – Translation," *Middle East Forum*, December 15, 2015, <https://www.meforum.org/jamaat-ansar-alislam>.

<sup>511</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Islam." Last modified December 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/325/>.

<sup>512</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq." Last modified June 1, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/336/>.

<sup>513</sup> Salih Humayd, "من هو قيس الخزعلي عراب البدر الشيعي - الإيراني," <https://www.alarabiya.net/iran/2017/12/11/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%9F>.

College of Sciences in the Iraqi capital.<sup>514</sup> In the mid-1990s, al-Khazali grew more interested in religious pursuits and traveled to Najaf to study in the city's Hawza.<sup>515</sup> In Najaf, al-Khazali reportedly became a devout student of Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr until the latter's execution in 1999.<sup>516</sup> Following the U.S. invasion of Iraq, al-Khazali became involved in various rebel activities alongside figures such as Akram al-Kabi.<sup>517</sup> After 2003, al-Khazali also became an aide to Muqtada al-Sadr and was a prominent commander in the al-Mahdi Army.<sup>518</sup> However, in 2006, al-Khazali broke with the al-Mahdi Army and formed AAH.<sup>519</sup> A key reason for the split was reportedly al-Khazali's disagreement with a 2004 ceasefire and lack of direct confrontation with coalition forces in subsequent months.<sup>520</sup> Following a major attack on the Iraqi-American Provincial Joint Coordination Center in 2007,<sup>521</sup> al-Khazali was arrested by British forces.<sup>522</sup> Al-Khazali was detained at the U.S. Camp Cropper<sup>523</sup> but reportedly retained control of AAH during his time in detention.<sup>524</sup> Al-Khazali was released in 2010 as part of a prisoner exchange.<sup>525</sup> In 2020,

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<sup>514</sup> Salih Humayd, "من هو قيس الخزعلي عراب البدر الشيعي - الإيراني"،

<https://www.alarabiya.net/iran/2017/12/11/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%9F>.

<sup>515</sup> <https://www.alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=69>.

<sup>516</sup> Kenneth M. Pollack, "The Qayis Al-Khazali Papers," *American Enterprise Institute*, August 30, 2018, <https://www.aei.org/the-qayis-al-khazali-papers/>.

<sup>517</sup> Salih Humayd, "من هو قيس الخزعلي عراب البدر الشيعي - الإيراني"،

<https://www.alarabiya.net/iran/2017/12/11/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%9F>.

<sup>518</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq." Last modified June 1, 2025.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/336/>.

<sup>519</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq." Last modified June 1, 2025.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/336/>.

<sup>520</sup> Rafid Jaboor, "Qais al-Khazali—The PMU Militia Leader Challenging the U.S. in Iraq," *Jamestown Foundation*, 2020,"

<https://jamestown.org/qais-al-khazali-the-pmu-militia-leader-challenging-the-u-s-in-iraq/>.

<sup>521</sup> <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/iranian-resources-shia-militant-cohesion-insights-khazali-papers/>.

<sup>522</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq." Last modified June 1, 2025.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/336/>.

<sup>523</sup> Matthew Hilburn, "One-time US Prisoner Now Key in Battling IS," *VOA News*, March 15, 2015,

<https://www.voanews.com/a/qais-khazali-onetime-us-prisoner-now-key-in-battling-islamic-state/2679431.html>.

<sup>524</sup> Rafid Jaboor, "Qais al-Khazali—The PMU Militia Leader Challenging the U.S. in Iraq," *Jamestown Foundation*, 2020,"

<https://jamestown.org/qais-al-khazali-the-pmu-militia-leader-challenging-the-u-s-in-iraq/>.

<sup>525</sup> Rafid Jaboor, "Qais al-Khazali—The PMU Militia Leader Challenging the U.S. in Iraq," *Jamestown Foundation*, 2020,"

<https://jamestown.org/qais-al-khazali-the-pmu-militia-leader-challenging-the-u-s-in-iraq/>.

the United States designated AAH as a Foreign Terrorist Organization<sup>526</sup> and al-Khazali as a Special Designated Global Terrorist.<sup>527</sup>

## Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development

### *Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim*

Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim was born in 1939 in Najaf, Iraq.<sup>528</sup> Al-Hakim began his religious education at an early age and later taught various topics, such as *tafsir*.<sup>529</sup> He became a key opposition figure in the 1970s<sup>530</sup> and was first arrested by Iraqi authorities in 1972.<sup>531</sup> He was later arrested in 1977 and released in 1978 during a general amnesty.<sup>532</sup> Al-Hakim would leave Iraq in 1980, traveling to the newly formed Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>533</sup> During the Iran-Iraq War, al-Hakim reportedly founded the Badr Organization in 1983 as the military branch of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) with the support of Iranian intelligence.<sup>534</sup> As Guido Steinberg states: “The unit was founded as the Badr Corps... the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). It was an organization made up of Iraqi exiles who fled to Iran when the regime of Saddam Hussein intensified its persecution of Shiites in 1979. The leader of the Corps was the cleric Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim whose family still dominates the Supreme Council today.”<sup>535</sup> In 2003, al-Hakim returned to Iraq and was killed by non-state actors in a car bombing outside the Imam Ali Mosque.<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>526</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>527</sup> U.S. Department of State “State Department Terrorist Designations of Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq and Its Leaders, Qays and Laith al-Khazali,” January 3, 2020, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/state-department-terrorist-designations-of-asaib-ahl-al-haq-and-its-leaders-qays-and-laith-al-khazali/>.

<sup>528</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>529</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>530</sup> Muhammad Baqir al- Hakim. *Oxford Reference*. Retrieved 12 July. 2024, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095915975>.

<sup>531</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>532</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>533</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “محمد باقر الحكيم” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/4/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>534</sup> Hogr Tarkhani, “The Thin Line Between Militia and Terror Groups: The Case of Iraq’s Badr Organization,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (2024): 1-27.

<sup>535</sup> Guido Steinberg, “The Badr Organization: Iran’s Most Important Instrument in Iraq,” *SWP Comments* 26 (2017).

<sup>536</sup> CBS News, “Iraq Mosque Blast Kills 85,” August 29, 2003, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/iraq-mosque-blast-kills-85/>.

## *Hadi al-Amiri*

Hadi al-Amiri was born in 1954 in the Diyala province of Iraq.<sup>537</sup> He reportedly joined the Shi'i Islamic Movement in Iraq at an early age and was among the followers of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr.<sup>538</sup> Al-Amiri received a college education at Baghdad University, graduating with a degree in the mid-1970s.<sup>539</sup> He then worked in the Ministry of Education as a research assistant.<sup>540</sup> Al-Amiri left this job and reportedly spent two years among the ranks of Kurdish forces in northern Iraq before traveling to Syria and then Iran following the execution of al-Sadr.<sup>541</sup> Al-Amiri participated in the Iran-Iraq War on the side of Iran during the 1980s and became the military commander of the Badr Organization in the 1990s.<sup>542</sup> During the 1990s, Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim also tasked al-Amiri with overseeing resistance operations within Iraq.<sup>543</sup> Al-Amiri returned to Iraq in 2003 and later became the leader of the Badr Organization. As Tarkhani states: "Under Amiri's leadership, the Badr Organization carried out brutal massacres against Iraqi Sunnis in several cities, including Samarra, Diyala, Hawija, Al-Qaim, and Fallujah."<sup>544</sup> Al-Amiri has also held various posts in the Iraqi government, including Minister of Transportation and a member of the Iraqi parliament.<sup>545</sup>

## Kata'ib Hezbollah

### *Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis*

Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis was born in 1954 in Basra to an Iraqi father and an Iranian mother.<sup>546</sup> Al-Muhandis started his college education in 1973 and began work as a civil engineer after graduating

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<sup>537</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. جنرال" إيران في العراق, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>538</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. جنرال" إيران في العراق, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>539</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. جنرال" إيران في العراق, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>540</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. جنرال" إيران في العراق, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>541</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "هادي العامري.. جنرال" إيران في العراق, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/2/28/%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A>.

<sup>542</sup> Guido Steinberg, "The Badr Organization: Iran's Most Important Instrument in Iraq," *SWP Comments* 26 (2017).

<sup>543</sup> Al Khanadeq, "رئيس تحالف الفتح في العراق هادي العامري," <https://alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=38>.

<sup>544</sup> Hogr Tarkhani, "The Thin Line Between Militia and Terror Groups: The Case of Iraq's Badr Organization," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (2024): 1-27.

<sup>545</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/342/>.

<sup>546</sup> Amira Al Abbas and Walid Badran, "من هو أبو مهدي المهندس الذي قتل مع قاسم سليمان في بغداد," January 3, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/50983574>.

in 1977.<sup>547</sup> He also reportedly attained a graduate degree in political science.<sup>548</sup> In terms of religious education, al-Muhandis also enrolled in religious courses at the Hawza in Basra.<sup>549</sup> Al-Muhandis would also join the Islamic Da'wa Party in the late 1970s in opposition to Saddam Hussein's regime.<sup>550</sup> Al-Muhandis left Iraq to live in Kuwait and was later sentenced to death by the Kuwaiti judiciary for his involvement in militant activities.<sup>551</sup> Al-Muhandis was accused of playing a key role in attacks against U.S. and French embassies, attempts to hijack a Kuwaiti airliner, and the plot to assassinate Kuwaiti Prince Jaber al-Sabah.<sup>552</sup> Al-Muhandis, however, had already left Kuwait for Iran, where he would continue his militant activities and become a member of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq.<sup>553</sup> After 2003, al-Muhandis returned to Iraq and was elected to parliament.<sup>554</sup> He would later form Kata'ib Hezbollah in 2007 and serve as the organization's leader until his death in 2020.<sup>555</sup> The United States designated al-Muhandis and Kata'ib Hezbollah in 2009 for their acts of violence against and security threats to Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces.<sup>556</sup> In January 2020, al-Muhandis was killed in a U.S. drone strike alongside Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) leader Qassem Soleimani.<sup>557</sup>

### *Ahmad al-Hamidawi*

Ahmad al-Hamidawi succeeded al-Muhandis as the secretary-general of Kata'ib Hezbollah. Al-Hamidawi was born in 1974 in Iraq.<sup>558</sup> As stated by the Mapping Militants Project, al-Hamidawi "was likely trained by the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), but very little information is available about his activities before 2007."<sup>559</sup> The training from the IRGC

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<sup>547</sup> Amira Al Abbas and Walid Badran, "من هو أبو مهدي المهندس الذي قتل مع قاسم سليمان في بغداد?" January 3, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/50983574>.

<sup>548</sup> Al Khanadeq, "الشهيد أبو مهدي المهندس," <https://alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=70>.

<sup>549</sup> Al Khanadeq, "الشهيد أبو مهدي المهندس," <https://alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=70>.

<sup>550</sup> Middle East Eye, "Who Was Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis?" January 3, 2020, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/who-abu-mahdi-al-muhandis-qassem-soleimani-iran-iraq>.

<sup>551</sup> Othman al-Mukhtar, "Fugitive from International Justice Now Militia Leader in Iraq," *The New Arab*, January 4, 2015, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/fugitive-international-justice-now-militia-leader-iraq>.

<sup>552</sup> Middle East Eye, "Who Was Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis?" January 3, 2020, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/who-abu-mahdi-al-muhandis-qassem-soleimani-iran-iraq>.

<sup>553</sup> Middle East Eye, "Who Was Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis?" January 3, 2020, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/who-abu-mahdi-al-muhandis-qassem-soleimani-iran-iraq>.

<sup>554</sup> Othman al-Mukhtar, "Fugitive from International Justice Now Militia Leader in Iraq," *The New Arab*, January 4, 2015, <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/fugitive-international-justice-now-militia-leader-iraq>.

<sup>555</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Kata'ib Hezbollah." Last modified September 21, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/427/>.

<sup>556</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," July 2, 2009, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg195>.

<sup>557</sup> Matthew S. Schwartz, "Who Was the Iraq Commander Also Killed in the Baghdad Drone Strike," *NPR*, January 4, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/01/04/793618490/who-was-the-iraqi-commander-also-killed-in-baghdad-drone-strike>.

<sup>558</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Kata'ib Hezbollah." Last modified September 21, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/427/>.

<sup>559</sup> For additional information, see Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University. <https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>.

reportedly included military and intelligence training.<sup>560</sup> Al-Hamidawi would join Kata'ib Hezbollah in 2007, the year of the organization's founding.<sup>561</sup> Al-Hamidawi became a member of the organization's Shura Council and played a key role in organizational activities targeting U.S. forces between 2007 and 2011.<sup>562</sup> Between 2011 and 2014, al-Hamidawi reportedly commanded a brigade in Syria, fighting alongside Bashar al-Asad's forces.<sup>563</sup> In February 2020, al-Hamidawi assumed leadership of Kata'ib Hezbollah,<sup>564</sup> with the United States designating al-Hamidawi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist the same month.<sup>565</sup>

## Islamic Movement of Kurdistan

### *Uthman Abdel Aziz*

Uthman Abdel Aziz, also spelled Osman Abdulaziz, was born in 1922 in a village in the Halabja Governorate.<sup>566</sup> Abdel Aziz received religious education at a young age and also studied Persian.<sup>567</sup> Abdel Aziz reportedly gave lectures on religious topics<sup>568</sup> and was noted to be a “traditional small-town mullah with a traditional but thorough madrasa education.”<sup>569</sup> He was also a former member of the Union of Muslim Scholars of Kurdistan<sup>570</sup> and was active in the Muslim Brotherhood movement.<sup>571</sup> He returned to Iraq in late 1980 but fled in 1984 due to regime repression, seeking refuge in Iran.<sup>572</sup> Returning to Iraq in 1987, Abdel Aziz formed the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan

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<sup>560</sup> Counter Extremism Project, “Ahmad al-Hamidawi,” <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/ahmad-al-hamidawi>.

<sup>561</sup> The Arab Center for Extremism Studies, “أحمد محسن فرج الحميداوي,” <https://thearabcenter.org/%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A/>.

<sup>562</sup> The Arab Center for Extremism Studies, “أحمد محسن فرج الحميداوي,” <https://thearabcenter.org/%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A/>.

<sup>563</sup> The Arab Center for Extremism Studies, “أحمد محسن فرج الحميداوي,” <https://thearabcenter.org/%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A/>.

<sup>564</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Kata'ib Hezbollah.” Last modified September 21, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/427/>.

<sup>565</sup> U.S. Department of State, “State Department Terrorist Designation of Ahmad al-Hamidawi,” February 26, 2020, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/state-department-terrorist-designation-of-ahmad-al-hamidawi/>.

<sup>566</sup> <https://iasj.rdd.edu.iq/journals/uploads/2024/12/08/d02575687431b78228884049e597fbc2.pdf>.

<sup>567</sup> <https://iasj.rdd.edu.iq/journals/uploads/2024/12/08/d02575687431b78228884049e597fbc2.pdf>.

<sup>568</sup> “پانۆرامای شەخسیەتنامەی مامۆستا مهلا عوسمان عەبدوڵعەزیز” <https://web.archive.org/web/20120603024732/http://imkmedia.com/dreje.aspx?id=1166&babet=4>.

<sup>569</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, “Kurds in the Islamic Movement, Islamists in Kurdistan: The Muslim Brotherhood and Kurdish Islamist Movements.” *Études kurdes, Revue Biannuelle de Recherches* 14 (2021): 9-55.

<sup>570</sup> David Romano, “Outline of Kurdish Islamist Groups in Iraq,” *Jamestown Foundation* (2007).

<sup>571</sup> Mapping Militants Project (MMP). “Islamic Movement of Kurdistan.” Last modified March 2019. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/405>.

<sup>572</sup> Mapping Militants Project (MMP). “Islamic Movement of Kurdistan.” Last modified March 2019. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/405>.

in 1987 with assistance from Iran<sup>573</sup> and Saudi Arabia.<sup>574</sup> In 1993, the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan clashed with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, leading to Abdel Aziz's arrest and the withdrawal of his organization to Iran.<sup>575</sup> Abdel Aziz led the organization until his death in 1999.<sup>576</sup>

### *Ali Abdel Aziz*

Ali Abdel Aziz succeeded his brother, Uthman Abdel Aziz, as leader of the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (IMK).<sup>577</sup> Ali Abdel Aziz was born in 1929 in Iraq.<sup>578</sup> He worked as the director of the Islamic Institute in Halabja and was an imam at the Mohammed Pasha Mosque.<sup>579</sup> Ali Abdel Aziz reportedly created his own armed Kurdish peshmerga brigade, which was among “the first armed Islamist Kurdish peshmerga in Kurdistan.”<sup>580</sup> In 2003, U.S. forces arrested Ali Abdul Aziz.<sup>581</sup> The same year, the Kurdish Regional Government formally disarmed the IMK.<sup>582</sup>

## Tawhid and Jihad/al-Qaida in Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

### *Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi*

Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, also known as Ahmad Fadhil Nazzal al-Khalaylah, was born in October 1966 in Zarqa, Jordan.<sup>583</sup> A high school dropout,<sup>584</sup> al-Zarqawi joined the military in 1984 for two years under Jordan's mandatory conscription laws.<sup>585</sup> During the 1980s, al-Zarqawi reportedly

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<sup>573</sup> Mapping Militants Project (MMP). “Islamic Movement of Kurdistan.” Last modified March 2019. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/405>.

<sup>574</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, “The Kurds and Islam,” Working Paper no. 13, Islamic Area Studies Project (1999).

<sup>575</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “الحركة الإسلامية في كردستان العراق,”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/opinions/2004/10/3/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%83%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-2>.

<sup>576</sup> Mapping Militants Project (MMP). “Islamic Movement of Kurdistan.” Last modified March 2019. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/405>.

<sup>577</sup> Mapping Militants Project (MMP). “Islamic Movement of Kurdistan.” Last modified March 2019. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/405>.

<sup>578</sup> Balen Ibrahim “گوزهر نيك به لاپهره كاني ژباني ماموستا مه لا على عبدالعزيزدا”

<https://web.archive.org/web/20210422180119/https://www.basknet.net/martyrs/2020/1304/>.

<sup>579</sup> Balen Ibrahim “گوزهر نيك به لاپهره كاني ژباني ماموستا مه لا على عبدالعزيزدا”

<https://web.archive.org/web/20210422180119/https://www.basknet.net/martyrs/2020/1304/>.

<sup>580</sup> Mohammed Shareef, “Kurdish Islamists in Iraq: From the Muslim Brotherhood to the So-Called Islamic State: Continuity or Departure?” *King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies* (2015).

<sup>581</sup> Al Jazeera, “US Troops Arrest Kurdish Leader,” August 3, 2003, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2003/8/3/us-troops-arrest-kurdish-leader>.

<sup>582</sup> Mapping Militants Project (MMP). “Islamic Movement of Kurdistan.” Last modified March 2019. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/405>.

<sup>583</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>584</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>585</sup> Muhammad Abu Rumman and Hassan Abu Haniyeh, *The Islamic Solution in Jordan* (2012), <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/amman/09373.pdf>.

spent time in prison and was described by people who knew him during his teenage years as “a bully and a thug, a bootlegger and a heavy drinker, and even, allegedly, a pimp in Zarqa’s underworld.”<sup>586</sup> In 1989, al-Zarqawi left for Afghanistan and “is believed to have taken part in some fighting, but he mainly worked as a correspondent for a radical Islamist magazine during this period.”<sup>587</sup> In Afghanistan, al-Zarqawi used this time “to begin the process of cultivating friendships that would eventually lead to the formation of an international support network for his activities.”<sup>588</sup> Al-Zarqawi returned to Jordan in 1993 and was subsequently arrested.<sup>589</sup> Working with Abu Muhammad al-Maqqdisi, al-Zarqawi “flourished” in prison, building his militant network and jihadist credentials.<sup>590</sup> Al-Maqqdisi was released from prison in 1999 under a general amnesty and returned to Afghanistan.<sup>591</sup> Reportedly receiving a small amount of seed money from al-Qaida’s leaders,<sup>592</sup> al-Zarqawi set up a training camp in Herat and became the leader of Jama’at al-Tawhid wal Jihad.<sup>593</sup> Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, al-Zarqawi operated in Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan and, by 2003, had established his organization's presence in Arab cities in Iraq.<sup>594</sup> In 2004, al-Zarqawi pledged fealty to al-Qaida and changed his organization’s name to al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>595</sup> Al-Zarqawi died following a U.S. airstrike in 2006.<sup>596</sup> The United States had previously designated al-Zarqawi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2003<sup>597</sup> and al-Qaida in Iraq as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2004.<sup>598</sup>

### *Abu Hamza al-Muhajir*

Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, also known as Abu Ayyub al-Masri, succeeded Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi as leader of al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>599</sup> There is significant controversy surrounding al-Muhajir’s background, given he stole another jihadist’s identity.<sup>600</sup> Al-Muhajir was born in 1968 in Egypt.<sup>601</sup>

<sup>586</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>587</sup> Gary Gambill, “Abu Musab al-Zarqawi: A Biographical Sketch,” *Jamestown Foundation*, May 5, 2005.

<sup>588</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>589</sup> Muhammad Abu Rumman and Hassan Abu Haniyeh, *The Islamic Solution in Jordan* (2012),

<https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/amman/09373.pdf>.

<sup>590</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>591</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>592</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>593</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Islamic State.” Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>594</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>595</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Islamic State.” Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>596</sup> Fred Barbash and Daniela Deane, “U.S. Says Zarqawi Died from Blast,” *The Washington Post*, June 11, 2006,

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/business/technology/2006/06/12/us-says-zarqawi-died-from-blast/61897968-c052-4a3a-bce3-c1e41d5e2285/?isMobile=1>.

<sup>597</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury Designates Six Al-Qaida Terrorists,” September 24, 2003,

<https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js757>.

<sup>598</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>599</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Islamic State.” Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>600</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, “State Department Designates Founding Member of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula,” *Long War Journal*, January 6, 2017.

<sup>601</sup> Kamal Kamal and Ahmed Arafa, “إسلاميون يفجرون مفاجأة: أبو حمزة المهاجر قتل في العراق والمالكي أعلن مقتله.. داعية سلفي: “مكافأة الـ3 ملايين دولار الأمريكية حيلة مفضوحة للتدخل في سيناء.. وخالد الزعفراني يصفه بـ"الجهادى الكبير”

<https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D>

Al-Masri also reportedly joined Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) and trained fighters in EIJ training camps in Yemen and later joined the Faruq training camp in Afghanistan in the late 1990s, specializing in explosives.<sup>602</sup> Despite taking over leadership of al-Qaida in Iraq in mid-2006, al-Muhajir would hand over control of the group to Abu Umar al-Baghdadi that same year.<sup>603</sup>

### *Abu Omar al-Baghdadi*

Abu Omar al-Baghdadi was born in 1959 in Iraq.<sup>604</sup> He reportedly worked for the Iraqi Security Forces and was a Police Brigade General<sup>605</sup> before being fired due to his Salafist leanings.<sup>606</sup> Following the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, al-Baghdadi commanded Jaish al-Ta'ifa al-Mansoura before pledging bay'a to al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>607</sup> He was reportedly briefly detained by U.S. security forces in Iraq, being released after seven months.<sup>608</sup> Al-Baghdadi took control of al-Qaida in Iraq, which rebranded to the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI), in October 2006.<sup>609</sup> During a joint U.S.-Iraqi raid in 2010, U.S. air forces reportedly bombed a house that contained Abu Hamza al-Muhajir and al-Baghdadi.<sup>610</sup>

### *Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi*

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, also known as Ibrahim Awad al-Samarrai, was born in 1971 near Samarra, Iraq.<sup>611</sup> Al-Baghdadi was from the al-Bu Badri tribe, with his family claiming that they are

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[9%86-%D9%8A%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog\\_rewarded.](https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog_rewarded)

<sup>602</sup> Kamal Kamal and Ahmed Arafat, “إسلاميون يفجرون مفاجأة: أبو حمزة المهاجر قتل في العراق والمالكي أعلن مقتله.. داعية سلفي: “مكافأة الـ 3 ملايين دولار الأمريكية حيلة مفضوحة للتدخل في سيناء.. وخالد الزعفراني يصفه بـ”الجهادى الكبير”

[https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog\\_rewarded.](https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog_rewarded)

<sup>603</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Islamic State.” Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>604</sup> Hussam Haddad, “أبو عمر البغدادي زعيم القاعدة بالعراق” <https://www.islamist-movements.com/26774>.

<sup>605</sup> Myriam Benraad, “Assessing AQI’s Resilience After April’s Leadership Decapitations,” *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2010): 4-8.

<sup>606</sup> Hussam Haddad, “أبو عمر البغدادي زعيم القاعدة بالعراق” <https://www.islamist-movements.com/26774>.

<sup>607</sup> Hussam Haddad, “أبو عمر البغدادي زعيم القاعدة بالعراق” <https://www.islamist-movements.com/26774>.

<sup>608</sup> Myriam Benraad, “Assessing AQI’s Resilience After April’s Leadership Decapitations,” *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2010): 4-8.

<sup>609</sup> M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (June 2011).

<sup>610</sup> Ernesto Londoño, “Two Top Leaders of the Insurgent Group al-Qaeda in Iraq are Killed in Raid,” *Washington Post Foreign Service*, April 20, 2010.

<sup>611</sup> MEE Staff, “Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: The ‘Loner’ Who Became Leader of Islamic State,” *Middle East Eye*, October 27, 2019, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-loner-who-became-leader-islamic-state>.

descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's Quraysh tribe.<sup>612</sup> Al-Baghdadi graduated from the University of Baghdad in 1996 and enrolled in a master's program in Quranic recitation at the Saddam University for Islamic Studies. After attaining this degree, he enrolled in Saddam University's doctoral program in Quranic studies.<sup>613</sup> As Paul Kamolnick states: "His specialization across both [degrees] was phonetics and recitation of the Quran. He produced for his Ph.D. project in Quranic Sciences a commentary on a medieval poem on Quran recitation. It was defended March 13, 2007, receiving the grade of 'Very Good.'" Using this religious training, al-Baghdadi taught Quranic recitation<sup>614</sup> and preached at a mosque in Samarra.<sup>615</sup> Al-Baghdadi's nearsightedness reportedly disqualified him from military service.<sup>616</sup> Rather than remain on the sidelines in 2003, al-Baghdadi "founded his own militant group [Jaysh Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama'a] immediately following the U.S. invasion in 2003."<sup>617</sup> In 2004, al-Baghdadi was arrested by coalition forces and spent time in Camp Bucca, where "he dazzled his comrades—and, no doubt, his jailers—on the soccer field...he was compared to an Argentinian great: his nickname at Camp Bucca was 'Maradona.'"<sup>618</sup> After his release, al-Baghdadi allied with Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi and became a member of the Islamic State of Iraq, serving in roles such as the general supervisor of Sharia committees and a member of the organization's senior consultative council.<sup>619</sup> Abu Bakr

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<sup>612</sup> Aaron Zelin, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State's Driving Force," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, July 2014.

<sup>613</sup> William McCants, "The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State," *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>.

<sup>614</sup> William McCants, "The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State," *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>.

<sup>615</sup> Aaron Zelin, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State's Driving Force," *BBC*, July 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28560449>.

<sup>616</sup> William McCants, "The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State," *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>.

<sup>617</sup> While the JLD codes this as rebel leadership, there is uncertainty surrounding al-Baghdadi's role in the organization. Users of the dataset may wish to make their own decision surrounding this coding. For further information, see Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13; William McCants, "The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State," *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>; Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "'Stations of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's Life: Translation and Analysis,'" November 7, 2019, <https://www.aymennjawad.org/2019/11/stations-of-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-life-translation>; Kyle Orton, *Profiles of Islamic State Leaders* (Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism at the Henry Jackson Society, 2016); Paul Kamolnick Dr., *The Al-Qaeda Organization and the Islamic State Organization: History, Doctrine, Modus Operandi, and U.S. Policy to Degrade and Defeat Terrorism Conducted in the Name of Sunni Islam* (US Army War College Press, 2017).

<sup>618</sup> William McCants, "The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State," *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>

<sup>619</sup> Aaron Zelin, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State's Driving Force," *BBC*, July 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28560449>; Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "'Stations of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's Life: Translation and Analysis,'" November 7, 2019, <https://www.aymennjawad.org/2019/11/stations-of-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-life-translation>

al-Baghdadi succeeded Abu Omar al-Baghdadi as head of the Islamic State of Iraq after the latter's death in April 2010.<sup>620</sup> In 2011, the United States designated al-Baghdadi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist, increasing to \$25 million its reward offer for "information leading to the location, arrest, or conviction" of al-Baghdadi.<sup>621</sup> Al-Baghdadi would oversee the expansion of the organization across Iraq and Syria and its transformation to the Islamic State in subsequent years.<sup>622</sup> Al-Baghdadi remained the organization's leader until he detonated a bomb he was wearing in October 2019 during a raid conducted by U.S. forces.<sup>623</sup>

### *Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi*

Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi, also known as Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla, was born in October 1976 in al-Muhlabiyyah, Iraq.<sup>624</sup> Despite being born in an area that is predominantly Turkmen, there is evidence to suggest that al-Qurayshi is ethnically Arab.<sup>625</sup> Al-Qurayshi completed compulsory military service in Iraq in 2001-2002 and later attained a master's degree in Islamic Studies from the University of Mosul in 2007.<sup>626</sup> An unofficial biography of al-Qurayshi published by Islamic State supporters notes that he joined Jama'at al-Ansar and worked as a member of its military personnel in Tel Afar<sup>627</sup> before participating in the battle of Tel Afar under the banner of al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>628</sup> Al-Qurayshi subsequently taught Sharia classes to members of the Islamic State of Iraq and was appointed in July 2007 as the general Sharia leader

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<sup>620</sup> Aaron Zelin, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State's Driving Force," *BBC*, July 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28560449>.

<sup>621</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Rewards for Justice - Increased Reward Offer for Information on ISIL Leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi," December 16, 2016, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/12/265708.htm>.

<sup>622</sup> William McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>623</sup> BBC, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: US Releases First Images of Raid on Compound," October 31, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50243895>; Patrice Taddonio, "Flashback: How Baghdadi Came to Lead ISIS," *Frontline* October 27, 2019, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/trump-raid-baghdadi-killed-isis/>; Jim Garamone, "Central Command Chief Gives Details on Baghdadi Raid," October 31, 2019, <https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/News-Article-View/Article/2004560/central-command-chief-gives-details-on-baghdadi-raid/>.

<sup>624</sup> Much of the information for this biography comes from Tactical Interrogation Reports. These reports contained information that al-Qurayshi provided to U.S. interrogators while in detention in 2008. For further information on these reports and the pros and cons of using such sources, see Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13; Daniel Milton, "The al-Mawla TIRs: An Analytical Discussion with Cole Bunzel, Haroro Ingram, Gina Ligon, and Craig Whiteside," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 14-23.

<sup>625</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>626</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>627</sup> This timing differs from the Tactical Interrogation Reports, which note that he only joined the Islamic State of Iraq in February 2007.

<sup>628</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi: The Islamic State's Second Caliph," *Middle East Forum*, September 11, 2023, <https://www.meforum.org/a-brief-biography-of-abu-ibrahim-al-hashimi-al->

for the city of Mosul.<sup>629</sup> In January 2008, al-Qurayshi was captured by coalition forces.<sup>630</sup> After his release, al-Qurayshi reportedly assumed various judicial and administrative roles within the Islamic State, such as serving as a judge for all of the Nineveh Province and as the leader of the Islamic State's treasury department.<sup>631</sup> On October 31, 2019, al-Qurayshi was announced as the successor to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.<sup>632</sup> Al-Qurayshi would remain the Islamic State's leader until he detonated an explosive device, which killed himself, his wife, and two children, during a U.S. raid in northern Syria in February 2022.<sup>633</sup> The United States had previously designated al-Qurayshi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on March 17, 2020.<sup>634</sup>

### *Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi*

Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi succeeded Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi as the Islamic State's leader in March 2022.<sup>635</sup> There are numerous conflicting reports surrounding Abu al-Hasan's identity.<sup>636</sup> Some sources suggest that the new Islamic State leader was likely Bashar Khattab Ghazal a-Sumaidai<sup>637</sup> or even Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's brother.<sup>638</sup> However, an unofficial biography published by Islamic State supporters suggests that Abu al-Hasan was born in Rawa, Iraq, and briefly studied computer engineering at the University of Baghdad.<sup>639</sup> Abu al-Hasan also reportedly spent time as a prisoner at Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib prison and was a long-established veteran in the Islamic State and its predecessor organizations.<sup>640</sup> Abu al-Hasan's time in power of the Islamic State was short-lived. While there are disputes surrounding who killed Abu

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<sup>629</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>630</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>631</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi: The Islamic State's Second Caliph," *Middle East Forum*, September 11, 2023, <https://www.meforum.org/a-brief-biography-of-abu-ibrahim-al-hashimi-al->

<sup>632</sup> Cole Bunzel, "Caliph Incognito: The Ridicule of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi," *Jihadica*, November 14, 2019, <https://www.jihadica.com/caliph-incognito/>.

