

Name: ISIS¹

Also known as:

- al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah
- al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi al-‘Iraq wa-sh-Sham
- al-Dawlah
- al-Qa’ida Group of Jihad in Iraq
- al-Qa’ida Group of Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers
- al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI);
- al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia (AQM)
- al-Qa’ida in the Land of the Two Rivers
- al-Qa’ida of Jihad Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers
- al-Qa’ida of the Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers
- al-Qaeda Separatists in Iraq and Syria (QSI)²
- al-Tawhid;
- al-Zarqawi Network;
- Da’ish
- Daish
- Da’esh
- Daesh
- Islamic State (IS)
- Islamic State in Iraq (ISI)
- Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)
- Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS)
- Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS)
- Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS)
- Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS)
- Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
- Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)
- Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL))
- Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS)

¹ CEP calls this extremist group simply “ISIS” (the acronym used for many English translations of one of the entity’s older names), even though the group now refers to itself as “*al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah*” [the Islamic State (IS)]. The entity is widely known among English-speakers as ISIS. Further, the name “Islamic State” could be construed as validating the group’s claim that it represents Islam and has established a legitimate model of Islamic governance, and the acronym IS can be confused with the word “is.”

² Shounaz Meko, “Egypt’s Dar al-Ifta: ISIS extremists not ‘Islamic State,’” Al Arabiya News, August 24, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/08/24/Islamic-authority-Extremists-no-Islamic-State-.html>.

- Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham (ISIS)
- Jam'at al-Tawhid Wa'al-Jihad (JTJ)
- Monotheism and Jihad Group
- Mujahidin Shura Council
- Mujahideen Shura Council
- Organization Base of Jihad/Mesopotamia
- Organization of al-Jihad's Base in Iraq
- Organization of al-Jihad's Base in the Land of the Two Rivers
- Organization Base of Jihad/Country of the Two Rivers
- Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in Iraq
- Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in the Land of the Two Rivers
- Organization of Jihad's Base in the Country of the Two Rivers
- Tanzeem Qa'idat al Jihad/Bilad al Raafidaini
- Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn
- Unity and Holy Struggle
- Unity and Holy War
- Unity and Jihad Group

Type(s) of Organization: Insurgent, Territory-controlling, Terrorist, Violent

Type(s) of Ideology: Islamist, Jihadist, Pan-Islamist, Salafist, Takfirist

Place of Origin: Iraq

Year of Origin: Al-Qaeda in Iraq: 2004; ISIS: 2013

Founder(s): Al-Qaeda in Iraq: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi; ISIS: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

Places of Operation: Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon.

Summary:

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is an extremist group formed from al-Qaeda offshoots in Iraq and Syria. The group flourished as a result of the Syrian Civil War, expanding its territory and outreach. In June 2014, ISIS declared the territory under its rule a caliphate, stretching across Eastern Syria and Western Iraq. Since June, it has taken over large swathes of land in northern and western Iraq and parts of Syria. The group has grown tremendously under its current leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, as a Sunni insurgency fighting against the Shi'ite-led Iraqi government. Today, ISIS calls itself simple, the "Islamic State."³

³ CEP calls this extremist group simply "ISIS" (the acronym used for many English translations of one of the entity's older names), even though the group now refers to itself as "*al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah*" [the Islamic State (IS)]. The entity is widely known among English-speakers as ISIS. Further, the name "Islamic State" could be construed as validating the group's claim that it represents Islam and has

Under its self-proclaimed caliphate, ISIS imposes a harsh system of Sharia law, claiming religious authority over all Muslims worldwide. ISIS aims to create a radical Sunni Islamist state in the Levant, a region consisting of Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Cyprus and Southern Turkey.

ISIS is well known for killing civilians en masse, often by public execution and crucifixion. Partially as a result of its wanton slaughter of civilians and “notorious intractability,”⁴ al-Qaeda cut ties with the group in February 2014.

The group funds itself through extortion, robbery, human trafficking, and more recently, the incredibly lucrative strategy of taking over oil fields and smuggling oil through Turkey. ISIS also sells the stolen oil back to the Syrian and Iraqi governments.