<sup>633</sup> BBC, "Islamic State Leader Abu Ibrahim al-Qurayshi Killed in Syria, US Says," February 3, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-60246129>.

<sup>634</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Designation of ISIS Leader Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla," March 17, 2020, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/terrorist-designation-of-isis-leader-amir-muhammad-said-abdal-rahman-al-mawla/>.

<sup>635</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State's Leaders Post-Mawla," *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>636</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State's Leaders Post-Mawla," *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>637</sup> Hassan Hassan, "The Next Islamic State Caliph," *New Lines Magazine*, February 16, 2022, <https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/the-next-islamic-state-caliph/>.

<sup>638</sup> Reuters, "'EXCLUSIVE: New Islamic State Leader is Brother of Slain Caliph Baghdadi - Sources," March 11, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/exclusive-new-islamic-state-leader-is-brother-slain-caliph-baghdadi-sources-2022-03-11/>.

<sup>639</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurashi: The Islamic State's Third Caliph," October 3, 2023, <https://www.aymennaltamimi.com/p/a-brief-biography-of-abu-al-hasan>.

<sup>640</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurashi: The Islamic State's Third Caliph," October 3, 2023, <https://www.aymennaltamimi.com/p/a-brief-biography-of-abu-al-hasan>.

al-Hasan,<sup>641</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi and Charlie Winter write that “the most likely scenario is that Abu al-Hasan was killed in clashes between Islamic State cells and local militiamen from the town of Jasim in the northern countryside of Dera’a province in mid-October 2022.”<sup>642</sup>

### *Abu al-Husayn al-Husayni al-Qurayshi*

Abu al-Husayn al-Husayni al-Qurayshi took over command of the Islamic State in November 2022.<sup>643</sup> While there is little information surrounding Abu al-Husayn’s early life, he was likely born in Iraq.<sup>644</sup> Turkey’s Anadolu state news agency also claimed that Abu al-Husayn joined the Islamic State in 2013 and quickly rose through the organization’s ranks.<sup>645</sup> There are disputing reports surrounding Abu al-Husayn’s death, which occurred in 2023 only months after he assumed power. While Turkish sources claim that Abu al-Husayn detonated a suicide vest prior to being captured by Turkish forces,<sup>646</sup> the Islamic State claimed that Abu al-Husayn was killed during a firefight by Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham forces.<sup>647</sup>

## Lebanon

### Abdullah Azzam Brigades

#### *Saleh al-Qarawi*

The Abdullah Azzam Brigades (AAB) was formed in 2009 under the leadership of Saleh al-Qarawi.<sup>648</sup> Saudi government sources note that al-Qarawi was born in 1982 in Buraidah, Saudi

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<sup>641</sup> U.S. Central Command, “Death of ISIS Leader,” November 30, 2022, <https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/3232259/death-of-isis-leader/>.

<sup>642</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi and Charlie Winter, “The Islamic State in Dera’a: History and Present Situation,” *Hudson: Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, April 24, 2023, <https://www.hudson.org/islamic-state-deraa-history-present-situation>.

<sup>643</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, “Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State’s Leaders Post-Mawla,” *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>644</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, “Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State’s Leaders Post-Mawla,” *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>645</sup> France 24, “Turkey Offers Details of Islamic State Chief’s Death,” January 5, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230501-turkey-offers-details-of-islamic-state-chief-s-death>.

<sup>646</sup> France 24, “Turkey Offers Details of Islamic State Chief’s Death,” January 5, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230501-turkey-offers-details-of-islamic-state-chief-s-death>.

<sup>647</sup> We coded Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham as being the most likely actor responsible based on Al-Tamimi’s analysis of the conflicting claims. Aymenn Al-Tamimi, “Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State’s Leaders Post-Mawla,” *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>648</sup> The Global Terrorism Database includes attacks conducted by the group before 2009. However, sources list 2009 as the start name for this iteration of the organization. For instance, see United Nations Security Council, “Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB),” September 23, 2014, [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/entity/abdallah-azzam-brigades-%28aab%29](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/entity/abdallah-azzam-brigades-%28aab%29).

Arabia.<sup>649</sup> Al-Qarawi is a graduate of the Scientific Institute in Buraidah, where he specialized in religious studies.<sup>650</sup> After leaving Saudi Arabia sometime in 2006, al-Qarawi was reportedly arrested by Syrian authorities and handed over to Saudi authorities, spending a few months in jail before being released and leaving the country.<sup>651</sup> During his time abroad, al-Qarawi fought against U.S. forces in Fallujah and reportedly worked with al-Qaida in Iraq and received training in electronics.<sup>652</sup> Al-Qarawi stated he started AAB as an outgrowth of al-Qaida in Iraq,<sup>653</sup> with the organization making it clear that it was openly loyal to al-Qaida's leader.<sup>654</sup> Al-Qarawi reportedly sustained major injuries in Pakistan, forcing him to return to Saudi Arabia in 2012, where he was detained and subsequently replaced as AAB's leader.<sup>655</sup>

### *Majid bin Muhammad al-Majid*

Majid bin Muhammad al-Majid succeeded al-Qarawi as AAB's leader in 2012.<sup>656</sup> Al-Majid was born in Saudi Arabia in 1973.<sup>657</sup> Little information exists surrounding al-Majid's early life in Saudi Arabia. Arabic-language reporting notes that al-Majid traveled to Lebanon in 2006, joining Fatah al-Islam in their struggle against the Lebanese army.<sup>658</sup> After the Battle of Nahr al-Bared, al-Majid moved to the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon.<sup>659</sup> Al-Majid kept AAB in al-Qaida's orbit

<sup>649</sup> Saudi Ministry of Interior, "85 قائمة المطلوبين",

[https://safiu.moi.gov.sa/wps/portal/Home/sectors/passports/contents!/ut/p/z0/fY4xD4IwFIT\\_ShfmV0khXQmJCC4aB7ELeYGiVWwLvKA\\_32pcXBzvet\\_dgYlailMXFnJGMSzgeFvJpw0shNisRb6XYrXm2j6s8y8tYFikccIKIP9QaD HXcVQZqNZZ0k-C2thFz\\_RdYq7vTasj\\_ut22uNEd22J4RRxumj2wMB3zGvnh5AfzExMJh-weQuZNOGRvxXHF-p0oGs!/.](https://safiu.moi.gov.sa/wps/portal/Home/sectors/passports/contents!/ut/p/z0/fY4xD4IwFIT_ShfmV0khXQmJCC4aB7ELeYGiVWwLvKA_32pcXBzvet_dgYlailMXFnJGMSzgeFvJpw0shNisRb6XYrXm2j6s8y8tYFikccIKIP9QaD HXcVQZqNZZ0k-C2thFz_RdYq7vTasj_ut22uNEd22J4RRxumj2wMB3zGvnh5AfzExMJh-weQuZNOGRvxXHF-p0oGs!/)

<sup>650</sup> Gulf Issues Center for Strategic Studies, "الكرهية الدينية، الطائفية، والتحريض على القتل", [https://gulfiissues.info/m\\_p\\_folder/main\\_div/derasat/derasat\\_0013.htm](https://gulfiissues.info/m_p_folder/main_div/derasat/derasat_0013.htm).

<sup>651</sup> Gulf Issues Center for Strategic Studies, "الكرهية الدينية، الطائفية، والتحريض على القتل", [https://gulfiissues.info/m\\_p\\_folder/main\\_div/derasat/derasat\\_0013.htm](https://gulfiissues.info/m_p_folder/main_div/derasat/derasat_0013.htm).

<sup>652</sup> Gulf Issues Center for Strategic Studies, "الكرهية الدينية، الطائفية، والتحريض على القتل", [https://gulfiissues.info/m\\_p\\_folder/main\\_div/derasat/derasat\\_0013.htm](https://gulfiissues.info/m_p_folder/main_div/derasat/derasat_0013.htm).

<sup>653</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "Online Jihadists Discuss Fate of al Qaeda Operative Held by Saudi Arabia," *Long War Journal*, June 27, 2013, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online\\_jihadists\\_dis.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online_jihadists_dis.php).

<sup>654</sup> Caleb Weiss, "Abdullah Azzam Brigades Dissolves Itself in Syria," *Long War Journal*, November 22, 2019, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/11/abdullah-azzam-brigades-dissolves-itself-in-syria.php>.

<sup>655</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "Online Jihadists Discuss Fate of al Qaeda Operative Held by Saudi Arabia," *Long War Journal*, June 27, 2013, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online\\_jihadists\\_dis.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online_jihadists_dis.php).

<sup>656</sup> U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, "Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB)," [https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist\\_groups/abdallah\\_azzam.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/abdallah_azzam.html).

<sup>657</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام", [https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/.](https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/)

<sup>658</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام", [https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/.](https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/)

<sup>659</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام", [https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/.](https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/)

by pledging fealty to Jabhat al-Nusra's leader, Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, in 2013.<sup>660</sup> Al-Majid was arrested by Lebanese security forces in December 2013 before dying shortly thereafter while in custody in January 2014.<sup>661</sup> Al-Majid reportedly suffered from kidney failure which required dialysis.<sup>662</sup>

### *Sirajuddin Zureiqat*

Sirajuddin Zureiqat assumed control of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades (AAB) in October 2014.<sup>663</sup> Zureiqat was born in 1990 in a hospital outside of Beirut, Lebanon.<sup>664</sup> Zureiqat completed high school and studied at the College of Sharia.<sup>665</sup> Zureiqat reportedly opened a store selling phones and also served as an Imam.<sup>666</sup> In 2011, Zureiqat was reportedly detained and taken to the Lebanese Ministry of Defense and interrogated before being released after questioning.<sup>667</sup> Shortly thereafter, Zureiqat left home and later joined AAB, becoming a spokesperson for the organization.<sup>668</sup> After reportedly being based in Syria since 2012,<sup>669</sup> Zureiqat became AAB's leader in 2014 following the death of al-Majid.<sup>670</sup> In 2019, the organization issued a statement dissolving its operational units in Syria.<sup>671</sup>

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<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/>

<sup>660</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/>

<sup>661</sup> BBC, "القبض في لبنان على ماجد الماجد زعيم كتائب عبدالله عزام"

[https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101\\_terrorist\\_arrest\\_lebanon](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101_terrorist_arrest_lebanon)

<sup>662</sup> BBC, "القبض في لبنان على ماجد الماجد زعيم كتائب عبدالله عزام"

[https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101\\_terrorist\\_arrest\\_lebanon](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101_terrorist_arrest_lebanon)

<sup>663</sup> U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, "'Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB),"

[https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist\\_groups/abdallah\\_azzam.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/abdallah_azzam.html)

<sup>664</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادي إلى إرهابي خطير" <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>

<sup>665</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادي إلى إرهابي خطير" <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>

<sup>666</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادي إلى إرهابي خطير" <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>

<sup>667</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادي إلى إرهابي خطير" <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>

<sup>668</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادي إلى إرهابي خطير" <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>

<sup>669</sup> Caleb Weiss, "Abdullah Azzam Brigades Dissolves Itself in Syria," *Long War Journal*, November 22, 2019,

<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/11/abdullah-azzam-brigades-dissolves-itself-in-syria.php>

<sup>670</sup> U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, "'Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB),"

[https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist\\_groups/abdallah\\_azzam.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/abdallah_azzam.html)

<sup>671</sup> Caleb Weiss, "Abdullah Azzam Brigades Dissolves Itself in Syria," *Long War Journal*, November 22, 2019,

<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/11/abdullah-azzam-brigades-dissolves-itself-in-syria.php>

## Fatah al-Islam

### *Shaker al-Absi*

Shaker al-Absi was born in 1955<sup>672</sup> in the Ein al-Sultan refugee camp, which is located near Jericho.<sup>673</sup> Al-Absi later moved with his family to Amman, where he would complete high school in 1973.<sup>674</sup> According to his brother, Abdel Razzak al-Absi, Shaker al-Absi moved to Tunisia to join the medical school but realized that practicing medicine was not his goal.<sup>675</sup> Al-Absi also became involved in the Palestinian militant movement, joining Yasser Arafat's Fatah.<sup>676</sup> Al-Absi became a fighter pilot and received formal military training in the Eastern Bloc countries and in Libya, with sources indicating he fought for Libya in Chad.<sup>677</sup> Al-Absi also reportedly fought with Fatah in Lebanon following the 1982 Israeli invasion.<sup>678</sup> Al-Absi was arrested on multiple occasions. First, he was imprisoned in Syria in the late 1980s and released in 1996, with this time in prison marking "a turning point in Shaker al-Absi's existence. In prison, he formed ties with Islamist detainees, began praying five times daily, and memorized the Qur'an."<sup>679</sup> After his release, al-Absi reportedly had meetings with individuals close to Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with Jordanian officials claiming that al-Zarqawi and al-Absi orchestrated the

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<sup>672</sup> There are debates surrounding al-Absi's year of birth. While Rougier states that al-Absi was born in 1950, multiple sources claim he was born in 1955. For instance, see Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015); Samid Haddad, "The Inside Story of Fatah al Islam's Leader Shaker al-Absi," *Ya Libnan*, June 16, 2007,

[https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon\\_the\\_ins\\_1.php](https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon_the_ins_1.php); Al Jazeera Arabic, "شاکر العیسی.. حکایة لاجئ فلسطيني أسس فتح الإسلام,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2007/5/24/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%83%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%B3%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A6-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B3-%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%AD>.

<sup>673</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شاکر العیسی.. حکایة لاجئ فلسطيني أسس فتح الإسلام,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2007/5/24/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%83%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%B3%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A6-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B3-%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%AD>.

<sup>674</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "شاکر العیسی.. حکایة لاجئ فلسطيني أسس فتح الإسلام,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2007/5/24/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%83%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%B3%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A6-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B3-%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%AD>.

<sup>675</sup> Samid Haddad, "The Inside Story of Fatah al Islam's Leader Shaker al-Absi," *Ya Libnan*, June 16, 2007,

[https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon\\_the\\_ins\\_1.php](https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon_the_ins_1.php).

<sup>676</sup> Samid Haddad, "The Inside Story of Fatah al Islam's Leader Shaker al-Absi," *Ya Libnan*, June 16, 2007,

[https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon\\_the\\_ins\\_1.php](https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon_the_ins_1.php).

<sup>677</sup> Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>678</sup> Samid Haddad, "The Inside Story of Fatah al Islam's Leader Shaker al-Absi," *Ya Libnan*, June 16, 2007,

[https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon\\_the\\_ins\\_1.php](https://web.archive.org/web/20070619120257/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2007/06/lebanon_the_ins_1.php).

<sup>679</sup> Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015), 86.

assassination of USAID official Laurence Foley in 2002.<sup>680</sup> As Rougier states: “Al-Absi could claim a long relationship with the Jordanian Abu Mus‘ab al-Zarqawi. A death sentence imposed on both by Jordanian authorities served as unimpeachable proof of his legitimacy as a jihadi.”<sup>681</sup> In the early 2000s, al-Absi was arrested again by Syrian authorities and sentenced to three years in prison,<sup>682</sup> spending time in the Saydnaya prison.<sup>683</sup> After his release, al-Absi joined forces with Fatah al-Intifada, which had deep ties to Syrian intelligence, and Abu Khalid al-‘Amleh, with al-‘Amleh putting al-Absi in command of the “western force” wing of the group.<sup>684</sup> Al-Absi would shortly take command of his own organization, with Fatah al-Islam announcing its formation in the Naher al-Bared camp in Lebanon in 2006.<sup>685</sup> In 2007, the United States sanctioned Fatah al-Islam under Executive Order 13224.<sup>686</sup> While there is uncertainty surrounding his death, al-Absi may have died during a firefight with Syrian security forces in 2008.<sup>687</sup>

## Hezbollah

### *Subhi al-Tufayli*

Subhi al-Tufayli was born in 1948 in the town of Brital in southern Lebanon.<sup>688</sup> Al-Tufayli completed religious training under Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr in Najaf, Iraq, studying alongside Abbas al-Musawi, the second secretary-general of Hezbollah.<sup>689</sup> Al-Tufayli later traveled to Iran

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<sup>680</sup> Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>681</sup> Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015), 87.

<sup>682</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “شاعر العبيسي.. حكاية لاجئ فلسطيني أسس فتح الإسلام,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2007/5/24/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%83%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%B3%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A6-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B3-%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%AD>.

<sup>683</sup> Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>684</sup> Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>685</sup> Bernard Rougier, *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS* (Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>686</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Executive Order 13224,” <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>.

<sup>687</sup> Graham Bowley and Souad Mekhennet, “Fugitive Sunni Leader Thought to be Captured or Killed in Syria,” *The New York Times*, November 10, 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/10/world/africa/10iht-syria.4.18569673.html>.

<sup>688</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “صبحي الطفيلي,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/2004/10/03/%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A-2>.

<sup>689</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic “صبحي الطفيلي” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/10/27/%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A>.

to continue his religious studies and would eventually teach in the Hawzat of Qom.<sup>690</sup> After returning to Lebanon in 1979, al-Tufayli reportedly founded the Association of Muslim Scholars, headquartered in the Bekaa Valley, and participated in resistance activities against Israeli forces in Lebanon.<sup>691</sup> Al-Tufayli was also a member of Amal during the Lebanese civil war before leaving the movement to help found Hezbollah.<sup>692</sup> In 1989, al-Tufayli was elected as Hezbollah's first secretary-general. Al-Tufayli stepped down from his position as secretary-general of Hezbollah following the 1991 elections which were won by Abbas al-Musawi.<sup>693</sup>

### *Abbas al-Musawi*

Abbas al-Musawi succeeded Subhi al-Tufayli as secretary-general of Hezbollah. Al-Musawi was born in 1952 in a suburb of Beirut.<sup>694</sup> Al-Musawi traveled to Iraq at an early age to receive religious education under the guidance of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr.<sup>695</sup> He eventually left Iraq in the late 1970s at the request of al-Sadr due to increasing repression from the Iraqi regime.<sup>696</sup> In Lebanon, al-Musawi established a religious seminary in Baalbek.<sup>697</sup> Following the Iranian revolution, al-Musawi reportedly visited Iran and later received training from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in Lebanon.<sup>698</sup> Al-Musawi was also a member of Amal during the Lebanese civil war before leaving the movement to help found Hezbollah.<sup>699</sup> Al-Musawi reportedly visited Pakistan and Afghanistan in his efforts to promote the Palestinian issue.<sup>700</sup> His leadership of Hezbollah would be short-lived. Along with his wife, son, and five bodyguards, al-Musawi was killed in an Israeli airstrike in February 1992.<sup>701</sup>

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<sup>690</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic “صبحي الطفيلي”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/10/27/%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A>.

<sup>691</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “صبحي الطفيلي”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/2004/10/03/%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A-2>.

<sup>692</sup> Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizbu'llah: Politics and Religion* (Pluto Press, 2002).

<sup>693</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “صبحي الطفيلي”

<https://www.aljazeera.net/2004/10/03/%D8%B5%D8%A8%D8%AD%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A-2>.

<sup>694</sup> Al Khanadeq, “الشهيد السيد عباس الموسوي” <https://www.alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=126>.

<sup>695</sup> Al Khanadeq, “الشهيد السيد عباس الموسوي” <https://www.alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=126>.

<sup>696</sup> Al Khanadeq, “الشهيد السيد عباس الموسوي” <https://www.alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=126>.

<sup>697</sup> Middle East Eye, “Who Was Hassan Nasrallah, Leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah - and why did he matter?”

*Middle East Eye*, September 27, 2024, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/explainer-who-hezbollah-leader-hassan-nasrallah-profile-lebanon>.

<sup>698</sup> Al Khanadeq, “الشهيد السيد عباس الموسوي” <https://www.alkhanadeq.com/post.php?id=126>.

<sup>699</sup> Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizbu'llah: Politics and Religion* (Pluto Press, 2002).

<sup>700</sup> Israa Alfass, “الأممي الأول... الشهيد عباس الموسوي” <https://archive.almanar.com.lb/6299911>.

<sup>701</sup> Nicholas Blanford, “Twenty-Eight Years Ago Hezbollah's Leader Was Assassinated, and Israel Paid a Price,” *Atlantic Council*, January 6, 2020, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/iransource/twenty-eight-years-ago-hezbollahs-leader-was-assassinated-and-israel-paid-a-price/>.

## *Hassan Nasrallah*

Hassan Nasrallah succeeded Abbas al-Musawi as Hezbollah's leader in 1992. Nasrallah was born in 1960 in Sharshabouk, an area of east Beirut's Karantina.<sup>702</sup> Following the onset of the Lebanese civil war, Nasrallah joined Amal.<sup>703</sup> According to Daher, Nasrallah reportedly dropped out of college and traveled to study in Najaf, Iraq.<sup>704</sup> Due to political repression, Hassan Nasrallah returned to Lebanon in 1978 and studied at a religious seminary in Baalbek under Abbas al-Musawi.<sup>705</sup> Back in Lebanon, Nasrallah resumed his participation with Amal, serving as the head of administration for the Bekaa region and later as a member of the Politburo.<sup>706</sup> He reportedly remained active in Amal until 1982 before playing an important role in the formation of Hezbollah. According to a biography produced by the Lebanese Cultural Centre, Nasrallah was "very active during this era in the recruitment and mobilization of fighters."<sup>707</sup> In Hezbollah, Nasrallah became head of the Baalbek region before taking charge of organizational activities across the entire Bekaa.<sup>708</sup> Between 1985 and 1986, Nasrallah briefly resumed studies in Qom, Iran.<sup>709</sup> The United States designated Hezbollah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in October 1997.<sup>710</sup> On September 27, 2024, Israel launched airstrikes against Hezbollah positions in southern Beirut, with Hezbollah announcing Nasrallah's death the following day.<sup>711</sup>

## **Libya**

### **Ansar al-Sharia - Libya**

#### *Mohammad al-Zahawi*

Mohammad al-Zahawi served as the leader of Ansar al-Sharia in Libya at its inception in 2012.<sup>712</sup> Al-Zahawi reportedly fought in Afghanistan alongside al-Qaida prior to returning to Libya to

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<sup>702</sup> Middle East Eye, "Who Was Hassan Nasrallah, Leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah - And Why Did He Matter?" September 27, 2024, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/explainer-who-hezbollah-leader-hassan-nasrallah-profile-lebanon>.

<sup>703</sup> Aurélie Daher, *Hezbollah: Mobilization and Power* (Oxford University Press, 2024).

<sup>704</sup> Aurélie Daher, *Hezbollah: Mobilization and Power* (Oxford University Press, 2024).

<sup>705</sup> Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

<sup>706</sup> Aurélie Daher, *Hezbollah: Mobilization and Power* (Oxford University Press, 2024).

<sup>707</sup> See Aurélie Daher, *Hezbollah: Mobilization and Power* (Oxford University Press, 2024), 156.

<sup>708</sup> Aurélie Daher, *Hezbollah: Mobilization and Power* (Oxford University Press, 2024).

<sup>709</sup> Aurélie Daher, *Hezbollah: Mobilization and Power* (Oxford University Press, 2024).

<sup>710</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>711</sup> Michael Young, "Israel Has Assassinated the Secretary General of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, September 29, 2024, <https://carnegieendowment.org/middle-east/diwan/2024/09/israel-has-assassinated-the-secretary-general-of-hezbollah-hassan-nasrallah?lang=en>.

<sup>712</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Shariah (Libya)." Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/327/>.

combat the Gaddafi regime.<sup>713</sup> Al-Zahawi spent time in prison in Libya.<sup>714</sup> In his eulogy to al-Zahawi, an official of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) claimed: “Sheikh al Zahawi, may Allah have mercy on him, began his march in [the] mid-nineties... Allah guided him [to] meet the reviving Imam Osama bin Laden when Osama was in Sudan. Zahawi took from his determination and learned from his methodology, then he was captured quickly by the Saud government, the traitor to Allah and His Messenger.”<sup>715</sup> Al-Zahawi was then reportedly extradited to Libya. After his release from prison, al-Zahawi participated in the overthrow of Gaddafi’s regime during the February 17 Revolution.<sup>716</sup> Despite his time in Afghanistan, al-Zahawi publicly rejected any links to al-Qaida in 2013.<sup>717</sup> There are conflicting reports over al-Zahawi’s death. Some sources claim that al-Zahawi was killed during a battle in the fall of 2014.<sup>718</sup> However, the organization publicly announced al-Zahawi’s death in January 2015.<sup>719</sup> It is thought that al-Zahawi died of wounds that he suffered after an ambush by pro-government forces in 2014.<sup>720</sup> In 2014, the United States designated Ansar al-Sharia in Benghazi and Ansar al-Sharia in Derna as Foreign Terrorist Organizations.<sup>721</sup>

<sup>713</sup> BBC Arabic, “أنصار الشريعة في ليبيا يعلن مقتل زعيم التنظيم محمد الزهاوي ويتوعد بالانتقام,” [https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/01/150124\\_libya\\_ansar](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/01/150124_libya_ansar).

<sup>714</sup> BBC Arabic, “أنصار الشريعة في ليبيا يعلن مقتل زعيم التنظيم محمد الزهاوي ويتوعد بالانتقام,” [https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/01/150124\\_libya\\_ansar](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/01/150124_libya_ansar).

<sup>715</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, Ansar al Sharia Libya Leader Met with Osama bin Laden, Followed His ‘Methodology.’” *Long War Journal*, February 11, 2015.

<sup>716</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “مقتل زعيم أنصار الشريعة الليبي بمعارك في بنغازي,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2015/1/24/%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83>.

<sup>717</sup> France 24, “زعيم مجموعة أنصار الشريعة في ليبيا ينفي أية صلة مع تنظيم القاعدة,” <https://www.france24.com/ar/20131203-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%8A>.

<sup>718</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “مقتل زعيم أنصار الشريعة الليبي بمعارك في بنغازي,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2015/1/24/%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83>.

<sup>719</sup> BBC Arabic, “أنصار الشريعة في ليبيا يعلن مقتل زعيم التنظيم محمد الزهاوي ويتوعد بالانتقام,” [https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/01/150124\\_libya\\_ansar](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/01/150124_libya_ansar).

<sup>720</sup> Al Jazeera, “Libya’s Ansar al-Sharia Leader Dies Months after Ambush,” January 23, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/1/23/libyas-ansar-al-sharia-leader-dies-months-after-ambush>.

<sup>721</sup> National Counterterrorism Center, “Ansar al-Sharia,” [https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/ansar\\_al\\_sharia.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/ansar_al_sharia.html).

## Abu Khalid al-Madani

Abu Khalid al-Madani succeeded Mohammad al-Zahawi as leader of Ansar al-Sharia Libya.<sup>722</sup> Al-Madani was born in the town of Sabha in southwestern Libya.<sup>723</sup> Al-Madani was reportedly a member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and spent time in the Abu Salim prison in Libya.<sup>724</sup> After his release, al-Madani participated in the February 17 Revolution and was a member of the Rafallah al-Sahati Brigade before joining Ansar al-Sharia.<sup>725</sup> In 2017, al-Madani was killed in an airstrike conducted by an unknown aircraft.<sup>726</sup>

## Dernah Mujahideen Shura Council

### Salim Derby

Salim Derby was the founding leader of the Dernah Mujahideen Shura Council. Derby was born in 1972 in Tobruk, Libya.<sup>727</sup> In the 1990s, Derby joined the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and

<sup>722</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Shariah (Libya)." Last modified July 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/327/>.

<sup>723</sup> Ahmed Gomaa, "أمير تنظيم أنصار الشريعة في ليبيا يدعو الإرهابيين لمواصلة القتال ضد الجيش"، [https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/11/16/%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84/3513008#goog\\_rewarded](https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/11/16/%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84/3513008#goog_rewarded).

<sup>724</sup> Ahmed Gomaa, "أمير تنظيم أنصار الشريعة في ليبيا يدعو الإرهابيين لمواصلة القتال ضد الجيش"، [https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/11/16/%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84/3513008#goog\\_rewarded](https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/11/16/%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84/3513008#goog_rewarded).

<sup>725</sup> Ahmed Gomaa, "أمير تنظيم أنصار الشريعة في ليبيا يدعو الإرهابيين لمواصلة القتال ضد الجيش"، [https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/11/16/%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84/3513008#goog\\_rewarded](https://www.youm7.com/story/2017/11/16/%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84/3513008#goog_rewarded).

<sup>726</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "مقتل قائد 'انصار الشريعة' في بنغازي بغارة مجهولة"، <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2017/7/9/%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%8>.

<sup>727</sup> Akhbar Libya 24, "الإرهابي 'دربي' بين حقيقته وما أورد الظهور به .. ولماذا اختار درنة منطلق لعملته الإرهابية"، <https://akhbarlibya24.net/2020/08/10/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%>

spent years combating the Gaddafi regime.<sup>728</sup> In 2011, Derby reportedly helped found<sup>729</sup> and commanded the Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade.<sup>730</sup> In December 2014, Derby announced the formation of the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council in a statement that criticized “the work of the criminal Haftar.”<sup>731</sup> The Islamic State in Libya killed Derby in 2015 during clashes in Derna, Libya.<sup>732</sup>

### *Atiya Sayyed al-Sha’eri*

Atiya Sayyed al-Sha’eri replaced Salim Derby as head of the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council following the latter’s death.<sup>733</sup> While little information is available surrounding al-Sha’eri’s early life, he reportedly served as a commander in the Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade before taking control of the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council.<sup>734</sup> Al-Sha’eri led the organization until his death in 2018,<sup>735</sup> when the Libyan National Army reportedly killed al-Sha’eri during a firefight in eastern Libya.<sup>736</sup>

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<https://akhbarlibya24.net/2020/08/10/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%87-%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B8%D9%87>

<sup>728</sup> Akhbar Libya 24, “الإرهابي ‘دربي’ بين حقيقته وما أورد الظهور به .. ولماذا اختار درنة منطلق لعملته الإرهابية,”

<https://akhbarlibya24.net/2020/08/10/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%87-%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B8%D9%87>

<sup>729</sup> Akhbar Libya 24, “الإرهابي ‘دربي’ بين حقيقته وما أورد الظهور به .. ولماذا اختار درنة منطلق لعملته الإرهابية,”

<https://akhbarlibya24.net/2020/08/10/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%87-%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B8%D9%87>

<sup>730</sup> Kevin Truitte, “The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council: A Revolutionary Islamist Coalition in Libya,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 5 (2018).

<sup>731</sup> Kevin Truitte, “The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council: A Revolutionary Islamist Coalition in Libya,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 5 (2018), 6.

<sup>732</sup> Alexander Decina, “General Hifter’s Machiavelli Plan to Get American Support,” *The National Interest*, June 29, 2015, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/libyan-general-hifters-machiavellian-plan-get-american-13210>.

<sup>733</sup> Kevin Truitte, “The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council: A Revolutionary Islamist Coalition in Libya,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 5 (2018).

<sup>734</sup> Kevin Truitte, “The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council: A Revolutionary Islamist Coalition in Libya,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 5 (2018).

<sup>735</sup> Kevin Truitte, “The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council: A Revolutionary Islamist Coalition in Libya,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 5 (2018).

<sup>736</sup> Agenzia Nova, “Libia: ucciso il capo del Consiglio della Shura dei mujahidin di Derna,” (2018), <https://www.agenzianova.com/a/5b31de0da1d3d4.71237362/1975348/2018-06-26/libia-ucciso-il-capo-del-consiglio-della-shura-dei-mujahidin-di-derna>.

## February 17th Martyrs Brigade

### *Fawzi Bukatf*

Fawzi Bukatf was the founding leader of the February 17th Martyrs Brigade.<sup>737</sup> In 1984, Bukatf was first arrested on charges of affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood, remaining in prison until 1992.<sup>738</sup> He was later arrested in 1996 and 1998 and sentenced to life in prison before being released in an amnesty agreement in 2006.<sup>739</sup> Aside from years of imprisonment in the Abu Salim prison, Bukatf was also an engineer for the Arabian Gulf Oil Company.<sup>740</sup> In 2011, Bukatf was nominated to head a “military committee” of defectors from Benghazi’s police force.<sup>741</sup> According to the International Crisis Group, Bukatf also established the Revolutionary Brigades Coalition.<sup>742</sup> Discussing the need for greater coordination between armed groups, Bukatf stated: “In the early days, Misratans were fighting for Misrata and Zintanis for Zintan. By the end of May 2011, it was clear that we had to gather together coalitions of brigades. We couldn’t fight well if we did not coordinate ourselves.”<sup>743</sup> The February 17th Martyrs Brigade was eventually formed in August 2011 under Bukatf’s leadership.<sup>744</sup> By 2012, however, Amraja'a al-Msheiti had replaced Bukatf as leader of the organization.<sup>745</sup>

### *Amraja'a al-Msheiti*

Amraja'a al-Msheiti replaced Fawzi Bukatf as leader of the February 17th Martyrs Brigade.<sup>746</sup> Al-Msheiti was born in 1984 in the Bohdema neighborhood in Benghazi, Libya.<sup>747</sup> Al-Msheiti reportedly had formal military training and rose to the rank of Colonel.<sup>748</sup> In 2012, the General Staff of the Libyan National Army issued a statement promoting al-Msheiti as leader of the

<sup>737</sup> Mary Fitzgerald, “Finding Their Place: Libya’s Islamists During and After the Revolution.” *The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath* (2015): 177-204.

<sup>738</sup> Mohamed Fawzy, “قضية فوزي بوكتف.. فضيحة تعيد للأذهان جرائم جماعة الإخوان في ليبيا,” <https://lywitness.com/68073/%D9%82%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B2%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%83%D8%AA%D9%81-%D9%81%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B0%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86/>.

<sup>739</sup> Mary Fitzgerald, “Finding Their Place: Libya’s Islamists During and After the Revolution.” *The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath* (2015): 177-204.

<sup>740</sup> El Watan, “فوزي بوكتف.. الذراع الجديد لتركيا في ليبيا,” [https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/4877168#goog\\_rewarded](https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/4877168#goog_rewarded).

<sup>741</sup> Mary Fitzgerald, “Finding Their Place: Libya’s Islamists During and After the Revolution.” *The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath* (2015): 177-204.

<sup>742</sup> International Crisis Group, “Divided We Stand: Libya’s Enduring Conflicts,” (2012).

<sup>743</sup> International Crisis Group, “Divided We Stand: Libya’s Enduring Conflicts,” (2012), p. 18.

<sup>744</sup> Carey, Sabine C., Neil J. Mitchell and Katrin Paula. 2022. “The Life, Death and Diversity of Pro- Government Militias: The Fully Revised Pro-Government Militias Database Version 2.0”. *Research & Politics* 9(1).

<sup>745</sup> Almotamar, “الجيش الليبي يتولى قيادة ميليشيات في بنغازي,” <https://almotamar.net/news/print.php?id=102124>.

<sup>746</sup> The Jamestown Foundation, *Terrorism Monitor: In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror*, Volume X, Issue 19 (2012).

<sup>747</sup> Al Hadath, “في وجود الدببية.. أحد عناصر “شورى بنغازي” الإرهابية يحصل على رتبة عسكرية بحفل كلية الدفاع الجوي مصراة,” <https://libyaalhadath.net/?p=32395>.

<sup>748</sup> The Jamestown Foundation, *Terrorism Monitor: In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror*, Volume X, Issue 19 (2012).

February 17th Martyrs Brigade.<sup>749</sup> According to the Wilson Center, “The 17 February Martyrs Brigade, one of the largest and best armed militias in eastern Libya, was formed by members of the Muslim Brotherhood during the 2011 uprising. The Brigade, which previously received funding from Libya’s Defense Ministry, has carried out law enforcement functions in southern and eastern Libya. It is based in Benghazi and battled Gen. Haftar’s forces throughout 2014. Several hundred fighters reportedly left the group to join Ansar al Sharia in 2012, but the two groups maintain close ties.”<sup>750</sup> However, the organization formally dissolved in 2014.<sup>751</sup>

## Libyan Islamic Fighting Group

### *Abd al-Ghaffar al-Duwadi*

Abd al-Ghaffar al-Duwadi, also known as ‘Abd al-Salam, was born in the town of Sabrata, Libya.<sup>752</sup> Al-Duwadi, a former medical student, spent time in Afghanistan, where he reportedly established a militant training camp.<sup>753</sup> Al-Duwadi became the founding leader of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group as the group coalesced in the early 1990s.<sup>754</sup> Al-Duwadi later traveled to Egypt. Upon arriving in Egypt, al-Duwadi was arrested and extradited to Libya in 1992, remaining in prison until early 2009.<sup>755</sup>

### *Abdelhakim Belhadj*

Abdelhakim Belhadj, also known as Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq, became the leader of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group in 1995.<sup>756</sup> According to an arrest warrant issued by the Libyan government in 2002, Belhadj was born in 1966 in the Souq al-Jumaa area of Tripoli.<sup>757</sup> He later studied civil engineering at al-Fateh University.<sup>758</sup> Belhadj also reportedly fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union in the 1980s.<sup>759</sup> After leaving Afghanistan, he reportedly lived in Sudan

<sup>749</sup> Almotamar, “الجيش الليبي يتولى قيادة ميليشيات في بنغازي” <https://almotamar.net/news/print.php?id=102124>.

<sup>750</sup> Cameron Glenn, “Libya’s Islamists: Who They Are - And What They Want,” *Wilson Center*, August 8, 2017. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/libyas-islamists-who-they-are-and-what-they-want>.

<sup>751</sup> Carey, Sabine C., Neil J. Mitchell and Katrin Paula. 2022. “The Life, Death and Diversity of Pro- Government Militias: The Fully Revised Pro-Government Militias Database Version 2.0”. *Research & Politics* 9(1).

<sup>752</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi Books, 2011), 53.

<sup>753</sup> Al Chourouk, “من هو مفتاح الدواي عضو الجماعة الإسلامية الليبية المقاتلة المتوفي في حادث سقوط الطائرة الليبية؟” [https://www.turess.com/alchourouk/1039544#google\\_vignette](https://www.turess.com/alchourouk/1039544#google_vignette).

<sup>754</sup> Hussam Haddad, “الإسلامية المقاتلة الليبية... مفرخة الميليشيات الإرهابية” <https://www.islamist-movements.com/3455>.

<sup>755</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi Books, 2011), 65.

<sup>756</sup> Camille Tawil, *Brothers in Arms: The Story of al-Qa’ida and the Arab Jihadists* (Saqi Books, 2011).

<sup>757</sup> BBC, “Abdul Hakim Belhaj: Libyan Rebel Commander Who Got UK Apology,” May 10, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14786753>.

<sup>758</sup> BBC, “Abdul Hakim Belhaj: Libyan Rebel Commander Who Got UK Apology,” May 10, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14786753>.

<sup>759</sup> David Poort, “Q&A: Top NTC Commander Abdel Hakim Belhadj,” *Al Jazeera*, September 20, 2011, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2011/9/20/qa-top-ntc-commander-abdel-hakim-belhadj>.

until the mid-1990s.<sup>760</sup> He then returned to Libya to combat the Gaddafi regime and later fled the country, spending time in countries such as Syria, Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran.<sup>761</sup> Belhadj was eventually arrested by the CIA in Bangkok in 2004 and extradited to Libya, where he was imprisoned in the Abu Salim prison.<sup>762</sup> In 2001, the United States sanctioned the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group under Executive Order 13224.<sup>763</sup>

## Malaysia

### Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia

#### *Zainon Ismail*

Zainon Ismail was the founding leader of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia upon the organization's formation in October 1995.<sup>764</sup> Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia emerged from Halaqa Pakinda and had links to the Malaysian Islamist party Parti Islam Se-Malaysia.<sup>765</sup> The organization was established to “seek religious purity among Malay-Muslims” and implement “*syariah* laws in Malaysia and subsequently to establish an Islamic state.”<sup>766</sup> Ismail is noted to be a Malaysian from the state of Kedah who fought against the USSR in Afghanistan.<sup>767</sup> Ismail was reportedly replaced as leader of the group by Nik Adli Abdul Aziz in 1999 following internal organizational deliberations.<sup>768</sup>

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<sup>760</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “من هو عبد الحكيم بلحاج?” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2017/1/19/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AC>.

<sup>761</sup> David Poort, “Q&A: Top NTC Commander Abdel Hakim Belhadj,” Al Jazeera, September 20, 2011, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2011/9/20/qa-top-ntc-commander-abdel-hakim-belhadj>.

<sup>762</sup> David Poort, “Q&A: Top NTC Commander Abdel Hakim Belhadj,” Al Jazeera, September 20, 2011, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2011/9/20/qa-top-ntc-commander-abdel-hakim-belhadj>.

<sup>763</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Executive Order 13224,” <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>.

<sup>764</sup> Amira Jadoon, Nakissa Jahanbani, Elina Noor, Marley Carroll, and William Frangia, “Risks, Recruits, and Plots: Understanding and Mitigating the Influence of the Islamic State in Malaysia,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2022).

<sup>765</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

<sup>766</sup> Amira Jadoon, Nakissa Jahanbani, Elina Noor, Marley Carroll, and William Frangia, “Risks, Recruits, and Plots: Understanding and Mitigating the Influence of the Islamic State in Malaysia,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2022), 10.

<sup>767</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009).

<sup>768</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

### *Nik Adli Abdul Aziz*

Nik Adli Abdul Aziz reportedly assumed control of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia in 1999.<sup>769</sup> Abdul Aziz was born in the late 1960s<sup>770</sup> and was the son of Nik Aziz Nik Mat, the spiritual leader of Parti Islam Se-Malaysia.<sup>771</sup> Abdul Aziz received madrasa education in Pakistan and also fought against the USSR in Afghanistan.<sup>772</sup> In terms of employment, he was noted to be “a religious teacher.”<sup>773</sup> In 2001, Malaysian authorities arrested Abdul Aziz and other suspected militants on the basis of the Internal Security Act that allowed for detention without trial.<sup>774</sup>

### *Zulkifli Abdhir*

Zulkifli Abdhir was born in January 1996 in Muar, Johor, Malaysia.<sup>775</sup> Zulkifli completed his secondary education in 1983 and subsequently secured a Malaysian government scholarship to study engineering in the United States.<sup>776</sup> Zulkifli gained expertise in explosives while fighting in Afghanistan for three years before returning to Malaysia.<sup>777</sup> In 2007, the United States designated Zulkifli as a Specifically Designated Global Terrorist.<sup>778</sup> Zulkifli reportedly succeeded Nik Adli Abdul Aziz as the leader of Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia following the latter’s arrest.<sup>779</sup> In 2015, Zulkifli was killed during an assault by the Special Action Forces in the Philippines.<sup>780</sup>

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<sup>769</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

<sup>770</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Son of Opposition Leader is Arrested in Sweep,” August 5, 2001, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-aug-05-mn-30840-story.html>.

<sup>771</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, “Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihads in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* (2019): 1-13.

<sup>772</sup> Therese Lee, “Malaysia and the International Security Act: The Insecurity of Human Rights After September 11,” *Singapore Journal of Legal Studies* (2002): 56-72.

<sup>773</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Son of Opposition Leader is Arrested in Sweep,” August 5, 2001, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-aug-05-mn-30840-story.html>.

<sup>774</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Son of Opposition Leader is Arrested in Sweep,” August 5, 2001, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-aug-05-mn-30840-story.html>.

<sup>775</sup> Zachary Abuza, “Zulkifli bin Hir: JI’s U.S.-Trained Engineer,” *Jamestown Monitor*, April 5, 2007.

<sup>776</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009). Within this volume, see Ronan Gunaratna, “The Current and Emerging Extremist Threat in Malaysia,” (2009): 12-29.

<sup>777</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009).

<sup>778</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, “Specially Designated Global Terrorist and His Brother Indicted for Providing Material Support to Terrorists,” August 3, 2007, [https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2007/August/07\\_nsd\\_578.html](https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/2007/August/07_nsd_578.html).

<sup>779</sup> Scott Helfstein (ed.), *Radical Islamic Ideology in Southeast Asia* (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2009).

<sup>780</sup> Tim Hume, “FBI Confirms ‘Most Wanted’ Terror Suspect Marwan Killed after Philippines Raid,” *CNN*, April 3, 2015, <https://www.cnn.com/2015/04/03/world/philippines-marwan-confirmed-dead/index.html>.

## Jemaah Islamiya

### *Abdullah Sungkar*

Abdullah Sungkar was born in 1937 to a prominent family of traders of Yemeni descent in Solo.<sup>781</sup> Sungkar received early religious education from his father, a religious teacher in Solo, and later graduated from the Muhamadiyah Islamic University of Surakarta in 1957.<sup>782</sup> After graduating, Sungkar reportedly worked as a religious teacher and preacher and also became increasingly active in politics.<sup>783</sup> Sungkar was briefly detained in 1977 and was arrested again in 1978 on subversion charges for his alleged involvement in Darul Islam.<sup>784</sup> Sungkar was released from prison in 1982 and fled to Malaysia with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in 1985.<sup>785</sup> In Malaysia, Sungkar and Ba'asyir set up a religious school called Pondok Pesantren Lukmantul Hakiem.<sup>786</sup> This time in Malaysia witnessed the growth of their militant activities: "In exile, they expanded their network and began sending men to wage guerrilla war against the Soviet army in Afghanistan... Those who traveled to the training camps of Pakistan and the battlefields of Afghanistan gained important military skills, including instruction on explosives, mines, maps, and infantry tactics. The men were also exposed to new ideologies through their contact with Abdullah Azzam, the man most responsible for catalyzing the foreign fighter migration to Afghanistan."<sup>787</sup> During the 1990s, Sungkar and Ba'asyir co-founded Jemaah Islamiya, with Sungkar serving as the organization's top leader.<sup>788</sup> The fall of President Suharto's regime in 1998 allowed Sungkar to return to Indonesia.<sup>789</sup> Shortly after this return, however, Sungkar died of natural causes in 1999.<sup>790</sup>

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<sup>781</sup> International Crisis Group, "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operations," December 11, 2002.

<sup>782</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>783</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>784</sup> International Crisis Group, "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operations," December 11, 2002.

<sup>785</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>786</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>787</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, "Jemaah Islamiyah," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011), 2-3.

<sup>788</sup> The International Crisis Groups dates Jemaah Islamiya's formation to 1995. International Crisis Group, "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operations," December 11, 2002.

<sup>789</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, "Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihad in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 1 (2019): 1-13.

<sup>790</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

## *Abu Bakar Ba'asyir*

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir succeeded Abdullah Sungkar as leader of Jemaah Islamiya.<sup>791</sup> Ba'asyir was born in East Java in August 1938.<sup>792</sup> In a similar fashion to Abdullah Sungkar, Ba'asyir's family was of Yemeni/Hadramauti descent.<sup>793</sup> Ba'asyir received religious education at an early age and continued his studies at al-Irsyad Islamic University in Surakarta, graduating in 1963.<sup>794</sup> Alongside Abdullah Sungkar, Ba'asyir created a religious seminary (*pesantren*) in Ngruki and was an active supporter of the Darul Islam movement.<sup>795</sup> In 1978, Ba'asyir was arrested and remained in prison until 1982.<sup>796</sup> Reports indicate that "it was in prison that Ba'asyir and Sungkar grew even more radical in their thinking and ambitions."<sup>797</sup> After being released, Ba'asyir traveled with Sungkar to Malaysia to avoid future arrests in Indonesia.<sup>798</sup> Ba'asyir helped co-found Jemaah Islamiya while in exile.<sup>799</sup> The fall of President Suharto's regime in 1998 allowed Sungkar and Ba'asyir to return to Indonesia.<sup>800</sup> However, Sungkar's death in 1999 left Jemaah Islamiya "in the hands of Ba'asyir, whom many saw as a weak leader."<sup>801</sup> Ba'asyir reportedly served as Jemaah Islamiya's leader until his arrest in 2002<sup>802</sup> due to his connections to the 2002 Bali bombings.<sup>803</sup> The United States designated Jemaah Islamiya as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2002.<sup>804</sup>

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<sup>791</sup> Scott Atran, "The Emir: An Interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Alleged Leader of the Southeast Asian Jemaah Islamiyah Organization," December 16, 2005; David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, "Jemaah Islamiyah," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

<sup>792</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>793</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>794</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>795</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007).

<sup>796</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, "Jemaah Islamiyah," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

<sup>797</sup> Farish A. Noor, "Ngruki Revisited: Modernity and Its Discontents at the Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin of Ngruki, Surakarta," No. 139 (October 2007), 3.

<sup>798</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, "Jemaah Islamiyah," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011).

<sup>799</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>800</sup> Kirsten E. Schulze and Julie Chernov Hwang, "Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: New Insights into Jihad in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 1 (2019): 1-13.

<sup>801</sup> David Gordon and Samuel Lindo, "Jemaah Islamiyah," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2011), 3.

<sup>802</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>803</sup> Al Jazeera, "Indonesian Leader Behind 2002 Bali Bombings to be Freed: Lawyer," January 18, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/1/18/indonesian-leader-behind-2002-bali-bombings-to-be-freed-lawyer>.

<sup>804</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

## *Abu Rusydan*

Abu Rusydan, also known as Thoriquddin, succeeded Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as leader of Jemaah Islamiya. Abu Rusydan was born in 1960 in Central Java, Indonesia.<sup>805</sup> He was reportedly inducted into the Darul Islam organization at 15 years of age<sup>806</sup> and was university-educated.<sup>807</sup> Abu Rusydan is also thought to have fought in Afghanistan.<sup>808</sup> According to the United Nations Security Council, Abu Rusydan traveled to Afghanistan for paramilitary training in 1986 and stayed until 1989.<sup>809</sup> As stated by the United Nations Security Council, Abu Rusydan became emir of Jemaah Islamiya after Ba'asyir's 2002 arrest.<sup>810</sup> In 2003, he was arrested in Indonesia on charges of harboring one of the masterminds of the 2002 Bali bombings and sentenced in February 2004 to three and a half years in prison.<sup>811</sup> Muhammad Naim reportedly took over the position of "caretaker" emir in 2004.<sup>812</sup>

## *Zarkasih*

Zarkasih, also known as Muhammad Naim, succeeded Abu Rusydan as Jemaah Islamiya's leader.<sup>813</sup> Naim was reportedly born in December 1962.<sup>814</sup> While little information is available about his life, Naim is believed to have joined the mujahideen in Afghanistan.<sup>815</sup> Naim reportedly served as Jemaah Islamiya's "caretaker" emir until his arrest in Indonesia in 2007.<sup>816</sup>

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<sup>805</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Designates Jemaah Islamiyah's Emir, Top Bomb Maker and Military Comma," May 12, 2005, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js2441>.

<sup>806</sup> Julie Chernov Hwang and Kirsten E. Schulze, "Why They Join: Pathways into Indonesia Jihadist Organizations," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 30, no. 6 (2018): 911-932.

<sup>807</sup> Sian Powell, "New JI Terror Boss Tagged as 'Very Dangerous,'" *The Australian* (2003).

<sup>808</sup> Julie Chernov Hwang and Kirsten E. Schulze, "Why They Join: Pathways into Indonesia Jihadist Organizations," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 30, no. 6 (2018): 911-932.

<sup>809</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Abu Rusdan," February 2, 2023, [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan).

<sup>810</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Abu Rusdan," February 2, 2023, [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abu-rusdan).

<sup>811</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>812</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>813</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>814</sup> Detik News, "Sidang Perdana Tersangka Teroris Zarkasih Digelar," <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-867868/sidang-perdana-tersangka-teroris-zarkasih-digelar>.

<sup>815</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7140846.stm>.

<sup>816</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jemaah Islamiyah." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

## *Para Wijayanto*

Para Wijayanto reportedly succeeded Zarkasih as leader of Jemaah Islamiyah.<sup>817</sup> Wijayanto was born in August 1964 and is the son of an Indonesian Air Force officer.<sup>818</sup> Wijayanto studied at the Faculty of Technology at Diponegoro University in Central Java and subsequently worked in the civil engineering division of the PT Pura Group.<sup>819</sup> Sources highlight that Wijayanto may have studied in Malaysia as well as traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>820</sup> In 2019, Indonesian authorities arrested Wijayanto in Bekasi, Indonesia.<sup>821</sup>

# Mali

## al-Mourabitoun

### *Abu Bakr al-Nasri*

Abu Bakr al-Nasri was reportedly the first leader of al-Mourabitoun.<sup>822</sup> Al-Nasri, who was from Egypt, is noted to have fought in Afghanistan alongside the Taliban and also worked at an al-Qaeda camp in Libya.<sup>823</sup> Al-Nasri also reportedly had close ties with al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri.<sup>824</sup> In August 2013, al-Mourabitoun was formed following the merger of the al-Mulathamun Battalion and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO).<sup>825</sup> Al-

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<sup>817</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jemaah Islamiyah.” Last modified June 1, 2021.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/420/>.

<sup>818</sup> BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, “Indonesian Website Provides Info on Jemaah Islamiyah’s Para Wijayanto,” September 3, 2009.

<sup>819</sup> BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, “Indonesian Website Provides Info on Jemaah Islamiyah’s Para Wijayanto,” September 3, 2009.

<sup>820</sup> BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, “Indonesian Website Provides Info on Jemaah Islamiyah’s Para Wijayanto,” September 3, 2009.

<sup>821</sup> ABC News, “Indonesia Arrests Alleged Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Leader Para Wijayanto,” July 1, 2019, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-02/indonesian-police-arrest-jemaah-islamiyah-network-leader/11269286>.

<sup>822</sup> Christine Muratet, “Mali: qui sont les nouveaux chefs des katibas jihadistes?” May 14, 2014, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20140514-mali-etat-jihadistes-apres-mort-emir-al-mourabitoune-aqmi-al-qaida-mujao-belmokhtar>; Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University. <https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>.

<sup>823</sup> Christine Muratet, “Mali: qui sont les nouveaux chefs des katibas jihadistes?” May 14, 2014, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20140514-mali-etat-jihadistes-apres-mort-emir-al-mourabitoune-aqmi-al-qaida-mujao-belmokhtar>.

<sup>824</sup> Christine Muratet, “Mali: qui sont les nouveaux chefs des katibas jihadistes?” May 14, 2014, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20140514-mali-etat-jihadistes-apres-mort-emir-al-mourabitoune-aqmi-al-qaida-mujao-belmokhtar>.

<sup>825</sup> Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University. <https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>.

Nasri was killed by French military forces in April 2014 in the Timetrine region of Mali.<sup>826</sup> The United States had previously sanctioned al-Mourabitoun under Executive Order 13224 in 2013.<sup>827</sup>

### *Ahmed al-Tilemsi*

Ahmed al-Tilemsi, also known as Abderrahmane Ould el Amar, was born in 1977 in the Gao region of Mali.<sup>828</sup> Reportedly of Arab descent,<sup>829</sup> al-Tilemsi was involved in drug trafficking before joining the jihadist movement.<sup>830</sup> He fought with the Tariq Ibn Ziyad organization and later joined al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb.<sup>831</sup> Al-Tilemsi was arrested in April 2005 in Mauritania, but escaped the following year.<sup>832</sup> He was arrested again in Mali in September 2008 and was released in April 2009.<sup>833</sup> Al-Tilemsi later joined the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO); however, reports differ over his exact role. While some sources note that he was an influential leader but not a top leader,<sup>834</sup> other reports claim that he founded MUJAO alongside Hamad el Khairy and served as the organization's top military leader.<sup>835</sup> The United States designated al-Tilemsi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2012.<sup>836</sup> Following al-Nasri's

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<sup>826</sup> Christine Muratet, "Mali: qui sont les nouveaux chefs des katibas jihadistes?" May 14, 2014, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20140514-mali-etat-jihadistes-apres-mort-emir-al-mourabitoune-aqmi-al-qaida-mujao-belmokhtar>.

<sup>827</sup> Federal Register, "In the Matter of the Designation of Al-Mulathamun Battalion, Also Known as al-Mulathamun Brigade, Also Known as al-Muwaqqi'un bil-Dima, Also Known as Those Signed in Blood Battalion, Also Known as Signatories in Blood, Also Known as Those who Sign in Blood, Also Known as Witnesses in Blood, Also Known as Signed-in-Blood Battalion, Also Known as Masked Men Brigade, Also Known as Khaled Abu al-Abbas Brigade, Also Known as al-Mulathamun Masked Ones Brigade, Also Known as al-Murabitoun, Also Known as The Sentinels; as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist Pursuant to Section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224, as Amended," December 19, 2013, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2013/12/19/2013-30252/in-the-matter-of-the-designation-of-al-mulathamun-battalion-also-known-as-al-mulathamun-brigade-also>.

<sup>828</sup> Andrew Lebovich, "The Local Face of Jihadism in Northern Mali," *CTC Sentinel* 6, no. 6 (2013): 4-10; Office of Foreign Assets Control, "Sanctions List Search," <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/Details.aspx?id=15611>.

<sup>829</sup> Andrew Lebovich, "The Local Face of Jihadism in Northern Mali," *CTC Sentinel* 6, no. 6 (2013): 4-10.

<sup>830</sup> David Thompson, "Ahmed al-Tilemsi: portrait d'un «des principaux financiers du Mujao»" *RFI*, December 11, 2014, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20141211-mali-ahmed-al-telemsi-portait-principaux-financiers-mujao>.

<sup>831</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Abderrahmane Ould El Amar," [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abderrahmane-ould-el-amar](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abderrahmane-ould-el-amar).

<sup>832</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Abderrahmane Ould El Amar," [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abderrahmane-ould-el-amar](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abderrahmane-ould-el-amar).

<sup>833</sup> Open Sanctions, "Abderrahmane Ould El Amar," <https://www.opensanctions.org/entities/NK-W6nsQhfh7dGZUt5wb3CpMK/>; United Nations Security Council, "Abderrahmane Ould El Amar," [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/abderrahmane-ould-el-amar](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/abderrahmane-ould-el-amar).

<sup>834</sup> David Thompson, "Ahmed al-Tilemsi: portrait d'un «des principaux financiers du Mujao»" *RFI*, December 11, 2014, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20141211-mali-ahmed-al-telemsi-portait-principaux-financiers-mujao>.

<sup>835</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Designations of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Hamad el Khairy, and Ahmed el Tilemsi," December 7, 2012, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/12/201660.htm>; Bill Roggio and Caleb Weiss, "French Troops Kill MUJAO Founder During Raid in Mali," *Long War Journal*, December 11, 2014, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/12/us\\_wanted\\_malian\\_jih.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/12/us_wanted_malian_jih.php).

<sup>836</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Designations of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Hamad el Khairy, and Ahmed el Tilemsi," December 7, 2012, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/12/201660.htm>.

death, al-Tilemsi reportedly took command of al-Mourabitoun and commanded the group until his death, which occurred during a special operations mission conducted by the French forces in Gao in December 2014.<sup>837</sup>

### *Mokhtar Belmokhtar*

Mokhtar Belmokhtar, also known as Khalid Abu al-Abbas, was born in 1972 in the town of Metlili in the Ghardaïa Province of Algeria.<sup>838</sup> Belmokhtar reportedly completed some secondary schooling before leaving the country for Afghanistan.<sup>839</sup> In Afghanistan, Belmokhtar is noted to have trained at al-Qaida camps, fought the Najibullah regime, and met with numerous influential jihadist figures.<sup>840</sup> Belmokhtar also suffered an injury in Afghanistan that caused him to lose an eye, earning him the “one-eyed” nickname.<sup>841</sup> Belmokhtar reportedly returned from Afghanistan at the end of 1992<sup>842</sup> or early 1993.<sup>843</sup> Back in Algeria for the early stages of the civil war, Belmokhtar established a local militia known as the Martyrs’ Brigade in Ghardaïa.<sup>844</sup> Through his militant activities, Belmokhtar distinguished himself through stealing vehicles from oil companies, cross-border smuggling between Mali and Algeria, and the murder of five Sonatrach workers in 1995, after which the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) declared him as the organization’s Saharan emir.<sup>845</sup> Belmokhtar later joined the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat/al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).<sup>846</sup> In 2001, Belmokhtar hosted an al-Qaida emissary traveling to Niger, Algeria, and Mali: “the visit not only elevated Belmokhtar’s reputation but also reflected his ability to navigate the Sahara in a geographical and political sense.”<sup>847</sup> In 2003, the United States

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<sup>837</sup> Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University. <https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>.

<sup>838</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “بلمختار.. من إمارة الملثمين” إلى المرابطين”, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/1/%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1>.

<sup>839</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “بلمختار.. من إمارة الملثمين” إلى المرابطين”, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/1/%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1>.

<sup>840</sup> Andrew Wojtanik, “Mokhtar Belmokhtar: One-Eyed Firebrand of North Africa and the Sahel,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2015).

<sup>841</sup> Andrew Wojtanik, “Mokhtar Belmokhtar: One-Eyed Firebrand of North Africa and the Sahel,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2015).

<sup>842</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “بلمختار.. من إمارة الملثمين” إلى المرابطين”, <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/12/1/%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1>.

<sup>843</sup> Andrew Wojtanik, “Mokhtar Belmokhtar: One-Eyed Firebrand of North Africa and the Sahel,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2015).

<sup>844</sup> Andrew Wojtanik, “Mokhtar Belmokhtar: One-Eyed Firebrand of North Africa and the Sahel,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2015).

<sup>845</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>846</sup> Andrew Wojtanik, “Mokhtar Belmokhtar: One-Eyed Firebrand of North Africa and the Sahel,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* (2015).

<sup>847</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

designated Belmokhtar for his involvement in terrorism.<sup>848</sup> Due to internal disputes, Belmokhtar left AQIM in 2012 and formed the al-Mulathamun Battalion, which is also known as the Those Who Sign in Blood Brigade.<sup>849</sup> In August 2013, Belmokhtar merged his organization with the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) to create al-Mourabitoun.<sup>850</sup> Belmokhtar reportedly took command of the organization in 2015.<sup>851</sup> The same year, he rejected the oath of allegiance given by Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahraoui to the Islamic State's leaders and highlighted the group's allegiance to al-Qaida.<sup>852</sup> Despite repeated reports of his death,<sup>853</sup> Belmokhtar remained in charge of the organization until its merger with other jihadist groups, such as the Macina Liberation Front and Ansar al-Dine, to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM) in 2017.<sup>854</sup> In 2021, Ayman al-Zawahiri confirmed Belmokhtar's death.<sup>855</sup>

## Ansar al-Dine

### *Iyad Ag Ghali*

Iyad Ag Ghali, also known as Abu Fadl, was the founding leader of Ansar al-Dine in Mali. Ghali was born in 1954 in the city of Kidal, Mali.<sup>856</sup> Ghali is of Tuareg ethnicity and a member of the Ifoghas tribe.<sup>857</sup> During the 1990s, Ghali played a prominent role in the Tuareg revolt in Mali, reportedly serving as the secretary-general of the Popular Movement of Azawad and the “undisputed leader” of the Tuareg rebels.<sup>858</sup> During the 2000s, Ghali reportedly studied at a

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<sup>848</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, “U.S. Designates Three Individuals And One Organization Involved in Terrorism,” October 24, 2003, [https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js944#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20--%20The%20U.S.%20Treasury,Call%20and%20Combat%20\(GSPC\)](https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js944#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20--%20The%20U.S.%20Treasury,Call%20and%20Combat%20(GSPC)).

<sup>849</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “The Those Who Sign in Blood Brigade.” Last modified June 30, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/308/>.

<sup>850</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Al Mourabitoun.” Last modified June 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/307/>.

<sup>851</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Al Mourabitoun.” Last modified June 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/307/>.

<sup>852</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Al Mourabitoun.” Last modified June 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/307/>.

<sup>853</sup> For instance, see France 24, ““Uncatchable” Islamist Militant Belmokhtar Reported Killed in US Air Strike,” June 15, 2015, <https://www.france24.com/en/20150615-terrorist-belmokhtar-reported-killed-us-air-strike-libya-algerian>.

<sup>854</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen.” Last modified October 31, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/2979/>.

<sup>855</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Ayman al-Zawahiri Confirms Death of Sahelian Jihadist Mastermind Mokhtar Belmokhtar,” *The Jamestown Foundation*, October 28, 2021.

<sup>856</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “إياد غالي” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/3/24/%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A2%D8%BA-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A>.

<sup>857</sup> International Criminal Court, “Iyad Ag Ghaly,” <https://www.icc-cpi.int/defendant/iyad-ag-ghaly>.