To curb the group’s advances, Iran has deployed units of its Revolutionary Guard, helping Iraqi troops to reclaim the city of Tikrit, and is currently helping to safeguard Baghdad, Najaf and Karbala. Separately, a US-led coalition has formed to help the Iraqi air force conduct airstrikes against ISIS. Calls for US combat troops to engage ISIS directly have so far went unheeded, although a small contingent of forces have been deployed in an advisory capacity.

Doctrine: ISIS has the immediate objective to establish an Islamic caliphate throughout Iraq and *al-Sham* (English: “the Levant” or “Greater Syria”), and then to expand the caliphate across the world. ISIS declared a caliphate in the areas under its control in June 2014.

ISIS is an outgrowth of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) that has expanded its operations into Syria. Until February 2014, ISIS was a formal affiliate of al-Qaeda’s central command. However, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri cut ties with ISIS due to the group’s repeated attempts to subsume al-Qaeda’s Syrian affiliate, Jabhat al-Nusra, under its command.⁵

Despite losing its formal alliance with al-Qaeda, ISIS has the same ideology and goals and uses the same brutal tactics as its former mother organization. In an attempt to defeat rival opposition groups, ISIS has conducted suicide-bombing attacks against rebel bases and has beheaded

established a legitimate model of Islamic governance, and the acronym IS can be confused with the word “is.”

⁴ Liz Sly, “Al-Qaeda disavows any ties with radical Islamist ISIS group in Syria, Iraq,” *The Washington Post*, February 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/al-qaeda-disavows-any-ties-with-radical-islamist-isis-group-in-syria-iraq/2014/02/03/2c9afc3a-8cef-11e3-98ab-fe5228217bd1_story.html.

⁵ Thomas Joscelyn, “Al Qaeda’s General Command Disowns the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham,” *Long War Journal*, February 3, 2014, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/02/al_qaedas_general_co.php.

members of other fighting battalions.⁶ For example, according to a report from Al Jazeera English in January 2014, after ISIS prevailed in a battle with the rebel group Liwa al-Tawhid Brigade in Jarabulus, ISIS led more than 100 men to the main square to be executed.

Key Leaders:⁷

- Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (leader)
- Abu Ayman al-Iraqi (senior military commander in Idlib, Aleppo, and Latakia)
- Abu Ahmad al-Alwani (member of military council)
- Abu Abdul Rahman al-Bilawi (former head of ISIS Shura Council)
- Abu Fatima al-Jaheishi (former head of operations in southern Iraq before moving to Kirkuk)
- Haji Bakr (former senior military commander and top deputy to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi; killed in clashes with a Syrian rebel group in January 2014).⁸

Leadership Structure:

ISIS is led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, its *emir* (roughly equivalent to a commander, chieftain, or prince), whom the group proclaimed in as caliph of ISIS's self-declared "Islamic State" in June 2014.⁹ Underneath him are the Shura Council, *Shari'ah* Council, and judicial council that govern the organization, in addition to provincial councils that make decisions at the local level.¹⁰

Financing:

ISIS is widely believed to be the richest terrorist organization in the world, with its daily income most recently estimated at more than \$3 million.¹¹ According to the Iraq Energy Institute, ISIS's

⁶ Wladimir Van Wilgenburg, "ISIS Suicide Attacks Target Syrian Kurdish Capital," Al Monitor, March 13, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/03/isis-attacks-kurdish-capital.html>.

⁷ "Exclusive: Top ISIS Leaders Revealed," Al Arabiya English, February 13, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/2014/02/13/Exclusive-Top-ISIS-leaders-revealed.html>.

⁸ Bill Roggio, "ISIS Confirms Death of Senior Leader in Syria," Long War Journal, February 5, 2014, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/02/isis_confirms_death.php.

⁹ "ISIS Spokesman Declares Caliphate, Rebrands Group as 'Islamic State,'" SITE Institute, June 29, 2014, <https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/isis-spokesman-declares-caliphate-rebrands-group-as-islamic-state.html>.

¹⁰ "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant," Australian National Society, <http://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/Listedterroristorganisations/Pages/IslamicStateofIraqandtheLevant.aspx>; Joas Wagemakers, "Al-Qaida Advises the Arab Spring: The Case for Al-Baghdadi," Jihadica, September 21, 2013, <http://www.jihadica.com/al-qaida-advises-the-arab-spring-the-case-for-al-baghdadi>.