<sup>858</sup> Steve Metcalf, “Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali's Islamist Leader,” *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

Mosque in St. Denis, France,<sup>859</sup> as well as served as a Malian diplomat in Saudi Arabia.<sup>860</sup> In 2003, Ghali played a key role in negotiating the release of German tourists kidnapped by the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat.<sup>861</sup> Additionally, Ghali briefly served as head of the 23 May Democratic Alliance for Change.<sup>862</sup> In 2011, Ghali reportedly returned to Mali from Libya following the fall of the Gaddafi regime<sup>863</sup> and founded Ansar al-Dine.<sup>864</sup> Shortly after the formation of Ansar al-Dine, the United States designated Ghali as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist<sup>865</sup> and Ansar al-Dine as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.<sup>866</sup> Ghali continued to lead Ansar al-Dine until the organization merged with other jihadist organizations to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen in 2017.<sup>867</sup>

## Ansaroul Islam

### *Ibrahim Malam Dicko*

Ibrahim Malam Dicko founded Ansaroul Islam in Burkina Faso in 2016. Dicko was reportedly born around 1970 in a Fulani community in Burkina Faso.<sup>868</sup> Dicko first attended a traditional public school before undertaking religious studies in Burkina Faso and abroad.<sup>869</sup> Utilizing his religious education to become a cleric, Dicko taught as an Imam in Niger before returning to

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<sup>859</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Iyad Ag Ghaly," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/iyyad-ag-ghaly>.

<sup>860</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "إياد غالي"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/3/24/%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A2%D8%BA-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A>.

<sup>861</sup> Steve Metcalf, "Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali's Islamist Leader," *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

<sup>862</sup> Steve Metcalf, "Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali's Islamist Leader," *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

<sup>863</sup> Steve Metcalf, "Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali's Islamist Leader," *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

<sup>864</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar Dine." Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/329/>.

<sup>865</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Designations of Iyad ag Ghali, February 26, 2013, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/02/205196.htm>.

<sup>866</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>867</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen." Last modified October 31, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/2979/>.

<sup>868</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>; Koudbi Kaboré, "The Modernity of Islam in Burkina Faso: Contrasting Strategies in Two Emergent Movements," in Abdoulaye Sounaye and André Chappatte (eds.), *Islam and Muslim Life in West Africa: Practices, Trajectories and Influences* (De Gruyter, 2022): 39-62.

<sup>869</sup> Morgane Le Cam, "Comment est né Ansaroul Islam, premier groupe djihadiste de l'Histoire du Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, April 11, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/04/11/comment-est-ne-ansaroul-islam-premier-groupe-djihadiste-de-l-histoire-du-burkina-faso\\_5109520\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/04/11/comment-est-ne-ansaroul-islam-premier-groupe-djihadiste-de-l-histoire-du-burkina-faso_5109520_3212.html); Koudbi Kaboré, "The Modernity of Islam in Burkina Faso: Contrasting Strategies in Two Emergent Movements," in Abdoulaye Sounaye and André Chappatte (eds.), *Islam and Muslim Life in West Africa: Practices, Trajectories and Influences* (De Gruyter, 2022): 39-62.

Burkina Faso in 2009.<sup>870</sup> In 2012, Dicko reportedly joined the jihadist struggle in Mali before being arrested by French troops in 2013 and subsequently transported to Bamako.<sup>871</sup> He was released in 2015 due to a lack of incriminating evidence and returned to Burkina Faso to form Ansaroul Islam.<sup>872</sup> According to *Le Monde*, Dicko died of natural causes in 2017.<sup>873</sup>

### *Jafar Dicko*

Jafar Dicko succeeded his brother as the leader of Ansaroul Islam.<sup>874</sup> Born in Soboulé, Dicko was reportedly 38 years old when he assumed power in 2017.<sup>875</sup> In a similar fashion to his brother, Jafar was influenced by Amadou Koufa, the leader of the Macina Liberation Front.<sup>876</sup> However, Jafar reportedly lacked his brother's leadership skills: "Known for his brutal temper...Jafar purportedly lacks his brother's charisma."<sup>877</sup> The United States designated Ansaroul Islam as a terrorist organization under Executive Order 13224 in 2018 and sanctioned Dicko in 2024.<sup>878</sup>

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<sup>870</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>871</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>872</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>873</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html).

<sup>874</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html); Héni Nsaibia and Caleb Weiss, "Ansaroul Islam and the Growing Terrorist Insurgency in Burkina Faso," *CTC Sentinel* 11, no. 3 (2018): 21-26; Mapping Militants Project. "Ansaroul Islam." Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/2980/>; Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>875</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html).

<sup>876</sup> Seidik Abba, "Jafar Dicko, The New Face of Jihadism in Burkina Faso," *Le Monde Afrique*, December 21, 2017, [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso\\_5232877\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2017/12/21/jafar-dicko-le-nouveau-visage-du-djihadisme-au-burkina-faso_5232877_3212.html).

<sup>877</sup> Pauline Le Roux, "Ansaroul Islam: The Rise and Decline of a Militant Islamist Group in the Sahel," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, July 29, 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/ansaroul-islam-the-rise-and-decline-of-a-militant-islamist-group-in-the-sahel/>.

<sup>878</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "U.S. Targets West African Hostage Takers," April 23, 2024, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2293>.

## Islamic State Greater Sahara

### *Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahraoui*

Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahraoui was born in 1973 in Western Sahara.<sup>879</sup> Al-Sahraoui participated in the Western Sahara independence movement and received military training from the Polisario Front.<sup>880</sup> In 1992, al-Sahraoui fled Western Sahara for Algeria. In Algeria, he would study at the University of Mentouri in Constantine, receiving a social science degree.<sup>881</sup> By the early 2000s, al-Sahraoui reportedly grew increasingly frustrated by the lack of a political settlement between Western Sahara and Morocco and also suffered from health problems.<sup>882</sup> He later began smuggling goods between Mali and Algeria and grew closer to the jihadist movement, joining al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb's Tariq Ibn Ziyad battalion in 2010.<sup>883</sup> Al-Sahraoui subsequently became the spokesperson for the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO).<sup>884</sup> He would subsequently help create al-Mourabitoun in 2013, becoming a senior leader within the group.<sup>885</sup> In 2015, al-Sahraoui pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, claiming to do so on behalf of the entire al-Mourabitoun organization.<sup>886</sup> However, Mokhtar Belmokhtar rejected this oath, and al-Sahraoui splintered with a few dozen fighters to create the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara.<sup>887</sup> The United States designated the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and al-Sahraoui as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in May 2018.<sup>888</sup> In August 2021, a French drone strike killed al-Sahraoui while he was riding his motorbike near the "border between Mali and Niger."<sup>889</sup>

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<sup>879</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>880</sup> Yvan Guichaoua and Andrew Lebovich, "America's Options in Niger: Join Forces to Reduce Tensions, or Fan the Flames," *The Conversation*, November 2, 2017, <https://theconversation.com/americas-options-in-niger-join-forces-to-reduce-tensions-or-fan-the-flames-86655>.

<sup>881</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>882</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>883</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>884</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Adnan al-Sahrawi," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/adnan-al-sahrawi>.

<sup>885</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefront* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>886</sup> Thomas Josceyn and Caleb Weiss, "Islamic State Recognizes Oath of Allegiance from Jihadists in Mali," *Long War Journal*, October 31, 2016, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/10/islamic-state-recognizes-oath-of-allegiance-from-jihadists-in-west-africa.php>.

<sup>887</sup> Jason Warner and Charlotte Hulme, "The Islamic State in Africa: Estimating Fighter Numbers in Cells Across the Continent," 11, no. 7 (2018): 21-28.

<sup>888</sup> U.S. Department of State, "State Department Terrorist Designations of ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS) and Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi," May 16, 2018, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/state-department-terrorist-designations-of-isis-in-the-greater-sahara-isis-gs-and-adnan-abu-walid-al-sahrawi/>.

<sup>889</sup> Tom Wheeldon and Wassim Nasr, "Sahrawi: The Top Sahel Jihadist Killed in French 'Opportunistic Hit,'" September 16, 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20210916-the-assassinated-abou-walid-al-sahrawi-france-s-major-enemy-in-the-sahel>.

## Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen

### *Iyad Ag Ghali*

Iyad Ag Ghali, also known as Abu Fadl, was the founding leader of Ansar al-Dine in Mali. Ghali was born in 1954 in the city of Kidal, Mali.<sup>890</sup> Ghali is of Tuareg ethnicity and a member of the Ifoghas tribe.<sup>891</sup> During the 1990s, Ghali played a prominent role in the Tuareg revolt in Mali, reportedly serving as the secretary-general of the Popular Movement of Azawad and the “undisputed leader” of the Tuareg rebels.<sup>892</sup> During the 2000s, Ghali reportedly studied at a Mosque in St. Denis, France,<sup>893</sup> as well as served as a Malian diplomat in Saudi Arabia.<sup>894</sup> In 2003, Ghali played a key role in negotiating the release of German tourists kidnapped by the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat.<sup>895</sup> Additionally, Ghali briefly served as head of the 23 May Democratic Alliance for Change.<sup>896</sup> In 2011, Ghali reportedly returned to Mali from Libya following the fall of the Gaddafi regime<sup>897</sup> and founded Ansar al-Dine.<sup>898</sup> Shortly after the formation of Ansar al-Dine, the United States designated Ghali as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist<sup>899</sup> and Ansar al-Dine as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.<sup>900</sup> Ghali continued to lead Ansar al-Dine until the organization merged with other jihadist organizations, such as the Macina Liberation Front and al-Mourabitoun, to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM) in 2017.<sup>901</sup> Serving as the leader of the newly formed JNIM, Ghali would pledge allegiance to the

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<sup>890</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “إياد غالي” April 24, 2015,

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/3/24/%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A2%D8%BA-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A>.

<sup>891</sup> International Criminal Court, “Iyad Ag Ghaly,” <https://www.icc-cpi.int/defendant/iyad-ag-ghaly>.

<sup>892</sup> Steve Metcalf, “Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali’s Islamist Leader,” *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

<sup>893</sup> Counter Extremism Project, “Iyad Ag Ghaly,” <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/iyad-ag-ghaly>.

<sup>894</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “إياد غالي” April 24, 2015,

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/3/24/%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A2%D8%BA-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A>.

<sup>895</sup> Steve Metcalf, “Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali’s Islamist Leader,” *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

<sup>896</sup> Steve Metcalf, “Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali’s Islamist Leader,” *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

<sup>897</sup> Steve Metcalf, “Iyad Ag Ghaly - Mali’s Islamist Leader,” *BBC*, July 17, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-18814291>.

<sup>898</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Ansar Dine.” Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/329/>.

<sup>899</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Terrorist Designations of Iyad ag Ghali,” February 26, 2013, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/02/205196.htm>.

<sup>900</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>901</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen.” Last modified October 31, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/2979/>.

leaders of al-Qaida and al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb.<sup>902</sup> Shortly after its formation, the United States designated JNIM as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2018.<sup>903</sup>

## Macina Liberation Front (FLM)

### *Amadou Koufa*

Amadou Koufa was the founding leader of the Macina Liberation Front. Koufa was born in 1961 in Mali.<sup>904</sup> Educated in religious schools, Koufa became a preacher, initially “advocating for more social justice and practicing a moderate form of Islam.”<sup>905</sup> During the 2000s, Koufa visited Afghanistan, India, and Qatar.<sup>906</sup> After returning to Mali, Koufa’s beliefs grew increasingly radical and he joined Ansar al-Dine in 2012.<sup>907</sup> In 2013, Koufa led a jihadist offensive into the town of Konna in central Mali.<sup>908</sup> Over time, Koufa grew his popularity through his “mastery of radio as a tool for communication in his native Fulani language.”<sup>909</sup> The Macina Liberation Front was created in 2015, with Koufa as its leader.<sup>910</sup> In 2017, the Macina Liberation Front merged with other jihadist actors to create Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen, an organization that pledged its fealty to al-Qaida’s leaders.<sup>911</sup>

## Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat/al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb

### *Hassan Hattab*

Hassan Hattab became the founding leader of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) after splintering from the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in Algeria. Hattab was born in 1967

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<sup>902</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen.” Last modified October 31, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/2979/>.

<sup>903</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/>.

<sup>904</sup> André Bourgeot, “Le djihad armé d’Amadou Koufa (Mali central).” *Recherches Internationales* 117, no. 1 (2020): 95-116.

<sup>905</sup> Pauline Le Roux, “Confronting Central Mali’s Extremist Threat,” *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, February 22, 2019.

<sup>906</sup> Jacob Zenn, “The Sahel’s Militant ‘Melting Pot’: Hamadou Kouffa’s Macina Liberation Front (FLM),” *Jamestown Foundation* 13, no. 22 (2015).

<sup>907</sup> Pauline Le Roux, “Confronting Central Mali’s Extremist Threat,” *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, February 22, 2019.

<sup>908</sup> Jacob Zenn, “The Sahel’s Militant ‘Melting Pot’: Hamadou Kouffa’s Macina Liberation Front (FLM),” *Jamestown Foundation* 13, no. 22 (2015).

<sup>909</sup> Jacob Zenn, “The Sahel’s Militant ‘Melting Pot’: Hamadou Kouffa’s Macina Liberation Front (FLM),” *Jamestown Foundation* 13, no. 22 (2015).

<sup>910</sup> Jacob Zenn, “The Sahel’s Militant ‘Melting Pot’: Hamadou Kouffa’s Macina Liberation Front (FLM),” *Jamestown Foundation* 13, no. 22 (2015).

<sup>911</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen.” Last modified October 31, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/2979/>.

in Algeria.<sup>912</sup> After receiving some university education, Hattab reportedly joined the Algerian Armed Forces.<sup>913</sup> Hattab received formal military training, serving as a paratrooper before becoming a mechanic.<sup>914</sup> After serving as the GSPC's leader for years, the Council of Notables mobilized against Hattab in 2003. As Alexander Thurston states: "The coup against Hattab was organized by the very structures meant to ensure that the organization ran smoothly."<sup>915</sup> During Hattab's time in power, the GSPC had no pledge of allegiance to al-Qaida.

### *Nabil Sahrawi*

Nabil Sahrawi, also known as Abu Ibrahim, succeeded Hassan Hattab as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat's (GSPC) leader in August 2003.<sup>916</sup> Sahrawi was born in 1966 in Batna, Algeria.<sup>917</sup> Sahrawi attained a post-secondary degree in engineering, with a specialization in thermal energy.<sup>918</sup> Sahrawi served as commander of "Zone 5" in the GIA before splintering to join the GSPC.<sup>919</sup> In the GSPC, Sahrawi served in various positions, including being assigned a military command, serving as head of external relations, and participating as a member of the Council of Notables (*majlis al-A'yan*).<sup>920</sup> Sahrawi pledged the GSPC's loyalty to al-Qaida, Taliban, and jihadists in other conflict zones in 2003, indicating the group's expanding external ties. However, this Arabic-language statement was not a formal pledge of allegiance (*bay'a*) but rather a statement of broad solidarity (*wala'*).<sup>921</sup> In June 2004, Sahrawi was killed in a firefight with the Algerian army.<sup>922</sup>

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<sup>912</sup> Hussam Haddad, "حسن خطاب المؤسس "التائب" للجماعة السلفية للدعوة والقتال بالجزائر," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/33033>.

<sup>913</sup> Hussam Haddad, "حسن خطاب المؤسس "التائب" للجماعة السلفية للدعوة والقتال بالجزائر," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/33033>.

<sup>914</sup> Gregory A. Smith, "Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb," *Journal of Strategic Security* 2, no. 2 (May 2009).

<sup>915</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 70.

<sup>916</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb." Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>917</sup> Hussam Haddad, "أبو إبراهيم مصطفى (الأمير الثاني) للجماعة السلفية للدعوة والقتال بالجزائر," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/31421>.

<sup>918</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>919</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>920</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>921</sup> For a link to the statement, see Aaron Zelin's [jihadology.net](http://jihadology.net). Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, "Statement from al-Jama'ah al-Salafiyyah Li-l-Da'wah Wa-l-Qital: Support for the Jihadi Groups," September 11, 2003, <https://jihadology.net/2003/09/11/statement-from-al-jamaah-al-salafiyyah-li-l-dawah-wa-l-qital-support-for-the-jihadi-groups/>.

<sup>922</sup> Jean-Pierre Filiu, "Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Algerian Challenge or Global Threat?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* 104 (October 2009).

### *Abdelmalek Droukdel*

Abdelmalek Droukdel, also known as Abu Musab ‘Abd al-Wadud, replaced Sahrawi in June 2004 as the GSPC’s third leader.<sup>923</sup> Droukdel was born in the Blid Province of Algeria in 1970.<sup>924</sup> Droukdel attained a post-secondary degree in mathematics,<sup>925</sup> becoming an engineer by trade.<sup>926</sup> Droukdel reportedly traveled to Afghanistan before returning to fight in Algeria.<sup>927</sup> In the early 1990s, Droukdel joined the Movement for the Islamic State and later became the GIA’s commander of “Zone 2” and a distinguished bombmaker.<sup>928</sup> In the GSPC, he joined the Council of Notables and replaced Sahrawi as the head of the Council.<sup>929</sup> Droukdel formally pledged the GSPC’s allegiance to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida in 2006, with the organization changing its name to al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in January 2007.<sup>930</sup> Droukdel oversaw the organization’s expansion into Mali and other regional states.<sup>931</sup> In 2020, Droukdel was killed during a raid by French forces in Mali.<sup>932</sup>

### *Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Annabi*

In November 2020, AQIM announced Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Annabi as the successor to Droukdel.<sup>933</sup> Al-Annabi was born in January or February 1969 in Annaba, Algeria.<sup>934</sup> Al-Annabi holds a university degree in economics.<sup>935</sup> Al-Annabi reportedly became an active member at the age of 19 in the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) before participating in the Algerian Civil War.<sup>936</sup>

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<sup>923</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.” Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>924</sup> Sidi Ahmed Ould Al Amir, “تداعيات مقتل عبد المالك دروكدال على منطقة الساحل” <https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/article/4717>.

<sup>925</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>926</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.” Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>927</sup> BBC, “Al-Qaeda Chief in North Africa Abdelmalek Droukdel Killed - France,” June 5, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-52943692>.

<sup>928</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>929</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Jihadists of North Africa and the Sahel: Local Politics and Rebel Groups* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>930</sup> Jean-Pierre Filiu, “Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Algerian Challenge or Global Threat?” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* 104 (October 2009).

<sup>931</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.” Last modified July 21, 2025. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/312/>.

<sup>932</sup> Wassim Nasr, “Implications of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb’s New Leadership,” *News Lines Institute*, February 8, 2021, <https://newlinesinstitute.org/nonstate-actors/transnational-criminal-networks/implications-of-al-qaeda-in-the-islamic-maghrebs-new-leadership/>.

<sup>933</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Anabi,” <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/abu-ubaydah-yusuf-al-anabi/>.

<sup>934</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Anabi,” <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/abu-ubaydah-yusuf-al-anabi/>.

<sup>935</sup> The North Africa Journal, “Profile: Abu Ubaidah Youssef al-Annabi,” March 20, 2023, [https://north-africa.com/profile-abu\\_ubaidah\\_youssef\\_al-annabi/](https://north-africa.com/profile-abu_ubaidah_youssef_al-annabi/).

<sup>936</sup> Akram Khariief, “Qui est le nouveau chef d’Aqmi, Abou Obeida Yousouf al-Annabi?” November 24, 2020, <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1079608/politique/qui-est-le-nouveau-chef-daqmi-abou-obeida-yousouf-al-annabi/>.

There is little information to suggest that al-Annabi traveled to Afghanistan like other Algerian jihadists. As Wassim Nasr writes: “It is improbable that he participated in the Afghan jihad or visited Afghanistan or Pakistan in those early years. Instead, he likely joined one of the very small, local groups active in his native region that orbited around” the GIA.<sup>937</sup> Within AQIM, al-Annabi served as the organization's media chief and head of the Council of Notables.<sup>938</sup> As of October 2024, al-Annabi remains AQIM’s leader.

## Morocco

### Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group

#### *Abdelkarim el-Mejjati*

Abdelkarim el-Mejjati is considered a founding leader of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM) since the 1990s.<sup>939</sup> Little information exists on el-Mejjati. GICM absorbed cells during the founding period and has cells across Europe.<sup>940</sup> Nourredine Nafia is supposed to be involved in the leadership given the drafting of the charter of the group’s doctrine.<sup>941</sup> The group was listed as a terrorist organization by the UN in 2002<sup>942</sup> and has close ties to al-Qaida.<sup>943</sup> Abdelkarim el-Mejjati became a leader of al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia and was killed by police in 2004.<sup>944</sup>

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<sup>937</sup> Wassim Nasr, “Implications of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb’s New Leadership,” *News Lines Institute*, February 8, 2021, <https://newlinesinstitute.org/nonstate-actors/transnational-criminal-networks/implications-of-al-qaeda-in-the-islamic-maghrebs-new-leadership/>.

<sup>938</sup> Wassim Nasr, “Implications of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb’s New Leadership,” *News Lines Institute*, February 8, 2021, <https://newlinesinstitute.org/nonstate-actors/transnational-criminal-networks/implications-of-al-qaeda-in-the-islamic-maghrebs-new-leadership/>.

<sup>939</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group.” Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/457/>; It is assumed he founded the organization after 1998 (Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). Combating Terrorism Center at West Point., <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>)

<sup>940</sup> Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>.

<sup>941</sup> Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>.

<sup>942</sup> UCDP, actor GICM, <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/383>.

<sup>943</sup> Tan, Andrew T.H. 82010): *Politics of Terrorism: A Survey*, Routledge, <https://books.google.de/books?id=qXerAgAAQBAJ&lpg=PA183&hl=de&pg=PA184#v=onepage&q&f=false> (pp. 183-184)

<sup>944</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group.” Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/457/>, Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). Combating Terrorism Center at West Point., <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>

## *Mohamed al-Guerbouzi*

Mohamed al-Guerbouzi, also known as Abou Aissa, became Abdelkarim el-Mejjati's successor after 2002.<sup>945</sup> However, he denies relationships with GICM.<sup>946</sup> He lived in London and received British citizenship two decades earlier.<sup>947</sup> Mohamed al-Guerbouzi was convicted in absentia, receiving a 20-year prison sentence for his role in the Casablanca bombings.<sup>948</sup>

# Mozambique

## Ansar al-Sunna

### *Abu Yassir Hassan*

In October 2017, Ansar al-Sunna, also known locally as al-Shabaab, attacked multiple police stations in the Mocímboa da Praia district, signaling the start of their insurgency.<sup>949</sup> The year 2007 witnessed the earliest manifestations of the al-Shabaab sect under the guidance of figures such as Sualehe Rafayel.<sup>950</sup> Over the next decade, the group expanded across the Cabo Delgado province and shifted toward the use of violence around 2016.<sup>951</sup> By 2017, the organization was led by

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<sup>945</sup> Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>.

<sup>946</sup> Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>; Mapping Militants Project. "Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group." Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/457/>.

<sup>947</sup> Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>.

<sup>948</sup> Echeverría Jesús, C. (2009). *The current state of the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group*. CTC Sentinel, 2(3). *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss3-Art8.pdf>.

<sup>949</sup> Tom Gould, Tomás Queface, and Fernando Lima, "The Islamic State in Mozambique: The Cabo Delgado Conflict since 2021," *Hudson: Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, February 20, 2024, <https://www.hudson.org/islamic-state-mozambique-cabo-delgado-conflict-2021-tom-gould-tomas-queface-fernando-lima#footNote11>.

<sup>950</sup> Eric Morier-Genoud, "The Jihadi Insurgency in Mozambique: Origins, Nature and Beginning," *Journal of East African Studies* 14, no. 3 (2020): 396-412.

<sup>951</sup> Eric Morier-Genoud, "The Jihadi Insurgency in Mozambique: Origins, Nature and Beginning," *Journal of East African Studies* 14, no. 3 (2020): 396-412.

Tanzanian national, Abu Yassir Hassan.<sup>952</sup> Hassan was reportedly born between 1981 and 1983.<sup>953</sup> Under Hassan's leadership, the organization pledged fealty to the Islamic State's leaders in 2019 and became known as the Islamic State Mozambique.<sup>954</sup> The United States designated Hassan as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2021.<sup>955</sup> The same year, the United States also designated the Islamic State Mozambique as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.<sup>956</sup> In 2023, Hassan reportedly resigned from his leadership duties following a car accident.<sup>957</sup>

## Nigeria

### Ansaru

#### *Abubakar Adam Kamar*

Abubakar Adam Kamar, also known as Abu Yasir, was the first leader of Ansaru, alternatively called Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis-Sudan in 2011.<sup>958</sup> Ansaru only consists of combatants as its members and initially formed as a faction of Boko Haram.<sup>959</sup> Kamar was born

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<sup>952</sup> Tom Gould, Tomás Queface, and Fernando Lima, "The Islamic State in Mozambique: The Cabo Delgado Conflict since 2021," *Hudson: Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, February 20, 2024, <https://www.hudson.org/islamic-state-mozambique-cabo-delgado-conflict-2021-tom-gould-tomas-queface-fernando-lima#footNote11>; U.S. Embassy in Mozambique, "Media Note: Office of the Spokesperson," March 10, 2021, <https://mz.usembassy.gov/state-department-terrorist-designations-of-isis-affiliates-and-leaders-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-and-mozambique/>.

<sup>953</sup> Due to this uncertainty, we used 1982 as an estimate. U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Burma-related Designations; Counter Terrorism Designations and Designations Updates; Global Magnitsky Designation Update; Democratic Republic of the Congo Designation Update," March 10, 2021, <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20210310>.

<sup>954</sup> Eric Morier-Genoud, "The Jihadi Insurgency in Mozambique: Origins, Nature and Beginning," *Journal of East African Studies* 14, no. 3 (2020): 396-412; Tom Gould, Tomás Queface, and Fernando Lima, "The Islamic State in Mozambique: The Cabo Delgado Conflict since 2021," *Hudson: Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, February 20, 2024, <https://www.hudson.org/islamic-state-mozambique-cabo-delgado-conflict-2021-tom-gould-tomas-queface-fernando-lima#footNote11>.

<sup>955</sup> U.S. Embassy in Mozambique, "Media Note: Office of the Spokesperson," March 10, 2021, <https://mz.usembassy.gov/state-department-terrorist-designations-of-isis-affiliates-and-leaders-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-and-mozambique/>.

<sup>956</sup> U.S. Department of State, "State Department Terrorist Designations of ISIS Affiliates and Leaders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique," March 10, 2021, <https://2021-2025.state.gov/state-department-terrorist-designations-of-isis-affiliates-and-leaders-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-and-mozambique/>.

<sup>957</sup> Tom Gould, Tomás Queface, and Fernando Lima, "The Islamic State in Mozambique: The Cabo Delgado Conflict since 2021," *Hudson: Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, February 20, 2024, <https://www.hudson.org/islamic-state-mozambique-cabo-delgado-conflict-2021-tom-gould-tomas-queface-fernando-lima#footNote11>.

<sup>958</sup> Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, *Nigeria's Interminable Insurgency? Addressing the Boko Haram Crisis* (London: Chatham House, Africa Programme, September 2014), [https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedMontclos\\_0.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedMontclos_0.pdf)

<sup>959</sup> Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, *Nigeria's Interminable Insurgency? Addressing the Boko Haram Crisis* (London: Chatham House, Africa Programme, September 2014),

in 1977 in Nigeria.<sup>960</sup> Kamar reportedly received military training from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in Algeria and was arrested for these activities in Nigeria in 2007.<sup>961</sup> He was involved in the United Nations headquarters bombing in Abudja.<sup>962</sup> He had close ties to Boko Haram's Mohammed Yusuf.<sup>963</sup> Kamar was a specially designated national by the US in 2012.<sup>964</sup> Kamar was killed in Kano in August 2012 by security forces.<sup>965</sup>

### *Khalid al-Barnawi*

Khalid al-Barnawi, also known as Usman Umar Abubaker, succeeded Abubakar Adam Kamar after his death in 2012.<sup>966</sup> Al-Barnawi was born in 1976 in Nigeria.<sup>967</sup> In the 1990s, he joined the Armed Islamic Group and later the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat.<sup>968</sup> He reportedly completed military training in Algeria with al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in 2009.<sup>969</sup> He is

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[https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedeMontclos\\_0.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedeMontclos_0.pdf); Dudley-Taylor, E. (2023, September 11; updated September 23). *Ansaru*. Modern Insurgent.

<https://www.moderninsurgent.org/post/ansaru>

<sup>960</sup> Sanctions-Finder.com, *Abubakar Adam Kamar sanction entry* (Sanctions-Finder), showing that Abubakar Adam Kamar is listed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist by the U.S. Treasury/OFAC under Executive Order 13224, accessed January 2026, <https://sanctions-finder.com/sanction/574bf3bd-6ba9-4c26-875a-8497d68f3007/Abubakar%20Adam%20KAMbar>

<sup>961</sup> Jacob Zenn, "Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2014), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss2.pdf>; International Crisis Group. (2014, April 3). *Curbing violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram insurgency* (Africa Report No. 216). International Crisis Group.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20160117095404/www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/west-africa/nigeria/216-curbing-violence-in-nigeria-ii-the-boko-haram-insurgency.pdf>

<sup>962</sup> Jacob Zenn, "Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2014), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss2.pdf>

<sup>963</sup> News Wires. (2016, April 3). Leader of Ansaru Islamist militant group arrested in Nigeria. *France 24*. <https://www.france24.com/en/20160403-nigeria-leader-ansaru-islamist-militant-group-arrested>

<sup>964</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control. (2012, June 21). *Anti-terrorism designations*. U.S. Department of the Treasury. <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20120621>

<sup>965</sup> Jacob Zenn, "Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2014), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss2.pdf>; Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, *Nigeria's Interminable Insurgency? Addressing the Boko Haram Crisis* (London: Chatham House, Africa Programme, September 2014),

[https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedeMontclos\\_0.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedeMontclos_0.pdf)

<sup>966</sup> Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, *Nigeria's Interminable Insurgency? Addressing the Boko Haram Crisis* (London: Chatham House, Africa Programme, September 2014),

[https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedeMontclos\\_0.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20140901BokoHaramPerousedeMontclos_0.pdf); Isamotu, I. (2025, August 16). *UPDATED: Top Ansaru terrorist group leaders arrested*. Daily Trust.

<https://dailytrust.com/breaking-ansaru-terrorist-group-leader-arrested>; International Crisis Group. (2014, April 3). *Curbing violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram insurgency* (Africa Report No. 216). International Crisis Group. <http://web.archive.org/web/20160117095404/www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/west-africa/nigeria/216-curbing-violence-in-nigeria-ii-the-boko-haram-insurgency.pdf>.

<sup>967</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control. (2012, June 21). *Anti-terrorism designations*. U.S. Department of the Treasury. <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20120621>

<sup>968</sup> Zenn, J., & Weiss, C. (2021, October). *Ansaru resurgent. Perspectives on Terrorism*, 15(5), 46–58. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/2707343>

<sup>969</sup> Jacob Zenn, "Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2014), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss2.pdf>; International Crisis Group.

supposed to have close connections to MUJAO.<sup>970</sup> He also became a specially designated national by the United States in 2012.<sup>971</sup> Al-Barnawi is known for his kidnapping skills and allegedly cooperated on kidnapping Westerns with Shekau.<sup>972</sup> He was arrested in April 2016 in Nigeria.<sup>973</sup>

## Pakistan

### Hizb-ul Mujahideen

#### *Muhammad Ahsan Dar*

Muhammad Ahsan Dar was born in India during the early 1950s.<sup>974</sup> Dar was a former Jamaat schoolteacher<sup>975</sup> before reportedly turning to militancy in the mid-1980s and joining Ansur-ul-Islam.<sup>976</sup> He was arrested by Indian authorities in 1988 but escaped after eight months of incarceration. Hizb-ul Mujahideen was established in the Kashmir Valley in 1989, with Dar serving as its founding leader.<sup>977</sup> In 1991, Dar was expelled from the organization “in favor of imposing the command of a JI-dominated shura council.”<sup>978</sup>

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(2014, April 3). *Curbing violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram insurgency* (Africa Report No. 216). International Crisis Group.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20160117095404/www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/west-africa/nigeria/216-curbing-violence-in-nigeria-ii-the-boko-haram-insurgency.pdf>; Henry Jackson Society. (2014, June). *Terrorism in Nigeria: The threat from Boko Haram and Ansaru* (Strategic Briefing). <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Nigeria-Boko-Haram-Strategic-Briefing.pdf>

<sup>970</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria,” *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2014), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss2.pdf>

<sup>971</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control. (2012, June 21). *Anti-terrorism designations*. U.S. Department of the Treasury. <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20120621>

<sup>972</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Leadership Analysis of Boko Haram and Ansaru in Nigeria,” *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 2 (February 2014), <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CTCSentinel-Vol7Iss2.pdf>; International Crisis Group. (2014, April 3). *Curbing violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram insurgency* (Africa Report No. 216). International Crisis Group.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20160117095404/www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/west-africa/nigeria/216-curbing-violence-in-nigeria-ii-the-boko-haram-insurgency>.

<sup>973</sup> Zenn, J., & Weiss, C. (2021, October). *Ansaru resurgent. Perspectives on Terrorism*, 15(5), 46–58. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/2707343>

<sup>974</sup> We estimated Dar’s birth year as 1952 as a news article published in December 2012 stated that he was sixty years old. Kashmir Times (India), “From Guns to Peaceful Resistance,” December 26, 2012.

<sup>975</sup> Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018).

<sup>976</sup> Yelena Biberman, *Gambling with Violence: State Outsourcing of War in Pakistan and India* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>977</sup> Surinder Kumar Sharma and Anshuman Behera, *Militant Groups in South Asia* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2014); South Asia Terrorism Portal, “Hizb-ul-Mujahideen,”

[https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/terrorist\\_outfits/hizbul\\_mujahideen.htm](https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/terrorist_outfits/hizbul_mujahideen.htm).

<sup>978</sup> Paul Staniland, “Organizing Insurgency: Networks: Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia,” *International Security*, 37, no. 1 (2012), 167.

## *Syed Salahuddin*

Syed Salahuddin, also known as Muhammad Yusuf Shah, was born in 1946 in Jammu and Kashmir, India.<sup>979</sup> Salahuddin graduated from SP College in Srinagar and subsequently attained a master's degree in political science from the Kashmir University in 1971.<sup>980</sup> Salahuddin worked as a teacher and preacher and was an active member of Jamaat-e-Islami.<sup>981</sup> Salahuddin's "knowledge of Islamic religious scriptures and command of English, Urdu and various local languages earned him much popularity among college and university students."<sup>982</sup> Salahuddin lost his election bid as a candidate for the Muslim United Front in the 1987 Kashmir assembly elections.<sup>983</sup> He reportedly became "more disgruntled and radical" and was jailed for anti-India activities and hate speeches.<sup>984</sup> In 1991, Salahuddin traveled to Afghanistan to make arrangements to train Kashmiri fighters.<sup>985</sup> In Afghanistan, Salahuddin met with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who reportedly advised Salahuddin "to eliminate all of Hizbul Mujahideen's rivals."<sup>986</sup> Salahuddin became the second leader of Hizb-ul Mujahideen in 1991.<sup>987</sup> Salahuddin's time in Afghanistan was critical to subsequent actions: "His training in Afghanistan and Pakistan and knowledge of the local geography helped him immensely in many attacks on communication networks and bridges as well as ambushes on Indian security force convoys in Kashmir."<sup>988</sup> The United States designated Salahuddin as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in June 2017, coinciding with a visit by Indian Prime Minister Modi to Washington;<sup>989</sup> Hizb-ul Mujahideen was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in August 2017.<sup>990</sup>

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<sup>979</sup> Animesh Roul, "Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad," *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>980</sup> Abhishek Saha, "Syed Salahuddin: From Political Science Student in Kashmir to 'Global Terrorist,'" *Hindustan Times*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/syed-salahuddin-kashmiri-islamic-preacher-to-global-terrorist/story-IJuoHxTv5Tvd1SKpeIJDeP.html>.

<sup>981</sup> Abhishek Saha, "Syed Salahuddin: From Political Science Student in Kashmir to 'Global Terrorist,'" *Hindustan Times*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/syed-salahuddin-kashmiri-islamic-preacher-to-global-terrorist/story-IJuoHxTv5Tvd1SKpeIJDeP.html>; The Indian Express, "Syed Salahuddin: Teacher to Terror Commander," June 28, 2017, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/salahuddin-teacher-to-terror-commander-4725290/>.

<sup>982</sup> Animesh Roul, "Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad," *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>983</sup> Aijaz Hussain, "AP Explains: Who is Salahuddin, Rebel Named Terrorist by US?" *Associated Press*, June 27, 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/35475eceb25e40a3b08f61bcaf530536>.

<sup>984</sup> Animesh Roul, "Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad," *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>985</sup> Arif Jamal, *Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir* (New York: Melville House, 2009).

<sup>986</sup> Arif Jamal, *Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir* (New York: Melville House, 2009).

<sup>987</sup> Abhishek Saha, "Syed Salahuddin: From Political Science Student in Kashmir to 'Global Terrorist,'" *Hindustan Times*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/syed-salahuddin-kashmiri-islamic-preacher-to-global-terrorist/story-IJuoHxTv5Tvd1SKpeIJDeP.html>; Aijaz Hussain, "AP Explains: Who is Salahuddin, Rebel Named Terrorist by US?" *Associated Press*, June 27, 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/35475eceb25e40a3b08f61bcaf530536>.

<sup>988</sup> Animesh Roul, "Brief Sketch of Syed Salahuddin of Kashmir Jihad," *Jamestown Foundation* 5, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>989</sup> Aijaz Hussain, "AP Explains: Who is Salahuddin, Rebel Named Terrorist by US?" *Associated Press*, June 27, 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/35475eceb25e40a3b08f61bcaf530536>.

<sup>990</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

# Islamic Jihad Union

## *Najmiddin Kamolitdinovic Jalolov*

Najmiddin Kamolitdinovic Jalolov, also known as Abu Yahya Muhammad Fatih,<sup>991</sup> founded the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), also known as Jama'at al-Jihad al-Islam,<sup>992</sup> in March 2002. The IJU was formed following internal disagreements and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan's (IMU) decision to cease operations in Uzbekistan.<sup>993</sup> Jalolov left IMU in 2001 before founding IJU in Pakistan, having its headquarters in Mir Ali.<sup>994</sup> The group's initial name—Islamic Jihad Group—was changed to Islamic Jihad Union in 2005.<sup>995</sup> Jalolov was born on April 1, 1972, in the Andijan Region in Uzbekistan.<sup>996</sup> Jalolov is noted to have received secondary education.<sup>997</sup> Jalolov is the leader behind the terrorist attacks in Uzbekistan and the ringleader of the Sauerland cell attack plans in Germany.<sup>998</sup> He had links to the Taliban and al-Qaida, including Mohammad Omar and Osama bin Laden.<sup>999</sup> The IJU maintained close ties with the Afghan Taliban and al-Qaida.<sup>1000</sup> He received military training at al-Qaida camps and spent time in Afghanistan.<sup>1001</sup> Jalolov was convicted in absentia in Uzbekistan in 2000 for his actions as an IMU member.<sup>1002</sup> The group was listed as a terrorist organization by the United States in June 2005.<sup>1003</sup> Jalolov was sanctioned under

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<sup>991</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2008, June 18). *Treasury designates leadership of the IJU terrorist group* (Press Release hp-1035). <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1035>.

<sup>992</sup> Logvinov, M. (2009). Kapitel 16 Islamische Jihad Union – al-Qaidas Türkzentrale? *Jahrbuch Terrorismus*, 3, 265–278. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24916921>.

<sup>993</sup> Oberlandesgericht Düsseldorf. (2010, March 4). *Urteil des 6. Strafsenats* (Az. III-6 StS 11/08 u. III-6 StS 15/08). [https://nrwe.justiz.nrw.de/olgs/duesseldorf/j2010/III\\_6\\_StS\\_11\\_08\\_u\\_III\\_6\\_StS\\_15\\_08\\_Urteil\\_20100304.html](https://nrwe.justiz.nrw.de/olgs/duesseldorf/j2010/III_6_StS_11_08_u_III_6_StS_15_08_Urteil_20100304.html).

<sup>994</sup> Guido Steinberg, *The Islamic Jihad Union: On the Internationalisation of Uzbek Jihadism*, SWP Comment 2008/ (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, April 2008), [https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2008C07\\_sbg\\_ks.pdf](https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2008C07_sbg_ks.pdf).

<sup>995</sup> United States Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Islamic Jihad Union, 19 September 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/annualreport/usdos/2018/en/121970>.

<sup>996</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2008, June 18). *Treasury designates leadership of the IJU terrorist group* (Press Release hp-1035). <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1035>

<sup>997</sup> ROLE dataset

<sup>998</sup> Sandee, R. (2008, October 14). *The Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)*. The NEFA Foundation. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120824041931/http://www.nefafoundation.org/file/FeaturedDocs/nefaijuoct08.pdf>.

<sup>999</sup> Nichol, J. (2010, August 10). *Central Asia: Regional developments and implications for U.S. interests* (CRS Report No. RL33458). Congressional Research Service. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA530585.pdf>.

<sup>1000</sup> Steinberg, Guido W., 'The Islamic Jihad Union', *German Jihad: On the Internationalization of Islamist Terrorism* (New York, NY, 2013; online edn, Columbia Scholarship Online, 19 Nov. 2015), <https://doi.org/10.7312/columbia/9780231159920.003.0004>; Logvinov, M. (2009). Kapitel 16 Islamische Jihad Union – al-Qaidas Türkzentrale? *Jahrbuch Terrorismus*, 3, 265–278. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24916921>.

<sup>1001</sup> Oberlandesgericht Düsseldorf. (2010, March 4). *Urteil des 6. Strafsenats* (Az. III-6 StS 11/08 u. III-6 StS 15/08).

<sup>1002</sup> Sandee, R. (2008, October 14). *The Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)*. The NEFA Foundation. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120824041931/http://www.nefafoundation.org/file/FeaturedDocs/nefaijuoct08.pdf>.

<sup>1003</sup> Nichol, J. (2010, August 10). *Central Asia: Regional developments and implications for U.S. interests* (CRS Report No. RL33458). Congressional Research Service. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA530585.pdf>.

<sup>1004</sup> United States Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Islamic Jihad Union, 19 September 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/annualreport/usdos/2018/en/121970>

the framework of the U.S. Executive Order 13224 in June 2008.<sup>1004</sup> He was killed in a U.S. drone strike on September 14, 2009.<sup>1005</sup>

### *Suhayl Fatilleovich Buranov*

Suhayl Fatilleovich Buranov, also known as Abu Huzafa and Mansur Suhail,<sup>1006</sup> is assumed to have taken over IJU's leadership after Jalolov's death in 2009.<sup>1007</sup> He was the deputy leader of IJU as of 2007 and led the communication of the organization.<sup>1008</sup> Buranov was born on October 11, 1983, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.<sup>1009</sup> His expertise includes explosives<sup>1010</sup> with training in an al-Qaida camp in the Khost province.<sup>1011</sup> Buranov was convicted in 2004 in Uzbekistan for terrorist attacks alongside Jalolov.<sup>1012</sup> He participated in activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan for the Taliban.<sup>1013</sup> Buranov most likely died during a firefight/military engagement shortly after Jalolov's death.<sup>1014</sup> Buranov was also designated under U.S. Executive Order 13224 in June 2008.<sup>1015</sup>

### *Rauschan Eke*

Rauschan Eke, also known as Abdullah Fatih, was the military commander of IJU's Afghanistan

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<sup>1004</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2008, June 18). *Treasury designates leadership of the IJU terrorist group* (Press Release hp-1035). <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1035>

<sup>1005</sup> Oberlandesgericht Düsseldorf. (2010, March 4). *Urteil des 6. Strafsenats* (Az. III-6 StS 11/08 u. III-6 StS 15/08). [https://nrwe.justiz.nrw.de/olgs/duesseldorf/j2010/III\\_6\\_StS\\_11\\_08\\_u\\_III\\_6\\_StS\\_15\\_08\\_Urteil\\_20100304.html](https://nrwe.justiz.nrw.de/olgs/duesseldorf/j2010/III_6_StS_11_08_u_III_6_StS_15_08_Urteil_20100304.html);

Reuters. (2009, September 17). *Al Qaeda-linked Uzbek militant killed in Pakistan*. Reuters.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/economy/al-qaeda-linked-uzbek-militant-killed-in-pakistan-idUSISL412179/>.

<sup>1006</sup> Logvinov, M. (2009). Kapitel 16 Islamische Jihad Union – al-Qaidas Türkzentrale? *Jahrbuch Terrorismus*, 3, 265–278. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24916921>.

<sup>1007</sup> Witter, D. (2011, January 27). *Uzbek militancy in Pakistan's tribal region* (Research Report). Institute for the Study of War. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07877>.

<sup>1008</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2008, June 18). *Treasury designates leadership of the IJU terrorist group* (Press Release hp-1035). <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1035>.

<sup>1009</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2008, June 18). *Treasury designates leadership of the IJU terrorist group* (Press Release hp-1035). <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1035>.

<sup>1010</sup> Witter, D. (2011, January 27). *Uzbek militancy in Pakistan's tribal region* (Research Report). Institute for the Study of War. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07877>.

<sup>1011</sup> European Commission. (2008, May 5). *Commission Regulation (EC) No 400/2008 amending for the 95th time Council Regulation (EC) No 881/2002 imposing certain specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities associated with Usama bin Laden, the Al-Qaida network and the Taliban*. Official Journal of the European Union.

<sup>1012</sup> Witter, D. (2011, January 27). *Uzbek militancy in Pakistan's tribal region* (Research Report). Institute for the Study of War. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07877>; U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2008, June 18). *Treasury designates leadership of the IJU terrorist group* (Press Release hp-1035). <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1035>.

<sup>1013</sup> United Nations Security Council. (2010, September 7). *Sanctions list materials: Narrative summaries of reasons for listing – Islamic Jihad Group* (QDe.119). ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sanctions/1822/materials>.

<sup>1014</sup> Oberlandesgericht Düsseldorf. (2010, March 4). *Urteil des 6. Strafsenats* (Az. III-6 StS 11/08 u. III-6 StS 15/08).

<sup>1015</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2008, June 18). *Treasury designates leadership of the IJU terrorist group* (Press Release hp-1035). <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/hp1035>.

cell before taking over the leadership of IJU.<sup>1016</sup> He is associated with the attacks against the U.S. military.<sup>1017</sup> There is little confirmed evidence surrounding Eke and the leadership of IJU until Ilimbek Mamatov's leadership from 2019 onward.<sup>1018</sup>

### *Ilimbek Mamatov*

Ilimbek Mamatov is a Kyrgyz national<sup>1019</sup> who leads IJU as of 2019.<sup>1020</sup> The group is mostly operating in the Afghan Provinces of Badakhshan, Sari Pul and Takhar.<sup>1021</sup> It is assumed that the Kunduz fighters of the group pledged fealty to al-Qaida in 2015.<sup>1022</sup> In 2019, IJU fighters also reportedly fought with Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in Syria.<sup>1023</sup>

## Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)

### *Masood Azhar*

Masood Azhar was born in July 1968 in Pakistan's Punjab Province.<sup>1024</sup> Azhar received his education at Jamia Uloom-i-Islami, a prominent religious university in Pakistan.<sup>1025</sup> Despite reportedly failing to complete his 40-day military training in Afghanistan due to physical weakness, Azhar joined the war against the USSR.<sup>1026</sup> After suffering injuries, he began editing Urdu and Arabic jihadist magazines.<sup>1027</sup> Azhar reportedly taught classes and worked as a

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<sup>1016</sup> Oberlandesgericht Düsseldorf. (2010, March 4). *Urteil des 6. Strafsenats* (Az. III-6 StS 11/08 u. III-6 StS 15/08).

<sup>1017</sup> Oberlandesgericht Düsseldorf. (2010, March 4). *Urteil des 6. Strafsenats* (Az. III-6 StS 11/08 u. III-6 StS 15/08).

<sup>1018</sup> GlobalSecurity.org. (n.d.). *Islamic Jihad Union*. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/iju.htm>.

<sup>1019</sup> Seldin, J. (2023, August 18). *Afghanistan reemerging as a terrorism incubator*. Voice of America.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/afghanistan-reemerging-as-a-terrorism-incubator-/7230546.html#IJJG>;

<https://www.gfatf.org/archives/how-afghanistans-terrorist-groups-evolving-under-taliban-rule/>

<sup>1020</sup> GlobalSecurity.org. (n.d.). *Islamic Jihad Union*. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/iju.htm>.

<sup>1021</sup> Botobekov, Uran. (2020, June 3). *Central Asian Salafi-Jihadi groups and the US-Taliban peace agreement*.

CACI Analyst. <https://www.modern-diplomacy.eu/central-asian-salafi-jihadi-groups-and-the-us-taliban-peace-agreement>

<sup>1022</sup> Roggio, B., & Joscelyn, T. (2015, August 24). *Central Asian groups split over leadership of global jihad*. Long War Journal.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20151122142032/http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/08/central-asian-groups-split-over-leadership-of-global-jihad.php>.

<sup>1023</sup> United Nations Security Council. (2019, July 15). *Letter dated 15 July 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council* (S/2019/570).

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190802144618/https://undocs.org/S/2019/570>.

<sup>1024</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Targets Pakistan-Based Terrorist Organizations Lashkar-E Tayyiba and Jaish-E Mohammed," November 4, 2010, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg944>.

<sup>1025</sup> Hindustan Times, "A Profile of Maulana Masood Azhar," December 9, 2008, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/a-profile-of-maulana-masood-azhar/story-SgfdaU2uSP7iOi6GH0UGqM.html>.

<sup>1026</sup> Kashmir Herald, "Maulana Masood Azhar," (January 2002), <https://web.archive.org/web/20081211065030/http://www.kashmirherald.com/profiles/masoodazhar.html>.

<sup>1027</sup> Kashmir Herald, "Maulana Masood Azhar," (January 2002), <https://web.archive.org/web/20081211065030/http://www.kashmirherald.com/profiles/masoodazhar.html>.

preacher,<sup>1028</sup> giving sermons as far as the United Kingdom during the 1990s.<sup>1029</sup> He also traveled across multiple regions on recruitment and fundraising missions.<sup>1030</sup> Due to his growing prominence, he assumed a high-ranking position in Harkat ul-Ansar, which was led by Maulana Saadatullah Khan. In 1994, Indian authorities arrested Azhar for being a member of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.<sup>1031</sup> Azhar was eventually released in 1999 in exchange for 155 individuals being held hostage on an Indian Airlines flight that was hijacked to Afghanistan.<sup>1032</sup> After being released from prison, Azhar created Jaish-e-Mohammad in 2000.<sup>1033</sup> Azhar was held under house arrest in 2002 but was released after the Lahore High Court stated there were insufficient grounds to keep him detained.<sup>1034</sup> The United States designated Jaish-e-Mohammad as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2001 and Azhar as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2010.<sup>1035</sup>

## Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)

### *Hafiz Muhammad Saeed*

Hafiz Muhammad Saeed was born in 1950 to a Punjabi family in Sargodha, Pakistan.<sup>1036</sup> Saeed pursued graduate education at Lahore University and also studied at King Saud University in Riyadh.<sup>1037</sup> He also reportedly taught in higher education and received an appointment to Lahore's University of Engineering and Technology.<sup>1038</sup> Saeed traveled to Afghanistan in the late 1970s or

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<sup>1028</sup> Hindustan Times, "A Profile of Maulana Masood Azhar," December 9, 2008, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/a-profile-of-maulana-masood-azhar/story-SgfdU2uSP7iOi6GH0UGqM.html>.

<sup>1029</sup> BBC, "Masood Azhar: The Man Who Brought Jihad to Britain," April 5, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35959202>.

<sup>1030</sup> Kashmir Herald, "Maulana Masood Azhar," (January 2002), <https://web.archive.org/web/20081211065030/http://www.kashmirherald.com/profiles/masoodazhar.html>.

<sup>1031</sup> Hindustan Times, "A Profile of Maulana Masood Azhar," December 9, 2008, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/a-profile-of-maulana-masood-azhar/story-SgfdU2uSP7iOi6GH0UGqM.html>.

<sup>1032</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Mohammed Masood Azhar Alvi," <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/mohammed-masood-azhar-alvi>.

<sup>1033</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Jaish-e-Mohammad." Last modified July 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/411/>.

<sup>1034</sup> BBC, "Indian Fury over Freed Militant," December 14, 2002, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/2575199.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2575199.stm).

<sup>1035</sup> U.S. Department of State, "United Nations 1267 Sanctions Committee Designation of Masood Azhar," May 1, 2019, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/united-nations-1267-sanctions-committee-designation-of-masood-azhar/>.

<sup>1036</sup> The Times of India, "Who is Hafiz Saeed?" April 4, 2012, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/Who-is-Hafiz-Saeed/articleshow/12529918.cms>.

<sup>1037</sup> Suhasini Haidar, "Hafiz Saeed: The 'Professor' Who Runs Terrorist Networks," November 29, 2020, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/hafiz-saeed-the-professor-who-runs-terrorist-networks/article33201614.ece>.

<sup>1038</sup> Praveen Swami, "Pakistan and the Lashkar's Jihad in India," *The Hindu*, December 9, 2008, <https://web.archive.org/web/20081212111914/http://www.hindu.com/2008/12/09/stories/2008120955670800.htm>.

early 1980s to receive military training<sup>1039</sup> and became close contacts with Abdullah Azzam and Osama bin Laden.<sup>1040</sup> Saeed formed Lashkar-e-Taiba in 1990, with the organization being linked to numerous militant operations, such as the 2008 Mumbai attacks.<sup>1041</sup> Over recent decades, Pakistani authorities arrested Saeed on multiple occasions; Saeed was eventually convicted in 2020 and 2022 on charges of terrorism financing.<sup>1042</sup> The United States designated Lashkar-e-Taiba as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2001<sup>1043</sup> and Saeed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2008.<sup>1044</sup>

## Philippines

### Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement

#### *Ameril Umbra Kato*

Ameril Umbra Kato founded the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement in the Philippines in 2010.<sup>1045</sup> Kato was born during the mid-1940s<sup>1046</sup> in Datu Piang town in the Maguindanao Province of the Philippines.<sup>1047</sup> He reportedly graduated from the Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Saudi Arabia.<sup>1048</sup> Kato was a member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front; he commanded the organization's 105th Base Command and led an attack in the North Cotabato and Lanao del Norte provinces in 2008.<sup>1049</sup> He reportedly broke away from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front after facing disciplinary action for attacking civilian communities.<sup>1050</sup> Shortly

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<sup>1039</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Hafiz Muhammad Saeed," December 19, 2023, [https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/hafiz-muhammad-saeed](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/hafiz-muhammad-saeed).

<sup>1040</sup> Bruce Riedel, Hafiz Saeed, Pakistani Extremist with a \$10 Million Price on his Head, Is al Qaeda's Ally," *Brookings*, April 3, 2012.

<sup>1041</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Lashkar-e-Taiba." Last modified November 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/440/>.

<sup>1042</sup> Al Jazeera, "Pakistan: Hafiz Saeed Gets 31 Years in Jail for Terror Financing," April 9, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/9/pakistan-hafiz-saeed-gets-31-years-in-jail-for-terror-financing>.

<sup>1043</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>1044</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Hafiz Saeed," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/hafiz-saeed/>.

<sup>1045</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters." Last modified November 1, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/348/>.

<sup>1046</sup> Roy Ramos, "Muslim Rebel Group Head Dies in Philippines: Report," *Anadolu Ajansi*, April 14, 2015, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/archive/muslim-rebel-group-head-dies-in-philippines-report/57599>.

<sup>1047</sup> Joe Torres, "Philippines Rebel Chief Dies of Heart Attack," UCA News, April 14, 2015, <https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippines-rebel-chief-dies-of-heart-attack/73376>.

<sup>1048</sup> Joe Torres, "Philippines Rebel Chief Dies of Heart Attack," UCA News, April 14, 2015, <https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippines-rebel-chief-dies-of-heart-attack/73376>.

<sup>1049</sup> Roy Ramos, "Muslim Rebel Group Head Dies in Philippines: Report," *Anadolu Ajansi*, April 14, 2015, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/archive/muslim-rebel-group-head-dies-in-philippines-report/57599>.

<sup>1050</sup> Roy Ramos, "Muslim Rebel Group Head Dies in Philippines: Report," *Anadolu Ajansi*, April 14, 2015, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/archive/muslim-rebel-group-head-dies-in-philippines-report/57599>.

after breaking away to form the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement, Kato suffered a severe stroke in November 2011 and remained paralyzed until his death in April 2015.<sup>1051</sup> Prior to his death, the organization pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in 2014.<sup>1052</sup>

### *Ismael Abubakar*

At the age of 40,<sup>1053</sup> Ismael Abubakar succeeded Ameril Umbra Kato as leader of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement in 2015.<sup>1054</sup> Abubakar reportedly served as a brigade commander of the 105th Base Command in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.<sup>1055</sup> He is also noted to be an “expert at Shariah law” and studied in the Middle East.<sup>1056</sup> Following Kato’s death, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement splintered into three factions, with Abubakar reportedly pledging to the Islamic State but later retracting it.<sup>1057</sup> While some narratives note the group ended in 2017,<sup>1058</sup> the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement continues to conduct militant operations.<sup>1059</sup>

## Russia

### Chechen Republic of Ichkeria

#### *Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev*

Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev was born in 1952 in Kazakhstan.<sup>1060</sup> He was the second president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria between 1996 and 1997 and the first one to establish an independent

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<sup>1051</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.” Last modified November 1, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/348/>.

<sup>1052</sup> GMA News, “BIFF, Abu Sayyaf Pledge Allegiance to Islamic State Jihadists,” August 16, 2014, <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/375074/biff-abu-sayyaf-pledge-allegiance-to-islamic-state-jihadists/story/>.

<sup>1053</sup> GMA News, “Kumander Bungos is New BIFF Head,” April 15, 2015, <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/470082/kumander-bungos-is-new-biff-head/story/>.

<sup>1054</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.” Last modified November 1, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/348/>.

<sup>1055</sup> GMA News, “Kumander Bungos is New BIFF Head,” April 15, 2015, <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/470082/kumander-bungos-is-new-biff-head/story/>.

<sup>1056</sup> GMA News, “Kumander Bungos is New BIFF Head,” April 15, 2015, <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/470082/kumander-bungos-is-new-biff-head/story/>.

<sup>1057</sup> International Crisis Group, “The Philippines: Militancy and the New Bangsamoro,” *Asia Report*, June 27, 2019.

<sup>1058</sup> Iris Malone, “Unmasking Militants: Organizational Trends in Armed Groups, 1970–2012,” *International Studies Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (2022): sqac050.

<sup>1059</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.” Last modified November 1, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/348/>.

<sup>1060</sup> *Zelimkhan Yandarbiev*. (n.d.). In Biographs.org. Retrieved from <https://biographs.org/zelimkhan-yandarbiev>; Bamford, D. (2004, February 14). *Obituary: Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev*. BBC News. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3486179.stm>

Islamic state.<sup>1061</sup> He studied at the Maxim Gorki Institute of Literature.<sup>1062</sup> Yandarbiyev was a writer, specializing in ideological poetry.<sup>1063</sup> At the beginning of the 1990s, Yandarbiyev became the deputy chairman of the *All-National Congress of the Chechen People*, and head of the media committee of the Chechen parliament. Yandarbiyev led the Chechen delegation on peace talks with the Russian president in May 1996 and signed the agreement with Moscow in 1997.<sup>1064</sup> In subsequent elections, he lost against Aslan Maskhadov and became Chechen rebel representative in the Gulf region, established the Chechen embassy in Afghanistan, and was listed on the UN Security Council sanctions list in 2003.<sup>1065</sup> He lived in Qatar until his assassination by a car bomb linked to Russian agents.<sup>1066</sup>

### *Aslan Aliyevich Mashkhadov*

Coming to power through elections, Aslan Aliyevich Mashkhadov was the leader of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria between 1997 and 2005.<sup>1067</sup> He was born in 1951 in Kazakhstan.<sup>1068</sup> Mashkhadov graduated from Tbilisi Artillery College and with honors in 1981 from the Kalinin Artillery Academy in Leningrad.<sup>1069</sup> He was a trained military officer in the Soviet Army who served abroad after 1981, including in Hungary and Lithuania.<sup>1070</sup> Mashkhadov retired from the Soviet Army in 1992 and returned to Chechnya.<sup>1071</sup> In 1994, he became chief of staff for the

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<sup>1061</sup> The group is listed as of 1996 because its “jihadization” started, see Hahn, G. M. (2014). *The Caucasus Emirate mujahedin: Global jihadism in Russia’s North Caucasus and beyond*. McFarland. The first president in 1991 was Dzhokhar Dudayev who followed a nationalist and secular agenda as outlined in Hahn (2014) and the Mapping Militants Project. “Chechen Republic of Ichkeria.” Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/356/>. Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University. <https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>

<sup>1062</sup> Admin. (2008, May 18). *Zelimkhan Abdumuslimovich Yandarbiyev*. Waynakh Online.

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/zelimkhan-abdumuslimovich-yandarbiyev/>

<sup>1063</sup> Bamford, D. (2004, February 14). *Obituary: Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev*. BBC

News.<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3486179.stm>

<sup>1064</sup> Admin. (2008, May 18). *Zelimkhan Abdumuslimovich Yandarbiyev*. Waynakh Online.

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/zelimkhan-abdumuslimovich-yandarbiyev/>

<sup>1065</sup> Bamford, D. (2004, February 14). *Obituary: Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev*. BBC

News.<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3486179.stm>; Admin. (2008, May 18). *Zelimkhan Abdumuslimovich*

*Yandarbiyev*. Waynakh Online. <https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/zelimkhan-abdumuslimovich-yandarbiyev/>;

*Zelimkhan Yandarbiev*. (n.d.). In Biographs.org. Retrieved January 9, 2026, from <https://biographs.org/zelimkhan-yandarbiev>

<sup>1066</sup> Admin. (2008, May 18). *Zelimkhan Abdumuslimovich Yandarbiyev*. Waynakh Online.

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/zelimkhan-abdumuslimovich-yandarbiyev/>; McGregor, A. (2004). The

Assassination Of Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev: Implications For The War On Terrorism. *Terrorism Monitor*, 2(14).

<sup>1067</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Chechen Republic of Ichkeria.” Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/356/>

<sup>1068</sup> Felix Corley (2005, March 10). *Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov*. *The Independent (UK*

*Edition)*.<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/aslan-maskhadov-527805.html>

<sup>1069</sup> Felix Corley (2005, March 10). *Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov*. *The Independent (UK*

*Edition)*.<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/aslan-maskhadov-527805.html>

<sup>1070</sup> Felix Corley (2005, March 10). *Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov*. *The Independent (UK*

*Edition)*.<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/aslan-maskhadov-527805.html>

<sup>1071</sup> Admin. (2008, May 18). *Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov*. Waynakh Online.

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/aslan-aliyevich-maskhadov/>

embryonic armed forces under President Dudayev.<sup>1072</sup> In 2005, he called for negotiations with Russia to end the conflict.<sup>1073</sup> Shortly after the ceasefire agreement, Mashkhadov was killed by Russian troops on 8 March 2005.<sup>1074</sup>

### *Abdul Khalim-Salomovich Sadulayev*

Abdul Halim-Salomovich Sadulayev succeeded Mashkhadov as the fourth president of the CRI in 2005.<sup>1075</sup> He also founded the Caucasus and Dagestan Front and reunified the rebels in 2002. He was born in 1966 in Russia, attended the Chechen State University, and spoke fluent Chechen, Russian, Arabic, and some English.<sup>1076</sup> Sadulayev studied with local theologians and became the local Imam of Argun.<sup>1077</sup> He made the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>1078</sup> Mashkhadov appointed him as Vice President in 2002, and after his death, Sadulayev became president.<sup>1079</sup> Sadulayev reportedly opposed civilian killings and suicide attacks harming civilians.<sup>1080</sup> He was killed by Russian forces in June 2006.<sup>1081</sup>

### *Doku Umarov*

Doku Umarov became the president after Sadulayev's death in 2006.<sup>1082</sup> He was born in 1964 in Russia and joined the Chechen separatists in 1994.<sup>1083</sup> Umarov holds a degree in civil engineering from Grozny Oil Institute and has experience as a guerrilla commander.<sup>1084</sup> He was the Head of

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<sup>1072</sup> Admin. (2008, May 18). *Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov*. Waynakh Online.

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/aslan-aliyevich-maskhadov/>

<sup>1073</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Chechen Republic of Ichkeria." Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/356/>; Admin. (2008, May 18). *Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov*. Waynakh Online.

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/aslan-aliyevich-maskhadov/>

<sup>1074</sup> Admin. (2008, May 18). *Aslan Aliyevich Maskhadov*. Waynakh Online.

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/aslan-aliyevich-maskhadov/>; Uppsala Conflict Data Program. (n.d.).