¹¹ Glen Carey, Mahmoud Habboush and Gregory Viscusi, "Financing Jihad: Why ISIL Is a Lot Richer Than Al-Qaeda," Bloomberg, June 26, 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2014-06->

oil profits amount to \$1.2 million per day in Iraq and \$2 million in Syria.¹² Before the group seized Mosul in June 2014, a senior intelligence official speaking on condition of anonymity said that ISIS had accumulated \$875 million and that Mosul gains gave ISIS an expected net worth of over \$2 billion.¹³ Since then, ISIS has continued to raise money through its seized oil reserves, looting and robbing banks, and extortion. According to Matthew Levitt, director of the Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, ISIS is "the best-financed group we've ever seen."¹⁴

Militant financing expert Patrick Johnson of the RAND Corporation credits ISIS's survival and evolution to its strong, diversified fundraising apparatus.¹⁵ Presently, ISIS derives the largest part of its revenue from the spoils of war, particularly commandeered oil fields and weapons caches.¹⁶ As Paul Sullivan, a Middle East expert at Georgetown University, noted, "[ISIS] is not out in the economic boondocks of Afghanistan or hidden in deserts and caves. [ISIS] is developing in a vital oil, gas and trade area of the world. It can grab as it expands."¹⁷

ISIS records seized by the U.S. revealed that Mosul was the group's fundraising hub years before ISIS conquered the city in June of 2014.¹⁸ The records also showed that the group has required cells to kick up 20 percent of their locally generated income for redistribution to other local and

26/looted-banks-fund-iraq-fighters-eyeing-wealth-al-qaeda-never-had.html; "ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn- report," *Reuters*, last modified October 2, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>.

¹² John Defterios, "ISIS' struggle to control its oil riches," CNN, September 4, 2014, http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/03/business/defterios-oil-isis/index.html?hpt=ibu_c2.

¹³ Martin Chulov, "How an arrest in Iraq revealed Isis's \$2bn jihadist network," *The Guardian*, June 15, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/15/iraq-isis-arrest-jihadists-wealth-power>.

¹⁴ Scott Bronstein and Drew Griffin, "Self-funded and deep-rooted: How ISIS makes its millions," *CNN*, October 7, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/06/world/meast/isis-funding/>.

¹⁵ Hannah Allam, "Records show how Iraqi extremists withstood U.S. anti-terror efforts," McClatchy, June 23, 2014, http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/06/23/231223_records-show-how-iraqi-extremists.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy.

¹⁶ Graeme Baker, "ISIL: Rising Power in Iraq and Syria," Al Jazeera English, June 11, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/isil-eminent-threat-iraq-syria-20146101543970327.html>.

¹⁷ Glen Carey, Mahmoud Habboush and Gregory Viscusi, "Financing Jihad: Why ISIL Is a Lot Richer Than Al-Qaeda," Bloomberg, June 26, 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2014-06-26/looted-banks-fund-iraq-fighters-eyeing-wealth-al-qaeda-never-had.html>.

¹⁸ Hannah Allam, "Records show how Iraqi extremists withstood U.S. anti-terror efforts," McClatchy, June 23, 2014, http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/06/23/231223_records-show-how-iraqi-extremists.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy.

provincial cells in need of funds.¹⁹ The records offer no evidence for popular claims that Gulf countries provided significant contributions to ISIS. In reality, outside donations constituted no more than 5 percent of ISIS's operating budgets from 2005 to 2010.²⁰ The documents also countered the common belief that ISIS recruits fighters through high wages—in and before 2010, the average ISIS foot soldier was paid a salary of about \$40 per month, much less than blue-collar jobs in Iraq.²¹

ISIS controls oil fields in its strongholds in eastern Syria and northern Iraq and smuggles crude oil by truck in exchange for cash and refined petroleum,²² including through deals with enemies of ISIS such as Syria and Turkey.²³ The group also continues to try to seize further key infrastructure such as Iraq's biggest oil refinery in Baiji, as well as factories and power plants.²⁴ ISIS's exploitation of the energy infrastructure under its control is hamstrung by maintenance needs, which it addresses by intimidating on-site engineers.²⁵ A spokesman for Iraq's oil ministry stated that ISIS's oil income is falling due to personnel challenges at oil refineries.²⁶ Most of Iraq's oil is in the country's Shi'ite-dominated south, which ISIS would have difficulty controlling.²⁷ For the time being, ISIS's oil sales will continue to go through black markets, since, as the director of the Iraq Energy Institute notes, "Fixed distribution networks [such as

¹⁹ Hannah Allam, "Records show how Iraqi extremists withstood U.S. anti-terror efforts," McClatchy, June 23, 2014, http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/06/23/231223_records-show-how-iraqi-extremists.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy.

²⁰ Hannah Allam, "Records show how Iraqi extremists withstood U.S. anti-terror efforts," McClatchy, June 23, 2014, http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/06/23/231223_records-show-how-iraqi-extremists.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy.

²¹ Hannah Allam, "Records show how Iraqi extremists withstood U.S. anti-terror efforts," McClatchy, June 23, 2014, http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/06/23/231223_records-show-how-iraqi-extremists.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy.

²² Luay al-Khatteeb, "How Iraq's black market in oil funds ISIS," CNN, August 22, 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/18/business/al-khatteeb-isis-oil-iraq/index.html>.

²³ John Defterios, "ISIS' struggle to control its oil riches," CNN, September 4, 2014, http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/03/business/defterios-oil-isis/index.html?hpt=ibu_c2.

²⁴ Glen Carey, Mahmoud Habboush and Gregory Viscusi, "Financing Jihad: Why ISIL Is a Lot Richer Than Al-Qaeda," Bloomberg, June 26, 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2014-06-26/looted-banks-fund-iraq-fighters-eyeing-wealth-al-qaeda-never-had.html>.

²⁵ John Defterios, "ISIS' struggle to control its oil riches," CNN, September 4, 2014, http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/03/business/defterios-oil-isis/index.html?hpt=ibu_c2.

²⁶ John Defterios, "ISIS' struggle to control its oil riches," CNN, September 4, 2014, http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/03/business/defterios-oil-isis/index.html?hpt=ibu_c2.

²⁷ Luay al-Khatteeb, "How Iraq's black market in oil funds ISIS," CNN, August 22, 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/18/business/al-khatteeb-isis-oil-iraq/index.html>.

pipelines] are complex, require investment and can become targets by the Iraqi Army and Kurdish Peshmerga.”²⁸

Other sources of ISIS revenue include extortion (including levies on local businesses) and kidnapping for ransom. “We know that for more than a year, merchants in Mosul have been paying a ‘revolutionary tax,’” Fabrice Balanche, a French academic expert on the Middle East, reported.²⁹ The group has also made millions from the sale of women and children as sex slaves.³⁰ According to an analysis at the Council of Foreign Relations, after seizing Mosul in June 2014, ISIS has raked in more than \$8 million each month from extortion payments such as forced taxes, looting, and ransom from kidnapped hostages.³¹ ISIS has also illegally exported valuable antiquities from Iraq to Turkey, resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars.³²

Michael Stephens, director of the Royal United Services Institute in Qatar, noted that upon seizing control of an area, “[ISIS] quickly secures the water, flour and hydrocarbon resources of the area, centralizing distribution and thereby making the local population dependent on it for survival.”³³ In this way, Stephens stated, “Islamic State is essentially self-financing; it cannot be isolated and cut off from the world because it is intimately tied into regional stability in a way that benefits not only itself, but also the people it fights.”³⁴

ISIS has controlled a total of eleven oil fields across Syria and Iraq since October 2, 2014.³⁵ The illegal oil, which is sold to small “non-name brand companies”, is distributed under established

²⁸ Luay al-Khatteeb, “How Iraq’s black market in oil funds ISIS,” CNN, August 22, 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/18/business/al-khatteeb-isis-oil-iraq/index.html>.

²⁹ Glen Carey, Mahmoud Habboush and Gregory Viscusi, “Financing Jihad: Why ISIL Is a Lot Richer Than Al-Qaeda,” Bloomberg, June 26, 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2014-06-26/looted-banks-fund-iraq-fighters-eyeing-wealth-al-qaeda-never-had.html>.