*Chechen Republic of Ichkeria* (Actor ID 352). <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/352>

<sup>1075</sup> Smirnov, A. (2007, June 21). *One year after: Assessing the life of Abdul-Khalim Sadulaev*. *North Caucasus*

*Weekly*. Jamestown Foundation. <https://jamestown.org/one-year-after-assessing-the-life-of-abdul-khalim-sadulaev/>

<sup>1076</sup> Smirnov, A. (2007, June 21). *One year after: Assessing the life of Abdul-Khalim Sadulaev*. *North Caucasus*

*Weekly*. Jamestown Foundation. <https://jamestown.org/one-year-after-assessing-the-life-of-abdul-khalim-sadulaev/>

<sup>1077</sup> *Abdul Khalim Salamovich Sadullayev*. Waynakh Online. <https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/abdul-khalim-salamovich-sadullayev/>

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/abdul-khalim-salamovich-sadullayev/>

<sup>1078</sup> *Abdul Khalim Salamovich Sadullayev*. Waynakh Online. <https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/abdul-khalim-salamovich-sadullayev/>

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/abdul-khalim-salamovich-sadullayev/>

<sup>1079</sup> *Abdul Khalim Salamovich Sadullayev*. Waynakh Online. <https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/abdul-khalim-salamovich-sadullayev/>

<https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/abdul-khalim-salamovich-sadullayev/>

<sup>1080</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Chechen Republic of Ichkeria." Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/356/>; Admin. (2008, May 18). *Abdul Khalim Salamovich Sadullayev*. Waynakh

Online. <https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/abdul-khalim-salamovich-sadullayev/>

<sup>1081</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program. (n.d.). *Chechen Republic of Ichkeria* (Actor ID 352).

<https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/352>

<sup>1082</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Chechen Republic of Ichkeria." Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/356/>

<sup>1083</sup> Smick, E. (2006, July 18). *The Chechen separatist movement*. Council on Foreign Relations.

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chechen-separatist-movement>

<sup>1084</sup> Smick, E. (2006, July 18). *The Chechen separatist movement*. Council on Foreign Relations.

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chechen-separatist-movement>; Cunningham, J. M., (2024). *Doku Umarov*:

the Security Council of the CRI from 1997 onward and Vice-President from 2005 onward.<sup>1085</sup> He denounced terrorism but openly called for a jihad.<sup>1086</sup> He united the units in the North Caucasus under the Caucasus Emirate, declared himself Emir, and the CRI a province under the Caucasus Emirate in 2007.<sup>1087</sup> Consequently, the CRI dissolved temporarily before being revived in exile by Akhmed Zakayev.<sup>1088</sup>

## Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs

### *Shamil Basayev*

Shamil Basayev, also known as Abu Idris, was the founder of the Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs in 1999.<sup>1089</sup> He was born in 1965 in Russia.<sup>1090</sup> He studied land management in Moscow; however, Basayev dropped out of college and became a computer salesman and guerrilla commander.<sup>1091</sup> He was responsible for hijacking a Russian passenger jet in 1991.<sup>1092</sup> Basayev also fought with separatists in Georgia.<sup>1093</sup> In 1996, he lost to Mashkhadov in the presidential election.<sup>1094</sup> Basayev was the deputy prime minister and field commander in the CRI.<sup>1095</sup> Basayev grew increasingly radical in his beliefs and frequently

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*Chechen separatist and guerrilla leader. Encyclopedia Britannica.* <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Doku-Umarov>; Isayev, R. (2006, June 20). *Dokka Umarov: A Hawk Flies to the Ichkerian Throne. Prague Watchdog.* Retrieved from <https://www.watchdog.cz/?show=000000-000004-000001-000188&lang=1>

<sup>1085</sup> Cunningham, J. M., (2024). *Doku Umarov: Chechen separatist and guerrilla leader. Encyclopedia Britannica.* <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Doku-Umarov>

<sup>1086</sup> Cunningham, J. M., (2024). *Doku Umarov: Chechen separatist and guerrilla leader. Encyclopedia Britannica.* <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Doku-Umarov>

<sup>1087</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Chechen Republic of Ichkeria.” Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/356/>; Admin. (2008, May 18). *Dokka Khamadovich Umarov.* Waynakh Online. Retrieved January 9, 2026, from <https://www.waynakh.com/eng/2008/05/dokka-khamadovich-umarov>

<sup>1088</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program. (n.d.). *Chechen Republic of Ichkeria (Actor ID 352).* <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/352>

<sup>1089</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Brigade.” Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/511/>; *Riyad us-Salien Brigade of Martyrs.* (n.d.). In *Turkey.* <https://cvelasco1.wixsite.com/turkey/rsbm>. Sources suggest that Basayev founded the group based on two groups he led previously: Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR) and the International Islamic Brigade (IIB), see e.g. Roggio, B. (2011, January 24). *35 killed in suicide attack at Moscow airport.* FDD’s Long War Journal. [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2011/01/31\\_killed\\_in\\_suicide.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2011/01/31_killed_in_suicide.php)

<sup>1090</sup> Gartenstein-Ross, D. (2006, July 14). *The death of Shamil Basayev. The American Spectator.* [https://spectator.org/46731\\_death-shamil-basayev/](https://spectator.org/46731_death-shamil-basayev/)

<sup>1091</sup> BBC News. (2006, July 10). *Obituary: Shamil Basayev.* <https://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4727935.stm>; Murphy, K. (2004, September 10). *Chechen warlord always brazen — but never caught.* *Los Angeles Times.* <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2004-sep-10-fg-basayev10-story.html>

<sup>1092</sup> BBC News. (2006, July 10). *Obituary: Shamil Basayev.* <https://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4727935.stm>

<sup>1093</sup> Murphy, K. (2004, September 10). *Chechen warlord always brazen — but never caught.* *Los Angeles Times.*

<sup>1094</sup> Gartenstein-Ross, D. (2006, July 14). *The death of Shamil Basayev. The American Spectator.* [https://spectator.org/46731\\_death-shamil-basayev/](https://spectator.org/46731_death-shamil-basayev/)

<sup>1095</sup> Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University. <https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>; Mapping Militants Project. “Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Brigade.” Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/511/>

made use of hostage taking and human shields as well as labeling Russian citizens a legitimate target given their support for President Putin in the early 2000s.<sup>1096</sup> Basayev had close contact with Umar ibn al-Khattab.<sup>1097</sup> Basayev was designated as a terrorist by the UN Security Council.<sup>1098</sup> Russian forces killed Basayev in 2006.<sup>1099</sup>

### *Aslan Avgazarovich Butukayev*

Aslan Avgazarovich Butukayev, also known as Emir Khamzat, was born in 1974 in Russia.<sup>1100</sup> Possessing a Chechen identity, he succeeded Basayev as the leader of the Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs. Some reports mention that the group was revived into a unit of the Caucasus Emirate under Umarov in 2009 where Butukayev served as top commander until 2015.<sup>1101</sup> He was designated in the United States in 2016 as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist.<sup>1102</sup> Butukayev was killed by Russian forces in 2021.<sup>1103</sup>

## Special Purpose Islamic Regiment

### *Arbi Barayev*

Arbi Barayev was the founding leader of the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment.<sup>1104</sup> Barayev was born in 1974 in the village of Alkhan-Kala, southwest of Grozny.<sup>1105</sup> He reportedly received a secondary education and briefly worked as a police sergeant in the early 1990s.<sup>1106</sup> During the First Chechen-Russian War, Barayev fought for the Chechen separatists.<sup>1107</sup> Seeking to establish a transnational Islamic state, the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment was formed in 1996 during the

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<sup>1096</sup> Murphy, K. (2004, September 10). *Chechen warlord always brazen — but never caught*. *Los Angeles Times*.

<sup>1097</sup> Gartenstein-Ross, D. (2006, July 14). *The death of Shamil Basayev*. *The American Spectator*.

[https://spectator.org/46731\\_death-shamil-basayev/](https://spectator.org/46731_death-shamil-basayev/)

<sup>1098</sup> BBC News. (2006, July 10). *Obituary: Shamil Basayev*. <https://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4727935.stm>;

<sup>1099</sup> Gartenstein-Ross, D. (2006, July 14). *The death of Shamil Basayev*. *The American Spectator*.

[https://spectator.org/46731\\_death-shamil-basayev/](https://spectator.org/46731_death-shamil-basayev/)

<sup>1100</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Brigade.” Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/511/>; Byutukayev, Aslan Avgazarovich. (n.d.). [ArmedConflicts.com](http://ArmedConflicts.com).

<https://www.armedconflicts.com/Byutukayev-Aslan-Avgazarovich-t113343>

<sup>1101</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Brigade.” Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/511/>;

<sup>1102</sup> U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson. (2016, July 13). *State Department terrorist designations of Aslan Avgazarovich Byutukaev and Ayrat Nasimovich Vakhitov* [Media Note]. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/07/259932.htm>

<sup>1103</sup> AFP. (2021, January 20). *Chechnya kills militant tied to IS, deadly Moscow attacks*, *The Moscow Times*.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/01/20/chechnya-kills-militant-tied-to-is-deadly-moscow-attacks-a72671>

<sup>1104</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Special Purpose Islamic Regiment.” Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

<sup>1105</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20110827112213/http://www.waynakh.com/tr/arbi-barayev/>.

<sup>1106</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/news/newsid\\_1407000/1407433.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/news/newsid_1407000/1407433.stm).

<sup>1107</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Special Purpose Islamic Regiment.” Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

inter-war period of the Chechen Wars.<sup>1108</sup> In June 2001, Barayev was killed during a Russian military operation in which Russian troops blockaded Alkhan-Kala to find Barayev and other rebels.<sup>1109</sup>

### *Movsar Barayev*

Movsar Barayev succeeded Arbi Barayev as the leader of the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment.<sup>1110</sup> Born in the late 1970s in Chechnya,<sup>1111</sup> Movsar Barayev was Arbi Barayev's nephew.<sup>1112</sup> Movsar Barayev reportedly completed secondary education.<sup>1113</sup> He is also noted to be a "veteran of both Chechen wars."<sup>1114</sup> Movsar Barayev is considered to be one of the organizers of the Dubrovka Theater attacks and died on the final day of the siege.<sup>1115</sup>

### *Khamzat Tazabayev*

Khamzat Tazabayev succeeded Movsar Barayev as the leader of the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment.<sup>1116</sup> Tazabayev was born in 1978 in Chechnya and reportedly participated in both the First and Second Chechen Wars.<sup>1117</sup> In 2003, the United States designated the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment as a terrorist organization.<sup>1118</sup> The same year, the organization was absorbed into the armed forces of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria.<sup>1119</sup>

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<sup>1108</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Special Purpose Islamic Regiment." Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

<sup>1109</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1406317.stm>.

<sup>1110</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Special Purpose Islamic Regiment." Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

<sup>1111</sup> There are different dates listed for Barayev's birthdate. See Steve Banovac, Peter Dillon, Matthew Hennessy, Ronald Idoko, Christine Patterson, Augustine Paul, Ian Sonneborn, Christina Steve, and Kate Stubbe. "Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack: Terror at Beslan: A Chronicle of On-Going Tragedy and a Government's Failed Response." *Pittsburg: Ridgway Center* (2007); <https://www.smh.com.au/world/leader-of-kidnap-gang-led-brutal-life-20021027-gdfrhm.html>.

<sup>1112</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Special Purpose Islamic Regiment." Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

<sup>1113</sup> Agence France Presse, "The Chechen Rebel Who Came to Moscow 'To Die,'" October 25, 2002.

<sup>1114</sup> Steve Banovac, Peter Dillon, Matthew Hennessy, Ronald Idoko, Christine Patterson, Augustine Paul, Ian Sonneborn, Christina Steve, and Kate Stubbe. "Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack: Terror at Beslan: A Chronicle of On-Going Tragedy and a Government's Failed Response." *Pittsburg: Ridgway Center* (2007).

<sup>1115</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Special Purpose Islamic Regiment." Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

<sup>1116</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Special Purpose Islamic Regiment." Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

<sup>1117</sup> Steve Banovac, Peter Dillon, Matthew Hennessy, Ronald Idoko, Christine Patterson, Augustine Paul, Ian Sonneborn, Christina Steve, and Kate Stubbe. "Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack: Terror at Beslan: A Chronicle of On-Going Tragedy and a Government's Failed Response." *Pittsburg: Ridgway Center* (2007).

<sup>1118</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Designation Under Executive Order 13224," February 28, 2003, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2003/18067.htm>.

<sup>1119</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Special Purpose Islamic Regiment." Last modified August 1, 2018. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/522/>.

# Somalia

## Islamic Courts Union

### *Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed*

Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed was born in 1964 in Somalia and belongs to the Abgaal subclan of the Hawiya.<sup>1120</sup> He studied geography and Arabic at Kurdufan University in Sudan in the 1980s.<sup>1121</sup> He was a former lieutenant of Mohamed Dheere, with whom he had a fallout in 2003, and also worked with Heussein Aideed in the mid-1990s.<sup>1122</sup> As a former school teacher, he revived the Islamic Courts Union and was elected as chairman for all courts in 2004.<sup>1123</sup> He is labeled as a moderate leader of the ICU<sup>1124</sup> compared to the radical leader Sheikh Aweys, who was the chairman of the legislative council.<sup>1125</sup> Ahmed was pushed down to the chairman of the executive committee after more radical members gained control within the ICU.<sup>1126</sup> Ahmed resigned from his post on December 27, 2006 - after the Ethiopian invasion - and fled.<sup>1127</sup> It is also mentioned that Sheik Ahmed surrendered to the Kenyan authorities on January 21, 2007 and was freed through an agreement with the United States.<sup>1128</sup> He co-established the Alliance for the Liberation of Somalia (ARS) in 2007 and served as the 4th president of Somalia in 2009.<sup>1129</sup>

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<sup>1120</sup> <https://www.africa-confidential.com/profile/id/4867/Sheikh-Sharif-Sheikh-Ahmed>; Rabasa, Angel, *Radical Islam in East Africa*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009.

<https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG782.html>.

<sup>1121</sup> BBC News, *Somalia's moderate Islamist leader*, 22 January 2007, BBC News website,

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5072268.stm>

<sup>1122</sup> Rabasa, Angel, *Radical Islam in East Africa*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009.

<https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG782.html>, 59

<sup>1123</sup> Due to Somalia's Transitional National Government the Islamic Courts have lost their influence until the revival by Sheik Ahmed in 2003. See for example, Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic Courts Union." Last modified February 1, 2019. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/403/>; Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan (2007) *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*, *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1:2, 151-160. Islamic Courts occurred north of Mogadishu in 1994 for the first time and in the early 2000s In 2000 the different Islamic courts formed the Joint Islamic Courts Council

with Sheikh Hassan Mohammed Addeh as their head.

<sup>1124</sup> BBC News, *Somalia's moderate Islamist leader*, 22 January 2007, BBC News website,

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5072268.stm>

<sup>1125</sup> Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan (2007) *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*, *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1:2, 151-160.

<sup>1126</sup> Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan (2007) *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*, *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1:2, 151-160.

<sup>1127</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic Courts Union." Last modified February 1, 2019.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/403/>

<sup>1128</sup> Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan (2007) *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*, *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1:2, 151-160, Rabasa, Angel, *Radical Islam in East Africa*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG782.html>.

<sup>1129</sup> Rabasa, Angel, *Radical Islam in East Africa*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009.

<https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG782.html>; Atta-Asamoah, A. (2013, July). *Long walk to restoration: Lessons from Somalia's transition process*. Institute for Security Studies, ISS Pretoria.

[https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/166833/SitRep2013\\_9July-Asamoah.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/166833/SitRep2013_9July-Asamoah.pdf)

## Islamic State Somalia

### *Abdul Qadir Mumin*

Abdul Qadir Mumin was born in the early 1950s in Somalia.<sup>1130</sup> Mumin reportedly lived in Sweden and the United Kingdom during the 1990s and 2000s.<sup>1131</sup> In the United Kingdom, he preached at a mosque in Leicester and also lived in South London.<sup>1132</sup> Due to increasing surveillance from British intelligence, Mumin left the United Kingdom in 2010, burning his British passport and returning to Somalia.<sup>1133</sup> In Somalia, Mumin joined al-Shabaab and was sent by the organization to the Puntland region of Somalia in 2012.<sup>1134</sup> However, “despite his rising profile in al-Shabaab’s Puntland group, Mumin likely began to recognize that there were limits to his ascent given the all-importance of clan affiliation in Somali politics.”<sup>1135</sup> As a member of al-Shabaab, the United States sanctioned Mumin under Executive Order 13224.<sup>1136</sup> In 2015, Mumin defected from al-Shabaab and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the Islamic State.<sup>1137</sup> The United States designated the Islamic State Somalia as a terrorist organization under Executive Order 13224 in 2018.<sup>1138</sup>

## Syria

### Abdullah Azzam Brigades

#### *Saleh al-Qarawi*

The Abdullah Azzam Brigades (AAB) was formed in 2009 under the leadership of Saleh al-Qarawi.<sup>1139</sup> Saudi government sources note that al-Qarawi was born in 1982 in Buraidah, Saudi

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<sup>1130</sup> <https://ofac.treasury.gov/recent-actions/20160831>.

<sup>1131</sup> Austin Doctor and Gina Ligon, “The Death of an Islamic State Global Leader in Africa?” *CTC Sentinel* 17, no. 7 (2024): 26-31.

<sup>1132</sup> Austin Doctor and Gina Ligon, “The Death of an Islamic State Global Leader in Africa?” *CTC Sentinel* 17, no. 7 (2024): 26-31.

<sup>1133</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O’Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>1134</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O’Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>1135</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O’Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021), 206.

<sup>1136</sup> Austin Doctor and Gina Ligon, “The Death of an Islamic State Global Leader in Africa?” *CTC Sentinel* 17, no. 7 (2024): 26-31.

<sup>1137</sup> Austin Doctor and Gina Ligon, “The Death of an Islamic State Global Leader in Africa?” *CTC Sentinel* 17, no. 7 (2024): 26-31.

<sup>1138</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Executive Order 13224,” <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>.

<sup>1139</sup> The Global Terrorism Database includes attacks conducted by the group before 2009. However, sources list 2009 as the start name for this iteration of the organization. For instance, see United Nations Security Council, “Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB),” September 23, 2014,

Arabia.<sup>1140</sup> Al-Qarawi is a graduate of the Scientific Institute in Buraidah, where he specialized in religious studies.<sup>1141</sup> After leaving Saudi Arabia sometime in 2006, al-Qarawi was reportedly arrested by Syrian authorities and handed over to Saudi authorities, spending a few months in jail before being released and leaving the country.<sup>1142</sup> During his time abroad, al-Qarawi fought against U.S. forces in Fallujah and reportedly worked with al-Qaida in Iraq and received training in electronics.<sup>1143</sup> Al-Qarawi stated he started AAB as an outgrowth of al-Qaida in Iraq,<sup>1144</sup> with the organization making it clear that it was openly loyal to al-Qaida's leader.<sup>1145</sup> Al-Qarawi reportedly sustained major injuries in Pakistan, forcing him to return to Saudi Arabia in 2012, where he was detained and subsequently replaced as AAB's leader.<sup>1146</sup>

### *Majid bin Muhammad al-Majid*

Majid bin Muhammad al-Majid succeeded al-Qarawi as AAB's leader in 2012.<sup>1147</sup> Al-Majid was born in Saudi Arabia in 1973.<sup>1148</sup> Little information exists surrounding al-Majid's early life in Saudi Arabia. Arabic-language reporting notes that al-Majid traveled to Lebanon in 2006, joining Fatah al-Islam in their struggle against the Lebanese army.<sup>1149</sup> After the Battle of Nahr al-Bared,

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[https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/entity/abdallah-azzam-brigades-%28aab%29](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/entity/abdallah-azzam-brigades-%28aab%29).

<sup>1140</sup> Saudi Ministry of Interior, "85 قائمة المطلوبين"

[https://safiu.moi.gov.sa/wps/portal/Home/sectors/passports/contents!/ut/p/z0/fY4xD4IwFIT\\_ShfmV0khXQmJCC4aB7ELeYGiVWwLvKA\\_32pcXBzvt\\_dgYIalMXFnJGmszgEfVJpw0shNisRb6XYrXm2j6s8y8tYFikccIIK1P9QaD\\_HXcVQZqNZZ0k-C2thFz\\_RdYq7vTasj\\_ut22uNEd22J4RRxumj2wMB3zGvnh5AfczExMJh-weQuZNOGRvxXHF-p0oGs!/.](https://safiu.moi.gov.sa/wps/portal/Home/sectors/passports/contents!/ut/p/z0/fY4xD4IwFIT_ShfmV0khXQmJCC4aB7ELeYGiVWwLvKA_32pcXBzvt_dgYIalMXFnJGmszgEfVJpw0shNisRb6XYrXm2j6s8y8tYFikccIIK1P9QaD_HXcVQZqNZZ0k-C2thFz_RdYq7vTasj_ut22uNEd22J4RRxumj2wMB3zGvnh5AfczExMJh-weQuZNOGRvxXHF-p0oGs!/)

<sup>1141</sup> Gulf Issues Center for Strategic Studies, "الكرهية الدينية، الطائفية، والتحرير على القتل"

[https://gulffissues.info/m\\_p\\_folder/main\\_div/derasat/derasat\\_0013.htm](https://gulffissues.info/m_p_folder/main_div/derasat/derasat_0013.htm).

<sup>1142</sup> Gulf Issues Center for Strategic Studies, "الكرهية الدينية، الطائفية، والتحرير على القتل"

[https://gulffissues.info/m\\_p\\_folder/main\\_div/derasat/derasat\\_0013.htm](https://gulffissues.info/m_p_folder/main_div/derasat/derasat_0013.htm).

<sup>1143</sup> Gulf Issues Center for Strategic Studies, "الكرهية الدينية، الطائفية، والتحرير على القتل"

[https://gulffissues.info/m\\_p\\_folder/main\\_div/derasat/derasat\\_0013.htm](https://gulffissues.info/m_p_folder/main_div/derasat/derasat_0013.htm).

<sup>1144</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "Online Jihadists Discuss Fate of al Qaeda Operative Held by Saudi Arabia," *Long War Journal*, June 27, 2013, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online\\_jihadists\\_dis.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online_jihadists_dis.php).

<sup>1145</sup> Caleb Weiss, "Abdullah Azzam Brigades Dissolves Itself in Syria," *Long War Journal*, November 22, 2019, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/11/abdullah-azzam-brigades-dissolves-itself-in-syria.php>.

<sup>1146</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "Online Jihadists Discuss Fate of al Qaeda Operative Held by Saudi Arabia," *Long War Journal*, June 27, 2013, [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online\\_jihadists\\_dis.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/06/online_jihadists_dis.php).

<sup>1147</sup> U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, "Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB),"

[https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist\\_groups/abdallah\\_azzam.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/abdallah_azzam.html).

<sup>1148</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام"

[https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/.](https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/)

<sup>1149</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام"

[https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/.](https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/)

al-Majid moved to the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon.<sup>1150</sup> Al-Majid kept AAB in al-Qaida's orbit by pledging fealty to Jabhat al-Nusra's leader, Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, in 2013.<sup>1151</sup> Al-Majid was arrested by Lebanese security forces in December 2013 before dying shortly thereafter while in custody in January 2014.<sup>1152</sup> Al-Majid reportedly suffered from kidney failure which required dialysis.<sup>1153</sup>

### *Sirajuddin Zureiqat*

Sirajuddin Zureiqat assumed control of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades (AAB) in October 2014.<sup>1154</sup> Zureiqat was born in 1990 in a hospital outside of Beirut, Lebanon.<sup>1155</sup> Zureiqat completed high school and studied at the College of Sharia.<sup>1156</sup> Zureiqat reportedly opened a store selling phones and also served as an Imam.<sup>1157</sup> In 2011, Zureiqat was reportedly detained and taken to the Lebanese Ministry of Defense and interrogated before being released after questioning.<sup>1158</sup> Shortly thereafter, Zureiqat left home and later joined AAB, becoming a spokesperson for the organization.<sup>1159</sup> After reportedly being based in Syria since 2012,<sup>1160</sup> Zureiqat became AAB's leader in 2014 following the death of al-Majid.<sup>1161</sup> In 2019, the organization issued a statement dissolving its operational units in Syria.<sup>1162</sup>

<sup>1150</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/>.

<sup>1151</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "ماجد الماجد.. أمير كتائب عبد الله عزام,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2014/1/3/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%A8-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B9%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85/>.

<sup>1152</sup> BBC, "القبض في لبنان على ماجد الماجد زعيم كتائب عبد الله عزام,"

[https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101\\_terrorist\\_arrest\\_lebanon](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101_terrorist_arrest_lebanon).

<sup>1153</sup> BBC, "القبض في لبنان على ماجد الماجد زعيم كتائب عبد الله عزام,"

[https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101\\_terrorist\\_arrest\\_lebanon](https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2014/01/140101_terrorist_arrest_lebanon).

<sup>1154</sup> U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, "Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB),"

[https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist\\_groups/abdallah\\_azzam.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/abdallah_azzam.html).

<sup>1155</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادئ إلى إرهابي خطير," <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>.

<sup>1156</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادئ إلى إرهابي خطير," <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>.

<sup>1157</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادئ إلى إرهابي خطير," <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>.

<sup>1158</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادئ إلى إرهابي خطير," <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>.

<sup>1159</sup> Lina Fakhridine, "سراج الدين زريقات.. من شيخ هادئ إلى إرهابي خطير," <https://www.saidanet.com/News-32455/>.

<sup>1160</sup> Caleb Weiss, "Abdullah Azzam Brigades Dissolves Itself in Syria," *Long War Journal*, November 22, 2019,

<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/11/abdullah-azzam-brigades-dissolves-itself-in-syria.php>.

<sup>1161</sup> U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, "Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB),"

[https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist\\_groups/abdallah\\_azzam.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/terrorist_groups/abdallah_azzam.html).

<sup>1162</sup> Caleb Weiss, "Abdullah Azzam Brigades Dissolves Itself in Syria," *Long War Journal*, November 22, 2019,

<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/11/abdullah-azzam-brigades-dissolves-itself-in-syria.php>.

## al-Nusra Front/Jabhat Fatah al-Sham

### *Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani*

Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, or Ahmed al-Sharaa, was the founding leader of al-Nusra Front/Jabhat al-Nusra following the organization's formation in 2012.<sup>1163</sup> Al-Jawlani's reported birth date is disputed, with some sources stating he was born between 1975 and 1979 or as late as 1982.<sup>1164</sup> Arabic-language reports note that al-Jawlani was born in 1981.<sup>1165</sup> However, recent reporting clarifies that he was born in 1982.<sup>1166</sup> Al-Jawlani reportedly joined the College of Medicine at Damascus University before traveling to Iraq.<sup>1167</sup> Al-Jawlani states that he traveled to Iraq shortly before the U.S. invasion of Iraq to participate in the insurgency; he would join al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>1168</sup> In 2006, al-Jawlani reportedly briefly traveled to Lebanon to supervise military training for Afnan al-Sham before returning to Iraq, where he was arrested and held in prisons such as Abu Ghraib and Camp Bucca.<sup>1169</sup> Al-Jawlani returned to Syria in 2011,<sup>1170</sup> establishing Jabhat al-Nusra in early 2012.<sup>1171</sup> Al-Jawlani pledged Jabhat al-Nusra's allegiance to al-Qaida in 2013

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<sup>1163</sup> Jerome Drevon and Patrick Haenni, "Redefining Global Jihad and Its Termination: The Subjugation of al-Qaeda by Its Former Franchise in Syria," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 48, no. 3 (2025): 284-299.

<sup>1164</sup> Martin Smith and Marcela Gaviria, "The Jihadist," *Frontline*, June 1, 2021, <http://pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/the-jihadist/>.

<sup>1165</sup> Al Khaleej Online, "الجزيرة تكشف عن هوية زعيم جبهة النصرة أبو محمد الجولاني," <https://alkhaleejonline.net/%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D9%83%D8%B4%D9%81-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A>.

<sup>1166</sup> Raya Jalabi, "Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, the Syrian Rebel Leader Who Overthrew the Assad Regime," *Financial Times*, December 6, 2024, <https://www.ft.com/content/574cc17a-fa3a-411b-acb0-34fc032c7fe4>; Al Jazeera Arabic, "أحمد الشرع.. من جبهات القتال إلى رئاسة سوريا,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/26/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A>.

<sup>1167</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أحمد الشرع.. رحلة صعود طالب الطب إلى قيادة عملية إسقاط نظام الأسد,"

<https://www.aljazeeramubasher.net/profile/2024/12/9/%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%B9-%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%B5%D8%B9%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D8%A8-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89>.

<sup>1168</sup> Martin Smith and Marcela Gaviria, "The Jihadist," *Frontline*, June 1, 2021, <http://pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/the-jihadist/>.

<sup>1169</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أحمد الشرع.. من جبهات القتال إلى رئاسة سوريا," <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/26/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A>.

<sup>1170</sup> Raya Jalabi, "Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, the Syrian Rebel Leader Who Overthrew the Assad Regime," *Financial Times*, December 6, 2024, <https://www.ft.com/content/574cc17a-fa3a-411b-acb0-34fc032c7fe4>.

<sup>1171</sup> Martin Smith and Marcela Gaviria, "The Jihadist," *Frontline*, June 1, 2021, <http://pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/the-jihadist/>; Jerome Drevon and Patrick Haenni, "Redefining Global Jihad and Its Termination: The Subjugation of al-Qaeda by Its Former Franchise in Syria," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 48, no. 3 (2025): 284-299.

following its split from the Islamic State.<sup>1172</sup> Al-Jawlani remained the organization's leader following its name change to Jabhat Fatah al-Sham in 2016.<sup>1173</sup> However, al-Jawlani would disavow ties to al-Qaeda in 2016 prior to the formation of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham in January 2017.<sup>1174</sup>

## Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki

### *Tawfiq Shahabuddin*

Tawfiq Shahabuddin founded the Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki organization during the Syrian civil war.<sup>1175</sup> The organization was formed outside of Aleppo in 2011.<sup>1176</sup> In an interview with scholar Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, Shahabuddin stated that his birthplace is “a village called Qubtan al-Jabal in a farm called al-Sheikh Suleiman affiliated with the village of Qubtan al-Jabal. I was born in 1973, I studied at the primary and preparatory level in Aleppo province, Aleppo city. And from there I moved to my very simple village. I worked in agriculture and rearing livestock before the revolution.”<sup>1177</sup> Therefore, unlike other jihadist leaders, Shahabuddin did not play a significant role in the anti-Asad movement before 2011.<sup>1178</sup> Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki was largely defunct by 2019, as many remaining fighters within the group joined the Syrian National Army.<sup>1179</sup>

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<sup>1172</sup> Jerome Drevon and Patrick Haenni, “Redefining Global Jihad and Its Termination: The Subjugation of al-Qaeda by Its Former Franchise in Syria,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 48, no. 3 (2025): 284-299.

<sup>1173</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Formerly Jabhat al-Nusra).” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/392/>.

<sup>1174</sup> Aaron Y. Zelin, “The Patient Efforts Behind Hayat Tahrir al-Sham’s Success in Aleppo,” *War on the Rocks*, December 3, 2024, <https://warontherocks.com/2024/12/the-patient-efforts-behind-hayat-tahrir-al-shams-success-in-aleppo/>.

<sup>1175</sup> Syrian Memory Institution, “توفيق شهاب الدين” <https://syrianmemory.org/archive/figures/5cd0d9f7658c9f000109f6b0>.

<sup>1176</sup> Hosam al-Jablawi, “Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement: How a Once Moderate Group Joined Fateh al-Sham,” *Atlantic Council*, February 17, 2017, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/syriasource/nour-al-din-al-zenki-movement-how-a-once-moderate-group-joined-fateh-al-sham/>.

<sup>1177</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, “The History of Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki: Interview,” January 8, 2020, <https://aymennjawad.org/2020/01/the-history-of-harakat-nour-al-din-al-zenki>.

<sup>1178</sup> Rafid Jaboori, “Al-Nusra’s Unlikely Ally: A Profile of Nour al-Din al-Zenki Leader Tawfiq Shahabuddin,” *Jamestown Foundation*, May 2, 2017, <https://jamestown.org/al-nusras-unlikely-ally-profile-nour-al-din-al-zenki-leader-tawfiq-shahabuddin/>.

<sup>1179</sup> European Union Agency for Asylum, “Syria: Country Focus,” March 2025, [https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2025-03/2025\\_03\\_EUAA\\_COI\\_Report\\_Syria\\_Country\\_Focus.pdf](https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2025-03/2025_03_EUAA_COI_Report_Syria_Country_Focus.pdf).

## Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham

### *Hashim al-Sheikh*

Hashim al-Sheikh, also known as Abu Jaber, was born in 1968 in Aleppo, Syria.<sup>1180</sup> According to a biography released by Ahrar al-Sham, al-Sheikh attained a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Aleppo.<sup>1181</sup> In 2003, al-Sheikh reportedly traveled to Iraq to combat U.S. forces.<sup>1182</sup> After returning to Syria in 2005, al-Sheikh was arrested by the Assad regime and spent time in the Sadnaya Prison.<sup>1183</sup> He was released in 2011 and “joined the Mujahideen against the Assad regime in the northern and western countryside of Aleppo.”<sup>1184</sup> Al-Sheikh subsequently led Ahrar al-Sham before heading Jaysh Halab, which was an umbrella organization of Aleppo-based armed groups.<sup>1185</sup> In early 2017, Jabhat Fatah al-Sham merged with other jihadist organizations to form Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, with al-Sheikh becoming the organization's leader.<sup>1186</sup> However, al-Sheikh resigned from this leadership position later in 2017 and was succeeded by Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani.<sup>1187</sup>

### *Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani*

Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, or Ahmed al-Sharaa, was the founding leader of al-Nusra Front/Jabhat al-Nusra following the organization's formation in 2012.<sup>1188</sup> Al-Jawlani's reported birth date is disputed, with some sources stating he was born between 1975 and 1979 or as late as 1982.<sup>1189</sup> Arabic-language reports note that al-Jawlani was born in 1981.<sup>1190</sup> However, recent

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<sup>1180</sup> Counter Extremism Project, “Hashim al-Sheikh,” <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/hashim-al-sheikh>.

<sup>1181</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, “Hay'at Tahrir al Sham Leader Calls for ‘Unity’ in Syrian Insurgency,” February 10, 2017, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/02/hayat-tahrir-al-sham-leader-calls-for-unity-in-syrian-insurgency.php>.

<sup>1182</sup> Syrian Memory Institution, “هاشم الشيخ - أبو جابر,” <https://syrianmemory.org/archive/figures/5cea1c50e845530001e7a5ad>.

<sup>1183</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, “Hay'at Tahrir al Sham Leader Calls for ‘Unity’ in Syrian Insurgency,” February 10, 2017, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/02/hayat-tahrir-al-sham-leader-calls-for-unity-in-syrian-insurgency.php>.

<sup>1184</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, “Hay'at Tahrir al Sham Leader Calls for ‘Unity’ in Syrian Insurgency,” February 10, 2017, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/02/hayat-tahrir-al-sham-leader-calls-for-unity-in-syrian-insurgency.php>.

<sup>1185</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Formerly Jabhat al-Nusra).” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/392/>.

<sup>1186</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Formerly Jabhat al-Nusra).” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/392/>.

<sup>1187</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Formerly Jabhat al-Nusra).” Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/392/>.

<sup>1188</sup> Jerome Drevon and Patrick Haenni, “Redefining Global Jihad and Its Termination: The Subjugation of al-Qaeda by Its Former Franchise in Syria,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 48, no. 3 (2025): 284-299.

<sup>1189</sup> Martin Smith and Marcela Gaviria, “The Jihadist,” *Frontline*, June 1, 2021, <http://pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/the-jihadist/>.

<sup>1190</sup> Al Khaleej Online, “الجزيرة تكشف عن هوية زعيم جبهة النصرة أبو محمد الجولاني,” <https://alkhaleejonline.net/%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D9%83%D8%B4%D9%81-%D8%B9%D9%86->

reporting clarifies that he was born in 1982.<sup>1191</sup> Al-Jawlani reportedly joined the College of Medicine at Damascus University before traveling to Iraq.<sup>1192</sup> Al-Jawlani states that he traveled to Iraq shortly before the U.S. invasion of Iraq to participate in the insurgency; he would join al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>1193</sup> In 2006, al-Jawlani reportedly briefly traveled to Lebanon to supervise military training for Ayn al-Sham before returning to Iraq, where he was arrested and held in prisons such as Abu Ghraib and Camp Bucca.<sup>1194</sup> Al-Jawlani returned to Syria in 2011,<sup>1195</sup> establishing Jabhat al-Nusra in early 2012.<sup>1196</sup> Al-Jawlani pledged Jabhat al-Nusra's allegiance to al-Qaida in 2013 following its split from the Islamic State.<sup>1197</sup> Al-Jawlani remained the organization's leader following its name change to Jabhat Fatah al-Sham in 2016.<sup>1198</sup> However, al-Jawlani would disavow ties to al-Qaida in 2016 prior to the formation of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham in January 2017.<sup>1199</sup> After the formation of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, al-Jawlani assumed control of the organization in October 2017.<sup>1200</sup>

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<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/26/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A>.

<sup>1191</sup> Raya Jalabi, "Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, the Syrian Rebel Leader Who Overthrew the Assad Regime," *Financial Times*, December 6, 2024, <https://www.ft.com/content/574cc17a-fa3a-411b-acb0-34fc032c7fe4>; Al Jazeera Arabic, "أحمد الشرع.. من جبهات القتال إلى رئاسة سوريا,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/26/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A>.

<sup>1192</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أحمد الشرع.. رحلة صعود طالب الطب إلى قيادة عملية إسقاط نظام الأسد,"

<https://www.aljazeera.com/profile/2024/12/9/%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%B9-%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%B5%D8%B9%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D8%A8-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89>.

<sup>1193</sup> Martin Smith and Marcela Gaviria, "The Jihadist," *Frontline*, June 1, 2021, <http://pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/the-jihadist/>.

<sup>1194</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أحمد الشرع.. من جبهات القتال إلى رئاسة سوريا,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/7/26/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A>.

<sup>1195</sup> Raya Jalabi, "Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, the Syrian Rebel Leader Who Overthrew the Assad Regime," *Financial Times*, December 6, 2024, <https://www.ft.com/content/574cc17a-fa3a-411b-acb0-34fc032c7fe4>.

<sup>1196</sup> Martin Smith and Marcela Gaviria, "The Jihadist," *Frontline*, June 1, 2021,

<http://pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/the-jihadist/>; Jerome Drevon and Patrick Haenni, "Redefining Global Jihad and Its Termination: The Subjugation of al-Qaeda by Its Former Franchise in Syria," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 48, no. 3 (2025): 284-299.

<sup>1197</sup> Jerome Drevon and Patrick Haenni, "Redefining Global Jihad and Its Termination: The Subjugation of al-Qaeda by Its Former Franchise in Syria," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 48, no. 3 (2025): 284-299.

<sup>1198</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Formerly Jabhat al-Nusra)." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/392/>.

<sup>1199</sup> Aaron Y. Zelin, "The Patient Efforts Behind Hayat Tahrir al-Sham's Success in Aleppo," *War on the Rocks*, December 3, 2024, <https://warontherocks.com/2024/12/the-patient-efforts-behind-hayat-tahrir-al-shams-success-in-aleppo/>.

<sup>1200</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Formerly Jabhat al-Nusra)." Last modified June 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/392/>.

## Hurras al-Din

### *Faruq al-Suri*

Faruq al-Suri, also known as Abu Hamam al-Shami, became the first leader of Hurras al-Din in 2018.<sup>1201</sup> Al-Suri was reportedly born in 1977 in Damascus, Syria.<sup>1202</sup> He later traveled to Afghanistan, receiving training at the al-Ghuraba training camp under the leadership of Abu Mus'ab al-Suri.<sup>1203</sup> After joining al-Qaida, al-Suri reportedly trained fighters in Iraq before being detained in Lebanon from 2009 to 2013.<sup>1204</sup> Following his release, al-Suri reportedly joined Jabhat al-Nusra during the Syrian civil war.<sup>1205</sup> In September 2019, the U.S. Department of State designated al-Suri as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist.<sup>1206</sup> Despite initially leading Hurras al-Din, al-Suri was replaced as the organization's leader by Khalid al-Aruri in 2019.<sup>1207</sup>

### *Khalid al-Aruri*

Khalid al-Aruri, also known as Abu al-Qassam, succeeded al-Suri as the leader of Hurras al-Din.<sup>1208</sup> Al-Aruri was born in 1967 in the West Bank and grew up in Jordan.<sup>1209</sup> Although little is known about his early years, al-Aruri spent time in prison in Jordan during the 1990s.<sup>1210</sup> After being released from prison, al-Aruri traveled to Afghanistan and received military training as well as developed close ties with Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, marrying one of al-Zarqawi's sisters.<sup>1211</sup>

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<sup>1201</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Letter dated 15 July 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council," July 15, 2019, <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2019/570>.

<sup>1202</sup> Rewards for Justice, "Faruq al-Suri," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/faruq-al-suri/>.

<sup>1203</sup> The Soufan Group, "TSG IntelBrief: The Long Arc of an Al-Qaeda Terrorist," April 2015, <https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/pbei/tsg/0033868/index.html>.

<sup>1204</sup> Rewards for Justice, "Faruq al-Suri," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/faruq-al-suri/>.

<sup>1205</sup> The Soufan Group, "TSG IntelBrief: The Long Arc of an Al-Qaeda Terrorist," April 2015, <https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/pbei/tsg/0033868/index.html>.

<sup>1206</sup> Rewards for Justice, "Faruq al-Suri," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/faruq-al-suri/>.

<sup>1207</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "Want al Qaeda Leader Warns of Turkish Influence on Jihad in Syria," *Long War Journal*, August 15, 2019, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/08/wanted-al-qaeda-leader-warns-of-turkish-influence-on-jihad-in-syria.php>.

<sup>1208</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Letter dated 15 July 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council," July 15, 2019, <https://docs.un.org/en/S/2019/570>.

<sup>1209</sup> Tore Hamming, "Abu al-Qassam: Zarqawi's Right-Hand Man Who Stayed Loyal to al-Qaida," *Jihadica*, November 20, 2017, <https://www.jihadica.com/abu-al-qassam-zarqawis-right-hand-man-who-stayed-loyal-to-al-qaeda/>.

<sup>1210</sup> Tore Hamming, "Abu al-Qassam: Zarqawi's Right-Hand Man Who Stayed Loyal to al-Qaida," *Jihadica*, November 20, 2017, <https://www.jihadica.com/abu-al-qassam-zarqawis-right-hand-man-who-stayed-loyal-to-al-qaeda/>.

<sup>1211</sup> Huda al-Saleh, "أردني سقط في إلب.. من هو صهر الزرقاوي" <https://www.alarabiya.net/arab-and-world/2020/06/15/%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%B9%D9%88%D9%86->

After surviving initial battles following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, al-Aruri would eventually flee to Iran, where he was imprisoned for twelve years prior to being released in a prisoner exchange in 2015.<sup>1212</sup> Al-Aruri was later killed in a U.S. drone strike in northwest Syria in 2020.<sup>1213</sup>

## Jaish al-Muhajireen wal Ansar

### *Omar al-Shishani*

Omar al-Shishani, also known as Tarkhan Batirashvili, was born in 1986 in Birkiani, Georgia.<sup>1214</sup> Al-Shishani's father was reportedly a Christian while his mother was an ethnic Chechen Muslim.<sup>1215</sup> Al-Shishani joined the Georgian military after high school,<sup>1216</sup> performing national service in the Georgian army between 2006 and 2007.<sup>1217</sup> Al-Shishani participated in combat during the 2008 Russia-Georgia War, rising to the rank of sergeant.<sup>1218</sup> In 2010, al-Shishani was considered unfit for the military due to a tuberculosis diagnosis and was arrested months later on allegations that he illegally purchased and stored weapons.<sup>1219</sup> The time in prison reportedly had a major impact on al-Shishani's subsequent trajectory into militancy.<sup>1220</sup> After being released under an amnesty program,<sup>1221</sup> al-Shishani traveled to Turkey and then Syria.<sup>1222</sup> In 2012, he became the

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[%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B6%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B9-%D8%A8%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84%D9%87.](https://www.jihadica.com/abu-al-qassam-zarqawis-right-hand-man-who-stayed-loyal-to-al-qaida/)

<sup>1212</sup> Tore Hamming, "Abu al-Qassam: Zarqawi's Right-Hand Man Who Stayed Loyal to al-Qaida," *Jihadica*, November 20, 2017, <https://www.jihadica.com/abu-al-qassam-zarqawis-right-hand-man-who-stayed-loyal-to-al-qaida/>.

<sup>1213</sup> Richard Spencer, "Khalid al-Aruri: Hellfire Missile Kills al-Qaeda Leader in Syria," *The Times*, June 16, 2020, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/us-world/article/khalid-al-aruri-hellfire-missile-kills-al-qaeda-leader-in-syria-k17mkxj2j>.

<sup>1214</sup> Murad Batal al-Shishani, "Syria Crisis: Omar Shishani, Chechen Jihadist Leader," *BBC*, December 3, 2013, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25151104>.

<sup>1215</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Omar al-Shishani," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/omar-al-shishani>.

<sup>1216</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Omar al-Shishani," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/omar-al-shishani>.

<sup>1217</sup> Murad Batal al-Shishani, "Syria Crisis: Omar Shishani, Chechen Jihadist Leader," *BBC*, December 3, 2013, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25151104>.

<sup>1218</sup> Murad Batal al-Shishani, "Syria Crisis: Omar Shishani, Chechen Jihadist Leader," *BBC*, December 3, 2013, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25151104>.

<sup>1219</sup> Murad Batal al-Shishani, "Syria Crisis: Omar Shishani, Chechen Jihadist Leader," *BBC*, December 3, 2013, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25151104>.

<sup>1220</sup> Nina Akhmeteli, "The Georgian Roots of ISIS Commander Omar al-Shishani," *BBC*, July 9, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28217590>.

<sup>1221</sup> Nina Akhmeteli, "The Georgian Roots of ISIS Commander Omar al-Shishani," *BBC*, July 9, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28217590>.

<sup>1222</sup> Murad Batal al-Shishani, "Syria Crisis: Omar Shishani, Chechen Jihadist Leader," *BBC*, December 3, 2013, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25151104>.

commander of the al-Muhajireen Battalion<sup>1223</sup> before merging with other jihadist actors to form Jaish al-Muhajireen wal Ansar in March 2013.<sup>1224</sup> However, months later, al-Shishani and other fighters pledged allegiance to the Islamic State and split from the group.<sup>1225</sup>

### *Salahuddin al-Shishani*

Salahuddin al-Shishani succeeded Omar al-Shishani as the leader of Jaish al-Muhajireen wal Ansar.<sup>1226</sup> Al-Shishani was a prominent Chechen commander in the Syrian civil war and a veteran of the jihad in the North Caucasus and Georgia.<sup>1227</sup> In 2002, al-Shishani, who was born in Georgia, was reportedly imprisoned while attempting an illegal crossing on the Georgian-Chechen border and, in 2003, rearrested for acts of violence against Georgian government employees.<sup>1228</sup> Under al-Shishani's rule, the United States designated Jaish al-Muhajireen wal Ansar as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2014.<sup>1229</sup> In 2015, al-Shishani and his deputy, Abdul Karim Kyrmsky, were forced out of the group and told to leave northern Idlib, as the two commanders "were accused of threatening members of the group with force and rejecting sharia, or Islamic law."<sup>1230</sup>

### *Abu Ibrahim al-Khorasani*

Abu Ibrahim al-Khorasani succeeded Salahuddin al-Shishani as the leader of Jaish al-Muhajireen wal Ansar. A Facebook account affiliated with the organization reportedly described al-Khorasani as a Russian-born Tajik militant.<sup>1231</sup> Apart from his name and potential origins, little information is available regarding al-Khorasani's life before joining Jaish al-Muhajireen wal Ansar, an organization in which he developed a reputation as an effective military commander.<sup>1232</sup> Al-

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<sup>1223</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic "أبو عمر الشيشاني... وزير الحرب" بتنظيم الدولة

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2016/3/9/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%A8-%D8%A8%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>1224</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Omar al-Shishani," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/omar-al-shishani>.

<sup>1225</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Omar al-Shishani," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/omar-al-shishani>.

<sup>1226</sup> For background on the organization, see Bill Roggio, "State Department Adds Chechen, Moroccan-led Jihadist Groups to Terrorist List," *Long War Journal*, September 24, 2014.

<sup>1227</sup> Caleb Weiss, "Chechen Commander Killed in Northern Syria," *Long War Journal*, December 17, 2017.

<sup>1228</sup> Joanna, "Who is Salakhuddin Shishani aka Feyzullah Margoshvili (aka Giorgi Kushtanashvili?)," *From Chechnya to Syria*, April 15, 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210128103657/https://www.chechensinsyria.com/?p=23682>.

<sup>1229</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Executive Order 13224," <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>.

<sup>1230</sup> Bill Roggio, "Chechen Commander in Syria Pledges to Islamic Caucasus Emirate," *Long War Journal*, July 20, 2015.

<sup>1231</sup> Joanna Paraszczuk, "Meet the Tajiks Fighting in Syria (But Not With IS)," *Radio Free Europe*, July 22, 2015, <https://www.rferl.org/a/islamic-state-tajiks-fighting-syria/27142561.html>.

<sup>1232</sup> Joanna Paraszczuk, "Meet the Tajiks Fighting in Syria (But Not With IS)," *Radio Free Europe*, July 22, 2015, <https://www.rferl.org/a/islamic-state-tajiks-fighting-syria/27142561.html>.

Khorasani's time in power, however, would be short-lived. Shortly after assuming power, al-Khorasani reportedly resigned from his leadership position.<sup>1233</sup>

## Liwa al-Tawhid

### *Abdel Qader Saleh*

Abdel Qader Saleh, also known as Hajji Marea, was born in 1979 in Syria.<sup>1234</sup> He co-founded Liwa al-Tawhid (the Tawhid Brigade) with Abdul-Aziz Salameh in 2012.<sup>1235</sup> He was a former businessman who has worked in the food industry.<sup>1236</sup> The group was fighting in Aleppo between 2012 and 2014.<sup>1237</sup> He was attacked during a leadership meeting by a Syrian air strike and died two days later in a hospital in Turkey in November 2013.<sup>1238</sup>

### *Abdul-Aziz Salameh*

Abdul-Azis Salameh, also called Abu Jumaa, is Syrian national.<sup>1239</sup> He co-founded Liwa al-Tawhid with Qader Saleh in 2012.<sup>1240</sup> He was in charge of the political affairs of Liwa al-Tawhid.<sup>1241</sup> Salameh took over the leadership after Saleh died in 2013.<sup>1242</sup> When Liwa al-Tawhid

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<sup>1233</sup> Thomas Joscelyn and Bill Roggio, "Foreign Fighter Group Officially Joins Al Nusrah Front," *Long War Journal*, September 23, 2015, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/09/foreign-fighter-group-officially-joins-al-nusrah-front.php>.

<sup>1234</sup> إدارة الموقع [Media Office]. (2024, March 24). *Honored by the Syrian Future Movement (SFM) No. 16: Abdel Qader Saleh "Hajji Mare."* Syrian Future Movement. <https://sfuturem.org/en/2024/03/honored-by-the-syrian-future-movement-sfm-no-16-abdel-qader-saleh-hajji-mare/>

<sup>1235</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Liwa al-Tawhid." Last modified July 1, 2016. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/448/>

<sup>1236</sup> Ashkar, Y. (2022, November 19). In memory of Abdul Qader Al-Saleh: The prince of Syria's martyrs for freedom. *SyriaWise*. <https://www.syriawise.com/abdul-qader-al-saleh-the-prince-of-syrias-martyrs-for-freedom/>

<sup>1237</sup> Generalbundesanwalt beim Bundesgerichtshof. (2024, January 23). *Anklage wegen mutmaßlicher Mitgliedschaft in der ausländischen terroristischen Vereinigung "Liwa al-Tawhid."*

<https://www.generalbundesanwalt.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2024/Pressemitteilung-vom-23-01-2024.html>

<sup>1238</sup> Zaman al-Wasl. (2013, November 18). *Tawhid Brigade's head, Abdul-Qader Saleh dies of his wounds.*

<https://en.zamanalwsl.net/news/article/2514>; AP. (2013, November 18). Syrian rebel group says its leader has died. *The Times of Israel*. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/syrian-rebel-group-says-its-leader-has-died>

<sup>1239</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Liwa al-Tawhid." Last modified July 1, 2016. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/448/>

<sup>1240</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Liwa al-Tawhid." Last modified July 1, 2016. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/448/>

<sup>1241</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Liwa al-Tawhid." Last modified July 1, 2016. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/448/>

<sup>1242</sup> Today Online. (2013, November 18). *Syrian rebel group says its leader has died.*

<https://www.todayonline.com/world/middle-east/syrian-rebel-group-says-its-leader-has-died>; AP. (2013, November 18). Syrian rebel group says its leader has died. *The Times of Israel*. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/syrian-rebel-group-says-its-leader-has-died>

became part of the Islamic Front, Salameh became the commander and later the commander for the Levantine Front.<sup>1243</sup>

## Tawhid and Jihad/al-Qaida in Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

### *Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi*

Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, also known as Ahmad Fadhil Nazzal al-Khalaylah, was born in October 1966 in Zarqa, Jordan.<sup>1244</sup> A high school dropout,<sup>1245</sup> al-Zarqawi joined the military in 1984 for two years under Jordan's mandatory conscription laws.<sup>1246</sup> During the 1980s, al-Zarqawi reportedly spent time in prison and was described by people who knew him during his teenage years as "a bully and a thug, a bootlegger and a heavy drinker, and even, allegedly, a pimp in Zarqa's underworld."<sup>1247</sup> In 1989, al-Zarqawi left for Afghanistan and "is believed to have taken part in some fighting, but he mainly worked as a correspondent for a radical Islamist magazine during this period."<sup>1248</sup> In Afghanistan, al-Zarqawi used this time "to begin the process of cultivating friendships that would eventually lead to the formation of an international support network for his activities."<sup>1249</sup> Al-Zarqawi returned to Jordan in 1993 and was subsequently arrested.<sup>1250</sup> Working with Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, al-Zarqawi "flourished" in prison, building his militant network and jihadist credentials.<sup>1251</sup> Al-Maqdisi was released from prison in 1999 under a general amnesty and returned to Afghanistan.<sup>1252</sup> Reportedly receiving a small amount of seed money from al-Qaida's leaders,<sup>1253</sup> al-Zarqawi set up a training camp in Herat and became the leader of Jama'at al-Tawhid wal Jihad.<sup>1254</sup> Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, al-Zarqawi operated in Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan and, by 2003, had established his organization's presence in Arab cities in Iraq.<sup>1255</sup> In 2004, al-Zarqawi pledged fealty to al-Qaida and changed his

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<sup>1243</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Liwa al-Tawhid." Last modified July 1, 2016.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/448/>; Zaman al-Wasl. (2014, December 25). *Islamic Front with 4 rebel groups unite in one alliance*. <https://en.zamanalwsl.net/news/article/8110/>

<sup>1244</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>1245</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>1246</sup> Muhammad Abu Rumman and Hassan Abu Haniyeh, *The Islamic Solution in Jordan* (2012), <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/amman/09373.pdf>.

<sup>1247</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>1248</sup> Gary Gambill, "Abu Musab al-Zarqawi: A Biographical Sketch," *Jamestown Foundation*, May 5, 2005.

<sup>1249</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>1250</sup> Muhammad Abu Rumman and Hassan Abu Haniyeh, *The Islamic Solution in Jordan* (2012), <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/amman/09373.pdf>.

<sup>1251</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>1252</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>1253</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

<sup>1254</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic State." Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>1255</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006.

organization's name to al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>1256</sup> Al-Zarqawi died following a U.S. airstrike in 2006.<sup>1257</sup> The United States had previously designated al-Zarqawi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2003<sup>1258</sup> and al-Qaida in Iraq as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2004.<sup>1259</sup>

### *Abu Hamza al-Muhajir*

Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, also known as Abu Ayyub al-Masri, succeeded Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi as leader of al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>1260</sup> There is significant controversy surrounding al-Muhajir's background, given he stole another jihadist's identity.<sup>1261</sup> Al-Muhajir was born in 1968 in Egypt.<sup>1262</sup> Al-Masri also reportedly joined Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) and trained fighters in EIJ training camps in Yemen and later joined the Faruq training camp in Afghanistan in the late 1990s, specializing in explosives.<sup>1263</sup> Despite taking over leadership of al-Qaida in Iraq in mid-2006, al-Muhajir would hand over control of the group to Abu Umar al-Baghdadi that same year.<sup>1264</sup>

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<sup>1256</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic State." Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>1257</sup> Fred Barbash and Daniela Deane, "U.S. Says Zarqawi Died from Blast," *The Washington Post*, June 11, 2006, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/business/technology/2006/06/12/us-says-zarqawi-died-from-blast/61897968-c052-4a3a-bce3-c1e41d5e2285/?isMobile=1>.

<sup>1258</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Designates Six Al-Qaida Terrorists," September 24, 2003, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/js757>.

<sup>1259</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>1260</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic State." Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

<sup>1261</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, "State Department Designates Founding Member of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *Long War Journal*, January 6, 2017.

<sup>1262</sup> Kamal Kamal and Ahmed Arafat, "مكافأة الـ3 ملايين دولار الأمريكية حيلة مفضوحة للتدخل في سيناء.. وخالد الزعفراني يصفه بـ"الجهادى الكبير إسلاميون يفجرون مفاجأة: أبو حمزة المهاجر قتل في العراق والمالكي أعلن مقتله.. داعية سلفى:" [https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog\\_rewarded](https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog_rewarded).

<sup>1263</sup> Kamal Kamal and Ahmed Arafat, "مكافأة الـ3 ملايين دولار الأمريكية حيلة مفضوحة للتدخل في سيناء.. وخالد الزعفراني يصفه بـ"الجهادى الكبير إسلاميون يفجرون مفاجأة: أبو حمزة المهاجر قتل في العراق والمالكي أعلن مقتله.. داعية سلفى:" [https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog\\_rewarded](https://www.youm7.com/story/2014/6/14/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A3%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%89/1723940#goog_rewarded).

<sup>1264</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Islamic State." Last modified April 1, 2021. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/407/>.

## *Abu Omar al-Baghdadi*

Abu Omar al-Baghdadi was born in 1959 in Iraq.<sup>1265</sup> He reportedly worked for the Iraqi Security Forces and was a Police Brigade General<sup>1266</sup> before being fired due to his Salafist leanings.<sup>1267</sup> Following the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, al-Baghdadi commanded Jaish al-Ta'ifa al-Mansoura before pledging bay'a to al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>1268</sup> He was reportedly briefly detained by U.S. security forces in Iraq, being released after seven months.<sup>1269</sup> Al-Baghdadi took control of al-Qaida in Iraq, which rebranded to the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI), in October 2006.<sup>1270</sup> During a joint U.S.-Iraqi raid in 2010, U.S. air forces reportedly bombed a house that contained Abu Hamza al-Muhajir and al-Baghdadi.<sup>1271</sup>

## *Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi*

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, also known as Ibrahim Awad al-Samarrai, was born in 1971 near Samarra, Iraq.<sup>1272</sup> Al-Baghdadi was from the al-Bu Badri tribe, with his family claiming that they are descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's Quraysh tribe.<sup>1273</sup> Al-Baghdadi graduated from the University of Baghdad in 1996 and enrolled in a master's program in Quranic recitation at the Saddam University for Islamic Studies. After attaining this degree, he enrolled in Saddam University's doctoral program in Quranic studies.<sup>1274</sup> As Paul Kamolnick states: "His specialization across both [degrees] was phonetics and recitation of the Quran. He produced for his Ph.D. project in Quranic Sciences a commentary on a medieval poem on Quran recitation. It was defended March 13, 2007, receiving the grade of 'Very Good.'" Using this religious training, al-Baghdadi taught Quranic recitation<sup>1275</sup> and preached at a mosque in Samarra.<sup>1276</sup> Rather than remain on the sidelines, al-Baghdadi "founded his own militant group [Jaysh Ahl al-Sunna wa al-

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<sup>1265</sup> Hussam Haddad, "أبو عمر البغدادي زعيم القاعدة بالعراق," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/26774>.

<sup>1266</sup> Myriam Benraad, "Assessing AQI's Resilience After April's Leadership Decapitations," *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2010): 4-8.

<sup>1267</sup> Hussam Haddad, "أبو عمر البغدادي زعيم القاعدة بالعراق," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/26774>.

<sup>1268</sup> Hussam Haddad, "أبو عمر البغدادي زعيم القاعدة بالعراق," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/26774>.

<sup>1269</sup> Myriam Benraad, "Assessing AQI's Resilience After April's Leadership Decapitations," *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2010): 4-8.

<sup>1270</sup> M.J. Kirdar, "Al Qaeda in Iraq," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (June 2011).

<sup>1271</sup> Ernesto Londoño, "Two Top Leaders of the Insurgent Group al-Qaeda in Iraq are Killed in Raid," *Washington Post Foreign Service*, April 20, 2010.

<sup>1272</sup> MEE Staff, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: The 'Loner' Who Became Leader of Islamic State," *Middle East Eye*, October 27, 2019, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-loner-who-became-leader-islamic-state>.

<sup>1273</sup> Aaron Zelin, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State's Driving Force," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, July 2014.

<sup>1274</sup> William McCants, "The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State," *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>.

<sup>1275</sup> William McCants, "The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State," *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>.

<sup>1276</sup> Aaron Zelin, "Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State's Driving Force," *BBC*, July 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28560449>.

Jama'a] immediately following the U.S. invasion in 2003.”<sup>1277</sup> In 2004, al-Baghdadi was arrested by coalition forces and spent time in Camp Bucca, where “he dazzled his comrades—and, no doubt, his jailers—on the soccer field...he was compared to an Argentinian great: his nickname at Camp Bucca was ‘Maradona.’”<sup>1278</sup> After his release, al-Baghdadi allied with Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi and became a member of the Islamic State of Iraq, serving in roles such as the general supervisor of Sharia committees and a member of the organization’s senior consultative council.<sup>1279</sup> Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi succeeded Abu Omar al-Baghdadi as head of the Islamic State of Iraq after the latter’s death in April 2010.<sup>1280</sup> In 2011, the United States designated al-Baghdadi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist, increasing to \$25 million its reward offer for “information leading to the location, arrest, or conviction” of al-Baghdadi.<sup>1281</sup> Al-Baghdadi would oversee the expansion of the organization across Iraq and Syria and its transformation to the Islamic State in subsequent years.<sup>1282</sup> Al-Baghdadi remained the organization’s leader until he detonated a bomb he was wearing in October 2019 during a raid conducted by U.S. forces.<sup>1283</sup>

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<sup>1277</sup> While the JLD codes this as rebel leadership, there is uncertainty surrounding al-Baghdadi’s role in the organization. Users of the dataset may wish to make their own decision surrounding this coding. For further information, see Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-‘Ubaydi, “Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State’s Future Caliph,” *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13; William McCants, “The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State,” *Brookings*, September 2015, <http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>; Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, “Stations of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s Life: Translation and Analysis,” November 7, 2019, <https://www.aymennjawad.org/2019/11/stations-of-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-life-translation>; Kyle Orton, *Profiles of Islamic State Leaders* (Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism at the Henry Jackson Society, 2016); Paul Kamolnick Dr., *The Al-Qaeda Organization and the Islamic State Organization: History, Doctrine, Modus Operandi, and U.S. Policy to Degrade and Defeat Terrorism Conducted in the Name of Sunni Islam* (US Army War College Press, 2017).

<sup>1278</sup> William McCants, “The Believer: How an Introvert with a Passion for Religion and Soccer Became Leader of the Islamic State,” *Brookings*, September 2015,

<http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/thebeliever.html>

<sup>1279</sup> Aaron Zelin, “Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State’s Driving Force,” *BBC*, July 2014,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28560449>; Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, “Stations of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s Life: Translation and Analysis,” November 7, 2019, <https://www.aymennjawad.org/2019/11/stations-of-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-life-translation>

<sup>1280</sup> Aaron Zelin, “Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: Islamic State’s Driving Force,” *BBC*, July 2014,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28560449>.

<sup>1281</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Rewards for Justice - Increased Reward Offer for Information on ISIL Leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi,” December 16, 2016, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/12/265708.htm>.

<sup>1282</sup> William McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>1283</sup> BBC, “Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: US Releases First Images of Raid on Compound,” October 31, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50243895>; Patrice Taddonio, “Flashback: How Baghdadi Came to Lead ISIS,” *Frontline* October 27, 2019, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/trump-raid-baghdadi-killed-isis/>; Jim Garamone, “Central Command Chief Gives Details on Baghdadi Raid,” October 31, 2019, <https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/News-Article-View/Article/2004560/central-command-chief-gives-details-on-baghdadi-raid/>.