³⁰ “ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn- report,” *Reuters*, last modified October 2, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>.

³¹ “ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn- report,” *Reuters*, last modified October 2, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>.

³² “ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn- report,” *Reuters*, last modified October 2, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>.

³³ “Islamic State: Where does jihadist group get its support?” BBC News, September 1, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29004253>.

³⁴ “Islamic State: Where does jihadist group get its support?” BBC News, September 1, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29004253>.

³⁵ “ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn- report,” *Reuters*, last modified October 2, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>.

networks “under the noses” of Turkish, Kurdish and Jordanian authorities.³⁶ Although ISIS controls Iraq’s northern pipeline which pumps oil into Turkey, the group still moves most of its oil above ground via tanker trucks. Smugglers who move the oil into Turkey pay the Islamic State between \$20-\$65 per barrel, while the international average is approximately \$100 per barrel.³⁷

While Ankara has attempted to crack down on ISIS’s oil smuggling, numerous Turkish individuals have fostered ISIS’s illegal activity by continued importation, which multiplies one’s wealth “a thousand fold”.³⁸ Nonetheless, actions and implementations such as increased security at borders, arrests, and stop-and-search procedures by Turkish authorities have all been helpful in reducing the amount of oil smuggled from ISIS. The Turkish journalist, Fehim Tastekin, estimates that the crackdown has cut smuggling by 70 to 80 percent.³⁹

Some analysts believe that ISIS’s profits from oil won’t last for long; Steven Mufson of the Washington Post remarked that ISIS’s Iraqi oil fields “are so small and the crude [oil is] of such poor quality”.⁴⁰ Others are not so optimistic. Jenik Radon of Columbia’s School of International and Public Affairs remarked that poor quality oil could be mixed with the oil that is “already running through [the] pipeline,” and that it would be “untraceable, essentially.” Even amidst the US airstrike program which launched in September 2014, Radon believes that ISIS is able to profit largely from oil sales by exercising total control of the pipeline.⁴¹

History:

³⁶ “ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn- report,” *Reuters*, last modified October 2, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>.

³⁷ Armin Rosen, “Here’s how ISIS is wrecking Iraq’s oil industry,” *Business Insider*, September 17, 2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/how-isis-is-wrecking-iraqs-biggest-industry-2014-9>; “ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn- report,” *Reuters*, last modified October 2, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>.

³⁸ Associated Press, “Turkey cracks down on oil smuggling linked to ISIS,” *Al Arabiya English*, last modified October 6, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/business/energy/2014/10/06/Turkey-cracks-down-on-oil-smuggling-linked-to-ISIS.html>.

³⁹ Associated Press, “Turkey cracks down on oil smuggling linked to ISIS,” *Al Arabiya English*, last modified October 6, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/business/energy/2014/10/06/Turkey-cracks-down-on-oil-smuggling-linked-to-ISIS.html>.

⁴⁰ Armin Rosen, “Here’s how ISIS is wrecking Iraq’s oil industry,” *Business Insider*, September 17, 2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/how-isis-is-wrecking-iraqs-biggest-industry-2014-9>

⁴¹ Erin Banco, “US airstrikes in Syria cripple ISIS funding by hitting oil refineries,” *International Business Times*, September 30, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.com/us-airstrikes-syria-cripple-isis-funding-hitting-oil-refineries-1696902>.