## *Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi*

Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi, also known as Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla, was born in October 1976 in al-Muhalabiyah, Iraq.<sup>1284</sup> Despite being born in an area that is predominantly Turkmen, there is evidence to suggest that al-Qurayshi is ethnically Arab.<sup>1285</sup> Al-Qurayshi completed compulsory military service in Iraq in 2001-2002 and later attained a master's degree in Islamic Studies from the University of Mosul in 2007.<sup>1286</sup> An unofficial biography of al-Qurayshi published by Islamic State supporters notes that he joined Jama'at al-Ansar and worked as a member of its military personnel in Tel Afar<sup>1287</sup> before participating in the battle of Tel Afar under the banner of al-Qaida in Iraq.<sup>1288</sup> Al-Qurayshi subsequently taught Sharia classes to members of the Islamic State of Iraq and was appointed in July 2007 as the general Sharia leader for the city of Mosul.<sup>1289</sup> In January 2008, al-Qurayshi was captured by coalition forces.<sup>1290</sup> After his release, al-Qurayshi reportedly assumed various judicial and administrative roles within the Islamic State, such as serving as a judge for all of the Nineveh Province and as the leader of the Islamic State's treasury department.<sup>1291</sup> On October 31, 2019, al-Qurayshi was announced as the successor to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.<sup>1292</sup> Al-Qurayshi would remain the Islamic State's leader until he detonated an explosive device, which killed himself, his wife, and two children, during a U.S. raid in northern Syria in February 2022.<sup>1293</sup> The United States had previously designated al-Qurayshi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on March 17, 2020.<sup>1294</sup>

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<sup>1284</sup> Much of the information for this biography comes from Tactical Interrogation Reports. These reports contained information that al-Qurayshi provided to U.S. interrogators while in detention in 2008. For further information on these reports and the pros and cons of using such sources, see Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13; Daniel Milton, "The al-Mawla TIRs: An Analytical Discussion with Cole Bunzel, Haroro Ingram, Gina Ligon, and Craig Whiteside," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 14-23.

<sup>1285</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>1286</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>1287</sup> This timing differs from the Tactical Interrogation Reports, which note that he only joined the Islamic State of Iraq in February 2007.

<sup>1288</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi: The Islamic State's Second Caliph," *Middle East Forum*, September 11, 2023, <https://www.meforum.org/a-brief-biography-of-abu-ibrahim-al-hashimi-al->

<sup>1289</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>1290</sup> Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Stepping Out from the Shadows: The Interrogation of the Islamic State's Future Caliph," *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 9 (2020): 1-13.

<sup>1291</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurashi: The Islamic State's Second Caliph," *Middle East Forum*, September 11, 2023, <https://www.meforum.org/a-brief-biography-of-abu-ibrahim-al-hashimi-al->

<sup>1292</sup> Cole Bunzel, "Caliph Incognito: The Ridicule of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi," *Jihadica*, November 14, 2019, <https://www.jihadica.com/caliph-incognito/>.

<sup>1293</sup> BBC, "Islamic State Leader Abu Ibrahim al-Qurayshi Killed in Syria, US Says," February 3, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-60246129>.

<sup>1294</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Designation of ISIS Leader Amir Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla," March 17, 2020, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/terrorist-designation-of-isis-leader-amir-muhammad-said-abdal-rahman-al-mawla/>.

### *Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi*

Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi succeeded Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi as the Islamic State's leader in March 2022.<sup>1295</sup> There are numerous conflicting reports surrounding Abu al-Hasan's identity.<sup>1296</sup> Some sources suggest that the new Islamic State leader was likely Bashar Khattab Ghazal a-Sumaidai<sup>1297</sup> or even Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's brother.<sup>1298</sup> However, an unofficial biography published by Islamic State supporters suggests that Abu al-Hasan was born in Rawa, Iraq, and briefly studied computer engineering at the University of Baghdad.<sup>1299</sup> Abu al-Hasan also reportedly spent time as a prisoner at Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib prison and was a long-established veteran in the Islamic State and its predecessor organizations.<sup>1300</sup> Abu al-Hasan's time in power of the Islamic State was short-lived. While there are disputes surrounding who killed Abu al-Hasan,<sup>1301</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi and Charlie Winter write that "the most likely scenario is that Abu al-Hasan was killed in clashes between Islamic State cells and local militiamen from the town of Jasim in the northern countryside of Dera'a province in mid-October 2022."<sup>1302</sup>

### *Abu al-Husayn al-Husayni al-Qurayshi*

Abu al-Husayn al-Husayni al-Qurayshi took over command of the Islamic State in November 2022.<sup>1303</sup> While there is little information surrounding Abu al-Husayn's early life, he was likely born in Iraq.<sup>1304</sup> Turkey's Anadolu state news agency also claimed that Abu al-Husayn joined the Islamic State in 2013 and quickly rose through the organization's ranks.<sup>1305</sup> There are disputing reports surrounding Abu al-Husayn's death, which occurred in 2023 only months after he assumed power. While Turkish sources claim that Abu al-Husayn detonated a suicide vest prior to being

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<sup>1295</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State's Leaders Post-Mawla," *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>1296</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State's Leaders Post-Mawla," *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>1297</sup> Hassan Hassan, "The Next Islamic State Caliph," *New Lines Magazine*, February 16, 2022, <https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/the-next-islamic-state-caliph/>.

<sup>1298</sup> Reuters, "'EXCLUSIVE: New Islamic State Leader is Brother of Slain Caliph Baghdadi - Sources," March 11, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/exclusive-new-islamic-state-leader-is-brother-slain-caliph-baghdadi-sources-2022-03-11/>.

<sup>1299</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurashi: The Islamic State's Third Caliph," October 3, 2023, <https://www.aymennaltamimi.com/p/a-brief-biography-of-abu-al-hasan>.

<sup>1300</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "A Brief Biography of Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurashi: The Islamic State's Third Caliph," October 3, 2023, <https://www.aymennaltamimi.com/p/a-brief-biography-of-abu-al-hasan>.

<sup>1301</sup> U.S. Central Command, "Death of ISIS Leader," November 30, 2022, <https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/3232259/death-of-isis-leader/>.

<sup>1302</sup> Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi and Charlie Winter, "The Islamic State in Dera'a: History and Present Situation," *Hudson: Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, April 24, 2023, <https://www.hudson.org/islamic-state-deraa-history-present-situation>.

<sup>1303</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State's Leaders Post-Mawla," *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>1304</sup> Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State's Leaders Post-Mawla," *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>1305</sup> France 24, "Turkey Offers Details of Islamic State Chief's Death," January 5, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230501-turkey-offers-details-of-islamic-state-chief-s-death>.

captured by Turkish forces,<sup>1306</sup> the Islamic State claimed that Abu al-Husayn was killed during a firefight by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham forces.<sup>1307</sup>

## Uganda

### Allied Democratic Forces

#### *Jamil Mukulu*

In 1995, Jamil Mukulu became the founding leader of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).<sup>1308</sup> Mukulu was born in 1964 in Uganda.<sup>1309</sup> Mukulu was reportedly a Christian cleric before converting to Islam.<sup>1310</sup> Mukulu received a diploma in Business Management in Kenya and studied Islamic theology in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Sudan.<sup>1311</sup> He later returned home to Uganda and became involved in the Tabligh movement.<sup>1312</sup> In 1991, Mukulu reportedly led as many as a thousand Tabligh activists and stormed the offices of the Ugandan Muslim Supreme Council. Mukulu was subsequently imprisoned until 1993.<sup>1313</sup> After his release, Mukulu formed his own armed group, the Salafi Foundation, and clashed with the clerical establishment and former Tabligh colleagues.<sup>1314</sup> After leading the ADF since 1995, Mukulu was arrested in 2015 by Tanzanian authorities and extradited to Uganda.<sup>1315</sup>

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<sup>1306</sup> France 24, "Turkey Offers Details of Islamic State Chief's Death," January 5, 2023,

<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230501-turkey-offers-details-of-islamic-state-chief-s-death>.

<sup>1307</sup> We coded Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham as being the most likely actor responsible based on Al-Tamimi's analysis of the conflicting claims. Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "Caliphs of the Shadows: The Islamic State's Leaders Post-Mawla," *CTC Sentinel* 16, no. 8 (August 2023): 16-22.

<sup>1308</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss, "The Islamic state in Congo (GW Program on Extremism, 2021).

<sup>1309</sup> Daily Monitor, "Who is ADF's Jamil Mukulu?" August 7, 2015,

[https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google\\_vignette](https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google_vignette).

<sup>1310</sup> Daily Monitor, "Who is ADF's Jamil Mukulu?" August 7, 2015,

[https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google\\_vignette](https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google_vignette).

<sup>1311</sup> Daily Monitor, "Who is ADF's Jamil Mukulu?" August 7, 2015,

[https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google\\_vignette](https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/reviews-profiles/who-is-adf-s-jamil-mukulu--1620396#google_vignette).

<sup>1312</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>1313</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>1314</sup> Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>1315</sup> Jared Thompson, "Examining Extremism: Allied Democratic Forces," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, July 29, 2021, <https://www.csis.org/blogs/examining-extremism/examining-extremism-allied-democratic-forces>.

## *Seka Baluku*

Seka Bakulu, also known as Seka Musa Baluku or Musa Baluku, was born between 1975 and 1977 in Uganda.<sup>1316</sup> Baluku reportedly received little formal education in Uganda's schooling system.<sup>1317</sup> However, he completed studies at the Bugembe Islamic Institute and worked as an Imam at a Tabligh mosque.<sup>1318</sup> Baluku was an early member of the Allied Democratic Forces: "While it is not known how Baluku became connected to the ADF, he joined the rebel outfit in 1994 and soon after departed for their camps. This makes Baluku part of the first wave of ADF members who joined in the 1990s and was with the group when it moved from Uganda to DRC in the late 1990s." After serving as Mukulu's second in command, Baluku took over the ADF following Mukulu's arrest in 2015.<sup>1319</sup> Under Baluku's rule, the ADF pledged fealty to the Islamic State's leaders.<sup>1320</sup> In 2021, the United States designated Baluku as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist and also designated ISIS-DRC as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.<sup>1321</sup>

## Uzbekistan

### Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

#### *Juma Namangani*

Juma Namangani, also known as Jumaboi Ahmadjonovich Khodjjiyev, is Uzbek national who was born in 1969 in Namangan.<sup>1322</sup> He is a former Soviet Army soldier with experience in Afghanistan and the Tajik Civil War.<sup>1323</sup> He was a farmer and businessperson who was active in heroin

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<sup>1316</sup> The U.S. State Department notes that Baluku was born sometime between 1975 and 1976 while the U.N. Security Council estimates that Bakulu was born around 1977. Adopting the middle ground, we coded Bakulu's year of birth as 1976. U.S. Department of State, "Seka Musa Baluku," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/seka-musa-baluku/>; United Nations Sanctions Committee, "Sanctions Committee Concerning Democratic Republic of Congo Adds One Individual to Its Sanctions List," <https://press.un.org/en/2020/sc14101.doc.htm>.

<sup>1317</sup> NTVUganda, "Who is Musa Baluku? - ADF Commander Took Over After Mukulu's Arrest," December 2, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsaf8Xpei0s>.

<sup>1318</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss, "The Islamic state in Congo (GW Program on Extremism, 2021).

<sup>1319</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss, "The Islamic state in Congo (GW Program on Extremism, 2021).

<sup>1320</sup> Tara Candland, Adam Finck, Haroro J. Ingram, Laren Poole, Lorenzo Vidino, and Caleb Weiss, "The Islamic state in Congo (GW Program on Extremism, 2021); Jason Warner, Ryan O'Farrell, Heni Nsaibia, and Ryan Cummings, *The Islamic State in Africa: The Emergence, Evolution, and Future of the Next Jihadist Battlefield* (Oxford University Press 2021).

<sup>1321</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Seka Musa Baluku," <https://rewardsforjustice.net/rewards/seka-musa-baluku/>.

<sup>1322</sup> Acosta, B., Huang, R., & Silverman, D. (2022). Introducing ROLE: A database of rebel leader attributes in armed conflict. *Journal of Peace Research*, 60(2), 352-361. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433221077920>. Ahmed Rashid, "They're Only Sleeping: Why Militant Islamicists in Central Asia Aren't Going to Go Away," *The New Yorker*, January 14, 2002, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/01/14/theyre-only-sleeping.mention> mentions 1968 as his birth year.

<sup>1323</sup> Parliament of Australia. (2012). *Appendix C – Statement of reasons – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*. In *Review of the re-listing of Ansar al-Islam (AAI), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)*

trafficking between Afghanistan and Tajikistan before founding the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in the summer 1998 together with Tahor Yuldashev.<sup>1324</sup> He is the military commander of the group.<sup>1325</sup> He met with bin Laden and Taliban leaders in Afghanistan and received financial support for IMU in 2000, besides IMU's resources from the opium trade.<sup>1326</sup> The IMU was listed as a US designated Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 25, 2000.<sup>1327</sup> Namangani was sentenced to death in absentia for bombings in Uzbekistan.<sup>1328</sup> He was reportedly killed in an U.S. airstrike in 2001, but subsequent information suggests he may have not been killed.<sup>1329</sup>

### *Tahir Yuldashev*

Tahir Yuldashev co-founded the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and was the leader after Nagamani's death in 2001.<sup>1330</sup> He was born in 1967, dropped out of college and was a local mullah in the city of Namanga.<sup>1331</sup> He was a politician, heading the Adolat (Justice) Party which aimed for Sharia law in the city.<sup>1332</sup> After the party was banned in 1992,<sup>1333</sup> he went into exile in Tajikistan

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and *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ)* as terrorist organisations (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security).

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed\\_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C).

<sup>1324</sup> Ahmed Rashid, "They're Only Sleeping: Why Militant Islamicists in Central Asia Aren't Going to Go Away," *The New Yorker*, January 14, 2002, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/01/14/theyre-only-sleeping>.

<sup>1325</sup> <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/359>;

<sup>1326</sup> Ahmed Rashid, "They're Only Sleeping: Why Militant Islamicists in Central Asia Aren't Going to Go Away," *The New Yorker*, January 14, 2002, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/01/14/theyre-only-sleeping>.

<sup>1327</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations>.

<sup>1328</sup> James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, *Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*, Nonproliferation.org, August 17, 2008, <https://nonproliferation.org/islamic-movement-of-uzbekistan-imu/>.

<sup>1329</sup> <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/359>; Rabasa, A., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., Daly, S. A., Gregg, H. S., Karasik, T. W., O'Brien, K. A., & Rosenau, W. (2006). *Beyond al-Qaeda: The global jihadist movement. Part 1*. RAND Corporation. Prepared for the United States Air Force; approved for public release, distribution unlimited. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg429af> (footnote 21, p. 113)

<sup>1330</sup> Parliament of Australia. (2012). *Appendix C – Statement of reasons – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*. In *Review of the re-listing of Ansar al-Islam (AAI), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) as terrorist organisations* (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security).

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed\\_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C)

; <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/359>

<sup>1331</sup> Ahmed Rashid, "They're Only Sleeping: Why Militant Islamicists in Central Asia Aren't Going to Go Away," *The New Yorker*, January 14, 2002, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/01/14/theyre-only-sleeping>.

<sup>1332</sup> Parliament of Australia. (2012). *Appendix C – Statement of reasons – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*. In *Review of the re-listing of Ansar al-Islam (AAI), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) as terrorist organisations* (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security).

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed\\_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C)

<sup>1333</sup> Parliament of Australia. (2012). *Appendix C – Statement of reasons – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*. In *Review of the re-listing of Ansar al-Islam (AAI), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) as terrorist organisations* (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security).

and studied at a madrasah in Dushanbe.<sup>1334</sup> Yuldashev spent time in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and had ties to al-Qaida and the Taliban.<sup>1335</sup> Yuldashev has served on al-Qaida's Shura Majlis top council.<sup>1336</sup> He was killed in a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan in 2009.<sup>1337</sup>

### *Abu Usman Adil*

Usmon Odil became the leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) after Yuldashev's death. In October 2009, he appeared alongside TTP leader Hakimullah Mahsud in a video.<sup>1338</sup> He died in a U.S. drone strike in 2012 in Pakistan.<sup>1339</sup>

### *Usamn Ghazi*

After serving as the deputy leader, Usamn Ghazi was appointed as new leader after Adil's death.<sup>1340</sup> He was killed in 2015 during clashes with the Taliban in Afghanistan.<sup>1341</sup> Significant numbers of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan fighters joined the Islamic State – Khorasan Province<sup>1342</sup> while sources suggest Ghazi pledged loyalty to the Islamic State.<sup>1343</sup>

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[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed\\_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C).

<sup>1334</sup> Ahmed Rashid, "They're Only Sleeping: Why Militant Islamicists in Central Asia Aren't Going to Go Away," *The New Yorker*, January 14, 2002, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/01/14/theyre-only-sleeping>.

<sup>1335</sup> Parliament of Australia. (2012). *Appendix C – Statement of reasons – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*. In *Review of the re-listing of Ansar al-Islam (AAI), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) as terrorist organisations* (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security).

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed\\_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C).

<sup>1336</sup> Roggio, Bill. "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan confirms leader Tahir Yuldashev killed." *The Long War Journal*, 16 Aug. 2010. Web. 25 Aug. 2018; Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University. <https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>.

<sup>1337</sup> Parliament of Australia. (2012). *Appendix C – Statement of reasons – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*. In *Review of the re-listing of Ansar al-Islam (AAI), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) as terrorist organisations* (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security).

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed\\_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C).

<sup>1338</sup> Parliament of Australia. (2012). *Appendix C – Statement of reasons – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*. In *Review of the re-listing of Ansar al-Islam (AAI), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) as terrorist organisations* (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security).

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed\\_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/pjicis/four%20terrorist/report/Appendix%20C).

<sup>1339</sup> Roggio, Bill. "2 IMU Leaders Captured in Northern Afghanistan." *The Long War Journal*, 09 Feb. 2013. Web. 25 Aug. 2018.

<sup>1340</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program, "IMU," <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/359>.

<sup>1341</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program, "IMU," <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/359>.

<sup>1342</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program, "IMU," <https://ucdp.uu.se/actor/359>.

<sup>1343</sup> Crenshaw, M., & Robinson, K. (2025). Mapping Militants Project. Rice University.

<https://doi.org/10.25613/G0K4-WF70>.

# Tunisia

## Ansar al-Sharia - Tunisia

### *Seifallah Ben Hassine*

Seifallah Ben Hassine, Abu Iyadh al-Tunisi, was born in November 1965 in Menzel Bourguiba, Tunisia.<sup>1344</sup> He reportedly undertook university studies in Morocco before traveling to Afghanistan and Pakistan to receive military training.<sup>1345</sup> Other reports note that Ben Hassine spent time studying in the United Kingdom under Abu Qatada al-Filistini.<sup>1346</sup> In Afghanistan, Ben Hassine joined al-Qaida and fought alongside Osama bin Laden.<sup>1347</sup> During his time in Afghanistan, he reportedly founded the Tunisian Combatant Group and participated in the Jalalabad battles in 2001.<sup>1348</sup> Ben Hassine was arrested in Turkey in 2003 and extradited to Tunisia.<sup>1349</sup> After spending eight years in prison, Ben Hassine was released from prison under the general amnesty in Tunisia and would subsequently found Ansar al-Sharia - Tunisia.<sup>1350</sup> The United States designated Ben Hassine as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist and Ansar al-Sharia Tunisia as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2014.<sup>1351</sup> Despite reports of his death in Libya in 2015,<sup>1352</sup> a United Nations report noted that Ben Hassine remained active in 2017.<sup>1353</sup> In 2019, Ben Hassine's death was announced following a French military operation in Mali.<sup>1354</sup>

<sup>1344</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو عياض التونسي,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/9/2/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B6-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A>.

<sup>1345</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو عياض التونسي,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/9/2/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B6-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A>.

<sup>1346</sup> [https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/10/al\\_qaeda\\_ally\\_orches.php](https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/10/al_qaeda_ally_orches.php).

<sup>1347</sup> Mapping Militants Project. "Ansar al-Shariah (Tunisia)." Last modified August 1, 2018.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/328/>.

<sup>1348</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو عياض التونسي,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/9/2/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B6-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A>.

<sup>1349</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "أبو عياض التونسي,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2014/9/2/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B6-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A>.

<sup>1350</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Seifallah Ben Hassine," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/seifallah-ben-hassine>.

<sup>1351</sup> Counter Extremism Project, "Seifallah Ben Hassine," <https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/seifallah-ben-hassine>; National Counterterrorism Center, "Ansar al-Sharia,"

[https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/ansar\\_al\\_sharia.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/ansar_al_sharia.html).

<sup>1352</sup> Carlotta Gall and Eric Schmitt, "Jihadist From Tunisia Died in Strike in Libya, U.S. Official Says," *The New York Times*, July 2, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/03/world/africa/jihadist-from-tunisia-died-in-strike-in-libya-us-official-says.html>.

<sup>1353</sup> United Nations Security Council, "Seifallah Ben Omar Ben Mohamed Ben Hassine,"

[https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list/summaries/individual/seifallah-ben-omar-ben-mohamed-ben-hassine](https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/individual/seifallah-ben-omar-ben-mohamed-ben-hassine).

<sup>1354</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "من تنظيم الشريعة بتونس للقاعدة بمالي.. نهاية رحلة أبو عياض,"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/politics/2019/2/27/%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A->

## Okba Ibn Nafaa Brigade

### *Khaled Chaib*

Khaled Chaib, also known as Lokman Abu Sakhr, was born in 1984 in Algeria's Tebessa Province.<sup>1355</sup> Chaib reportedly continued his studies until the university level and specialized in chemistry, providing him with unique insight into explosives manufacturing.<sup>1356</sup> Sources note that Chaib participated in rebel activity in Algeria, becoming a prominent leader in the Abu Fida Brigade before rising through the ranks of al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb.<sup>1357</sup> Chaib would later travel to Tunisia and found the Okba ibn Nafaa Brigade, which began attacks against Tunisian security forces in the Mount Chaambi region in 2012.<sup>1358</sup> Tunisian security forces stated that they killed Chaib during a military operation in the Gafsa region of Tunisia in 2015.<sup>1359</sup> Tunisia's Prime Minister Habib Essid stated that the death of Khaled Chaib "spared Tunisia from a security disaster."<sup>1360</sup>

### *Mourad Chaib*

Mourad Chaib succeeded his brother, Khaled Chaib, as leader of the Okba ibn Nafaa Brigade in 2015.<sup>1361</sup> Mourad was born in November 1983 in Algeria's Tebessa Province.<sup>1362</sup> Chaib reportedly participated in militant activities in Algeria as early as the late 1990s.<sup>1363</sup> Coordinating with al-Qaida, Chaib entered Tunisia as early as 2011 and would later command a company within the Okba ibn Nafaa Brigade.<sup>1364</sup> While some reports suggest that Mourad was killed during a Tunisian

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<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/4/3/%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B6-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9>

<sup>1355</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "لقمان أبو صخر"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/4/3/%D9%84%D9%82%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B5%D8%AE%D8%B1>

<sup>1356</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "لقمان أبو صخر"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/4/3/%D9%84%D9%82%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B5%D8%AE%D8%B1>

<sup>1357</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "لقمان أبو صخر"

<https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/4/3/%D9%84%D9%82%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%88-%D8%B5%D8%AE%D8%B1>

<sup>1358</sup> Garrett Nada, "The Islamist Spectrum - Tunisia: From Democrats to Jihadis," *Wilson Center*, August 7, 2017, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/the-islamist-spectrum-tunisia-democrats-to-jihadis>.

<sup>1359</sup> Reuters, "Tunisia Says Senior Militant Commander Killed in Raid," March 29, 2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/tunisia-says-senior-militant-commander-killed-in-raid-idUSKBN0MP0B7/>.

<sup>1360</sup> Lamine Ghanmi, "Tunisian Security Forces Kill Top al-Qaeda-Affiliated Commander," *The Arab Weekly*, October 26, 2019, <https://theArabweekly.com/tunisian-security-forces-kill-top-al-qaeda-affiliated-commander>.

<sup>1361</sup> Aaron Y. Zelin, "Not Gonna Be Able to Do It: al-Qaeda in Tunisia's Inability to Take Advantage of the Islamic State's Setbacks," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 13, no. 1 (2019): 63-77.

<sup>1362</sup> Ahmad Sultan, "مراد الشايب.. قائد إرهابي تونس ومنسق القاعدة في المغرب," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/49526>.

<sup>1363</sup> Ahmad Sultan, "مراد الشايب.. قائد إرهابي تونس ومنسق القاعدة في المغرب," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/49526>.

<sup>1364</sup> Ahmad Sultan, "مراد الشايب.. قائد إرهابي تونس ومنسق القاعدة في المغرب," <https://www.islamist-movements.com/49526>.

military operation in 2017,<sup>1365</sup> Chaib continued to lead the organization until 2019.<sup>1366</sup> In 2019, Chaib was killed in a military ambush in the Kasserine region of western Tunisia.<sup>1367</sup> The Tunisian Interior Ministry claimed that Chaib was among “the most dangerous and bloodthirsty of all terrorist leaders.”<sup>1368</sup>

## Yemen

### al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula

#### *Nasir al-Wuhayshi*

Nasir al-Wuhayshi, also known as Abu Baseer, became the founding leader of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in 2009.<sup>1369</sup> Al-Wuhayshi was born in October 1976 in the Mukayras region of Yemen.<sup>1370</sup> Shortly after studying at the Faculty of Sharia and Law at the University of Sana’a, al-Wuhayshi traveled to Afghanistan in 1998 and joined al-Qaida.<sup>1371</sup> After fighting in the Battle of Tora Bora and fleeing Afghanistan in 2001,<sup>1372</sup> al-Wuhayshi was arrested and imprisoned in Iran.<sup>1373</sup> Al-Wuhayshi reportedly spent nearly two years in prison before being extradited in late 2003 to Yemen, where he would remain in prison until 2006.<sup>1374</sup> Al-Wuhayshi was appointed as

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<sup>1365</sup> Aaron Y. Zelin, “Not Gonna Be Able to Do It: al-Qaeda in Tunisia’s Inability to Take Advantage of the Islamic State’s Setbacks,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 13, no. 1 (2019): 63-77.

<sup>1366</sup> Asharq al-Awsat, “تونس تعلن تفاصيل مقتل قيادي خطير جداً في القاعدة,” <https://aawsat.com/home/article/1955206/%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%C2%AB%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%8B%C2%BB-%D9%81%D9%8A-%C2%AB%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A9%C2%BB?page=4>.

<sup>1367</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “تونس تعلن مقتل قيادي جزائري بتنظيم القاعدة,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/2018/1/21/%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85>.

<sup>1368</sup> Lamine Ghanmi, “Tunisian Security Forces Kill Top al-Qaeda-Affiliated Commander,” *The Arab Weekly*, October 26, 2019, <https://theArabweekly.com/tunisian-security-forces-kill-top-al-qaeda-affiliated-commander>.

<sup>1369</sup> Mapping Militants Project. “Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.” Last modified October 12, 2024. <https://mappingmilitants.org/node/310/>.

<sup>1370</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, “A Profile of AQAP’s Upper Echelon,” *CTC Sentinel* 5, no. 7 (2012): 6-8.

<sup>1371</sup> Hussam Radman, “Founder’s Death a Blow to AQAP, but not Fatal,” *Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies*, March 5, 2020.

<sup>1372</sup> BBC, “Obituary: Yemen al-Qaeda Leader Nasser al-Wuhayshi,” June 16, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33150212>.

<sup>1373</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, “ناصر الوحيشي,” <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/6/16/%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%B4%D9%8A>.

<sup>1374</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, “A Profile of AQAP’s Upper Echelon,” *CTC Sentinel* 5, no. 7 (2012): 6-8.

al-Qaida in Yemen's commander shortly after escaping from prison in 2006.<sup>1375</sup> In 2009, al-Wuhayshi oversaw the merger of al-Qaida's branches in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, which led to the formation of AQAP.<sup>1376</sup> In June 2015, a U.S. drone strike killed al-Wuhayshi in southern Yemen.<sup>1377</sup>

### *Qasim al-Raymi*

Qasim al-Raymi succeeded Nasir al-Wuhayshi as al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula's (AQAP) leader in 2015. Al-Raymi was born in 1978 in Yemen's Raymah governorate.<sup>1378</sup> He studied alongside al-Wuhayshi at the Faculty of Sharia and Law at the University of Sana'a.<sup>1379</sup> Al-Raymi traveled to fight in Afghanistan during the 1990s, spending time at al-Qaida training camps.<sup>1380</sup> In 2004, al-Raymi was imprisoned in Yemen for plotting to attack foreign embassies.<sup>1381</sup> After escaping from prison in 2006, al-Raymi played a key role in building al-Qaida's network in Yemen.<sup>1382</sup> Following the formation of AQAP in 2009, al-Raymi became the organization's second-in-command and military leader.<sup>1383</sup> In early 2020, a U.S. airstrike killed al-Raymi in Yemen.<sup>1384</sup>

### *Khalid Batarfi*

Khalid Batarfi succeeded Qasim al-Raymi as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's (AQAP) leader in 2020. Batarfi was born in 1979 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.<sup>1385</sup> Batarfi graduated from high school in Jeddah prior to studying under several prominent Salafi sheikhs.<sup>1386</sup> In 1999, Batarfi traveled to

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<sup>1375</sup> Hussam Radman, "Founder's Death a Blow to AQAP, but not Fatal," *Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies*, March 5, 2020.

<sup>1376</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, "A Profile of AQAP's Upper Echelon," *CTC Sentinel* 5, no. 7 (2012): 6-8.

<sup>1377</sup> BBC, "Yemen al-Qaeda Chief al-Wuhayshi Killed in US Strike," June 16, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33143259>.

<sup>1378</sup> Al Jazeera Arabic, "قاسم الريمي," <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/2015/6/18/%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%8A>.

<sup>1379</sup> Hussam Radman, "Founder's Death a Blow to AQAP, but not Fatal," *Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies*, March 5, 2020.

<sup>1380</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, "A Profile of AQAP's Upper Echelon," *CTC Sentinel* 5, no. 7 (2012): 6-8.

<sup>1381</sup> BBC, "Profile: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," June 16, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-11483095>.

<sup>1382</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, "A Profile of AQAP's Upper Echelon," *CTC Sentinel* 5, no. 7 (2012): 6-8.

<sup>1383</sup> BBC, "Profile: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," June 16, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-11483095>.

<sup>1384</sup> Nikki Carvajal and Caroline Kelly, "White House Announces Death of Terror Leader Qassim al-Rimi," *CNN*, February 7, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/06/politics/white-house-announces-death-of-aqap-leader/index.html>.

<sup>1385</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, "Khalid Batarfi and the Future of AQAP," *Lawfare*, March 22, 2020, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/khalid-batarfi-and-future-aqap>.

<sup>1386</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, "Khalid Batarfi and the Future of AQAP," *Lawfare*, March 22, 2020, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/khalid-batarfi-and-future-aqap>.

Afghanistan, where he spent eight months training with al-Qaida and fighting with the Taliban.<sup>1387</sup> Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, Batarfi was imprisoned in Iran before being extradited to Yemen. Batarfi was released in 2004 after spending two years in prison.<sup>1388</sup> In 2008, Batarfi joined al-Qaida's network in Yemen, later becoming a member of AQAP's Shura Council.<sup>1389</sup> Batarfi was later arrested in 2011 before escaping from prison in 2015.<sup>1390</sup> Batarfi led AQAP until his death in 2024.<sup>1391</sup>

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<sup>1387</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, "Khalid Batarfi and the Future of AQAP," *Lawfare*, March 22, 2020, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/khalid-batarfi-and-future-aqap>; Elisabeth Kendall, "Twenty Years After 9/11: The Jihadi Threat in the Arabian Peninsula," *CTC Sentinel* 14, no. 7 (2021): 63-75.

<sup>1388</sup> Gregory D. Johnsen, "Khalid Batarfi and the Future of AQAP," *Lawfare*, March 22, 2020, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/khalid-batarfi-and-future-aqap>.

<sup>1389</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Rewards for Justice - Reward Offer for Information on Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) Key Leaders," October 18, 2018, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/rewards-for-justice-reward-offer-for-information-on-al-qaida-in-the-arabian-peninsula-aqap-key-leaders/>; Gregory D. Johnsen, "Khalid Batarfi and the Future of AQAP," *Lawfare*, March 22, 2020, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/khalid-batarfi-and-future-aqap>.

<sup>1390</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Rewards for Justice - Reward Offer for Information on Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) Key Leaders," October 18, 2018, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/rewards-for-justice-reward-offer-for-information-on-al-qaida-in-the-arabian-peninsula-aqap-key-leaders/>; Gregory D. Johnsen, "Khalid Batarfi and the Future of AQAP," *Lawfare*, March 22, 2020, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/khalid-batarfi-and-future-aqap>.

<sup>1391</sup> Assim al-Sabri, "Batarfi's Death and Al-Qaeda in Yemen's New Emir: What Comes Next?" *Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies*, May 31, 2024, <https://sanaacenter.org/publications/analysis/22765>.