- **December 1989:** Ahmad Fadhil Nazzal al-Khalaylah (also known as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi) arrives in Peshawar, Pakistan to fight alongside the mujahideen against the Soviet Union. During his three-year stay in Afghanistan and Pakistan, al-Zarqawi comes into contact with prominent jihadi ideologues, including radical Palestinian cleric Abu Mohamed al-Maqqisi.⁴²
- **1993:** Al-Zarqawi and al-Maqqisi return to Jordan, and began plotting against the Hashemite monarchy. There, al-Zarqawi establishes an organization called al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, later changing the name to Bayat al-Imam (Allegiance to the Imam). The first mission that al-Zarqawi directs—against a movie theater in Zarqa that was showing pornographic films—fails when the bomber “forgot about his bomb. It exploded and blew off his legs.”⁴³
- **Early 1994-1998:** Al-Zarqawi and al-Maqqisi are arrested by the Jordanian government for their activities related to Bayat al-Imam, and sentenced to prison (reports suggest that they received between 15 years to life).⁴⁴ While incarcerated together at al-Sawaqa prison, al-Maqqisi and al-Zarqawi continue expanding Bayat al-Imam among the inmates, while al-Maqqisi’s religious treatises are smuggled out of the prison and disseminated across the Middle East and Europe.⁴⁵ In 1998, several of al-Zarqawi’s own writings appeared on the Internet and are noticed by Osama bin Laden.⁴⁶
- **Mid-Late 1999:** Jordan’s King Abdullah II issues a general amnesty upon assuming the throne and al-Zarqawi is released from prison. Soon after, he leaves Jordan and returned to Afghanistan, where he meets Osama Bin Laden in December 1999.⁴⁷
- **2000-2001:** Al-Zarqawi secures \$5,000 in startup money from al-Qaeda, with help from the organization’s security chief Seif al-Adel. He sets up a training camp in Herat that

⁴² Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/?single_page=true.

⁴³ Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/?single_page=true.

⁴⁴ Nibras Kazimi, “A Virulent Ideology in Mutation: Zarqawi Upstages Maqqisi,” *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 2 (September, 2005): 63, http://www.hudson.org/content/researchattachments/attachment/1368/kazimi_vol2.pdf.

⁴⁵ M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” AQAM Futures Project, Case Study Number 1 (June 2011): 2-3, http://csis.org/files/publication/110614_Kirdar_AlQaedaIraq_Web.pdf.

⁴⁶ Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/?single_page=true.

⁴⁷ Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/?single_page=true.

recruits Jordanian, Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian jihadists. When the U.S. military campaign begins in Afghanistan in October 2001, Zarqawi's camp allegedly has 2,000-3,000 trainees.⁴⁸

- **December 2001-2002:** Al-Zarqawi leaves Afghanistan with several hundred of his newly trained fighters. They first travel to Iran, and then move between Lebanon, Syria, and the autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq.⁴⁹ In the lead up to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, al-Zarqawi “mobilized his network of safe houses, weapons caches, and intelligence networks, preparing a trap for the coalition forces.”⁵⁰
- **August 2003:** Al-Zarqawi is allegedly responsible for the car bombing of the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad on August 7, which kills at least 10 and wounds about 40.⁵¹ Two weeks later, al-Zarqawi is reportedly behind the truck bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad, which kills 17—including the UN representative—and injures 100.⁵² On August 29, al-Zarqawi is behind the car bombing outside of the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, Iraq—one of the holiest sites for Shi'ite Muslims—that kills revered cleric Ayatollah Mohamad Bakr al-Hakim and 100 others.⁵³
- **May 2004:** In May, al-Zarqawi “inaugurated his notorious wave of hostage beheadings,” making American citizen Nicholas Berg his first victim.⁵⁴ Later that month, a suicide bomber with suspected ties to al-Zarqawi detonates himself near the U.S.-led coalition headquarters in Baghdad, killing the acting president of the Iraqi Governing Council,

⁴⁸ M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) Futures Project, Case Study Number 1 (2011): 2-3. M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) Futures Project, Case Study Number 1 (2011): 2-3.

⁴⁹ M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” The Future of Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) | Center for Strategic and International Studies, June 2011, 3, http://csis.org/files/publication/110614_Kirdar_AlQaedaIraq_Web.pdf.

⁵⁰ M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” The Future of Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) | Center for Strategic and International Studies, June 2011, 3, http://csis.org/files/publication/110614_Kirdar_AlQaedaIraq_Web.pdf.

⁵¹ “Baghdad Blast Kills 10 at Jordanian Embassy,” CNN.com, August 7, 2003, <http://us.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/08/07/sprj.irq.main>.

⁵² “Truck Bomb Kills Chief U.N. Envoy to Iraq,” CNN.com, August 20, 2003, <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/08/19/sprj.irq.main>.

⁵³ Ben Wedeman, Ingrid Formanek, David Ensor, Shirzad Bozorgmehr, “Najaf Bombing Kills Shiite Leader, Followers Say,” CNN.com, August 30, 2003, <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/08/29/sprj.irq.najaf/index.html?iref=mpstoryview>.

⁵⁴ Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/?single_page=true.

Ezzedine Salim. Salim's death comes 45 days before the occupation forces are set to transfer limited political control back to the Iraqis.⁵⁵

- **October 17, 2004:** Al-Zarqawi's group pledges allegiance to Bin Laden, uniting under the name Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn (the Organization of Jihad's Base in the Land of the Two Rivers), better known as al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) or, less commonly, al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia (AQM).⁵⁶
- **2005:** AQI increases the frequency of attacks throughout the year, targeting Coalition forces and Iraqi Shi'ites. In late 2005, during operations in Iraq, U.S. forces confiscate a letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri that describes the organization's long-term global strategy. The letter also criticizes al-Zarqawi for videotaping and distributing footage of beheadings, saying that such violence could alienate the Islamic world from al-Qaeda's cause.⁵⁷
 - **February 28:** A suicide bombing in Hilla reportedly targets Shi'ite police and National Guard recruits, killing 125 and wounding hundreds.⁵⁸
 - **April 29:** Numerous suicide bombings across Iraq kill as many as 50 people.⁵⁹
 - **July 2:** Egypt's envoy to Iraq, Ihab al-Sherif, is kidnapped and later executed.⁶⁰
 - **July 16:** A suicide bomber attacks a fuel truck in Musayyib, killing at least 98 and wounding at least 80.⁶¹
 - **July 29:** A suicide bombing on Iraqi army recruits in Rabia kills 52 and injures 57.⁶²

⁵⁵ Ian Fisher, Christine Hauser, "The Struggle for Iraq: Political Violence; Suicide Bomber Kills President of Iraqi Council," *New York Times*, May 18, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/18/world/struggle-for-iraq-political-violence-suicide-bomber-kills-president-iraqi.html>.

⁵⁶ Ty McCormick, "Al Qaeda Core: A Short History," *Foreign Policy*, March 17, 2014, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/03/17/al_qaeda_core_a_short_history; "Terrorist Organization Profile: al-Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers," National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, http://www.start.umd.edu/tops/terrorist_organization_profile.asp?id=4416; "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant / al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI): ISIL – Early History," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/aqi-2.htm>.

⁵⁷ Douglas Jehl and Thom Shanker, "Al Qaeda Tells Ally in Iraq to Strive for Global Goals," *New York Times*, October 7, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/07/politics/07zarqawi.html>.

⁵⁸ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁵⁹ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁶⁰ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁶¹ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

- **September 14:** A suicide bomber attacks a group of laborers in a predominantly Shi'ite neighborhood in Baghdad, killing 112.⁶³
- **September 29:** Three suicide bombers detonate car bombs at a market and busy streets in the town of Balad, killing at least 102.⁶⁴
- **November 9:** Coordinated suicide bombings at three hotels in Amman, Jordan kill 58 and injure more than 90.⁶⁵
- **January 2006:** AQI's extreme tactics under al-Zarqawi provoke a backlash among Iraqi nationalist insurgents. In an attempt to rebrand itself and minimize the damage from al-Zarqawi, AQI joins other affiliated groups under the coalition Mujahideen Shura Council (MSC) and name Abdullah Rashid al-Baghdadi as its leader.⁶⁶
- **February 22, 2006:** AQI bombs the Shi'ite al-Askari Mosque in Samarra, Iraq, one of the four major Shi'ite shrines in Iraq and the burial place for two of the 12 revered Shi'ite Imams. Reportedly, "a group of men dressed like Iraqi police commandos" walked into the shrine and set off the explosions.⁶⁷ The mosque attack sets off a wave of intensified Shi'ite-Sunni attacks across Iraq.⁶⁸
- **June 7, 2006:** After weeks of tracking al-Zarqawi's spiritual adviser, Sheikh Abdul Rahman, U.S. forces pinpoint al-Zarqawi's location at a house near Baghdad. U.S. planes drop two 500-pound bombs on the location, killing al-Zarqawi and Rahman.⁶⁹ AQI soon

⁶² "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁶³ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁶⁴ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁶⁵ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁶⁶ Joseph Felter and Brian Fishman, "Al-Qa'ida's Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, January 2, 2008 [the website erroneously lists the publication date as January 2, 2007], 5, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/aqs-foreign-fighters-in-iraq.pdf>.

⁶⁷ Bill Roggio, "Dome of the Golden Mosque Destroyed," Long War Journal, February 22, 2006, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2006/02/dome_of_the_golden_m_1.php.

⁶⁸ Robert F. Worth, "Blast Destroys Shrine in Iraq, Setting Off Sectarian Fury," *New York Times*, February 22, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/22/international/middleeast/22cnd-iraq.html>.

⁶⁹ Ellen Knickmeyer and Jonathan Finer, "Insurgent Leader Al-Zarqawi Killed in Iraq," *Washington Post*, June 8, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/08/AR2006060800114.html>.

replaces al-Zarqawi with Abu Hamzah al-Muhajir—otherwise known as Abu Ayyub al-Masri.⁷⁰

- **Mid-2006:** A Sunni tribesman from Anbar Province begins coordinating attacks against AQI in what became known as the Sunni Awakening. The Awakening campaign is formally announced in September.⁷¹
- **October 15, 2006:** Due to a lack of support for the MSC, AQI formally rebrands for a second time, becoming the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). Its new leader is Abu Omar al-Baghdadi.⁷²
- **November 23, 2006:** Car bombs and mortar attacks in Sadr City kill 215, setting off more sectarian violence.⁷³
- **2007:** ISI continues its deadly bombing campaign, targeting predominantly Shi'ite populations. In January 2007, the U.S. begins its “surge,” deploying an additional 30,000 troops to Iraq, completing the deployment in June that year, and bringing the total number of troops in Iraq to 150,000.⁷⁴
 - **January 22, 2007:** A suicide bomber and car bomb target a Shi'ite market in central Baghdad, killing 88.⁷⁵
 - **February 3, 2007:** A suicide bomber detonates a truck bomb in a heavily Shi'ite populated neighborhood of Iraq, killing 135 in what is then the “deadliest single bombing” since the beginning of the Iraq war in 2003.⁷⁶
 - **March 6, 2007:** Two suicide bombers detonate themselves among Shi'ite pilgrims in Hillah, killing 93.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ Joseph Felter and Brian Fishman, “Al-Qa’ida’s Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records,” Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, January 2, 2008 [the website erroneously lists the publication date as January 2, 2007], 5, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/aqs-foreign-fighters-in-iraq.pdf>.

⁷¹ M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” The Future of Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) | Center for Strategic and International Studies, June 2011, 5, http://csis.org/files/publication/110614_Kirdar_AlQaedaIraq_Web.pdf.

⁷² M.J. Kirdar, “Al Qaeda in Iraq,” The Future of Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) | Center for Strategic and International Studies, June 2011, 5, http://csis.org/files/publication/110614_Kirdar_AlQaedaIraq_Web.pdf.

⁷³ Greg Bruno, “Profile: Al-Qaeda in Iraq (a.k.a. Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia),” *The Washington Post*, November 19, 2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/19/AR2007111900721.html>.

⁷⁴ Thom Shanker and Michael R. Gordon, “G.I.’s in Iraq Open Big Offensive against Al Qaeda,” *New York Times*, June 17, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/17/world/middleeast/17iraq.html>.

⁷⁵ “Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁷⁶ “CHRONOLOGY-The Deadliest Bomb Attacks in Iraq,” *Reuters*, February 3, 2007, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2007/02/03/us-iraq-bombings-idUSL0340037820070203>.

- **April 18, 2007:** Five separate bombs, including 4 car bombs, target Shi'ite areas in Baghdad, killing more than 170. One of the bombs strike a central bus station for Shi'ites travelling to Sadr City.⁷⁸
- **June 19, 2007:** A truck bomb explodes outside the Shi'ite Khulani mosque in Baghdad, killing more than 80 people.⁷⁹
- **July 7, 2007:** A suicide bomber detonates a truck carrying 4.5 tons of explosives in the Shi'ite Turkmen village of Amerli, killing as many as 150 people.⁸⁰
- **August 16, 2007:** Suicide bombers simultaneously detonates five fuel trucks in the Yazidi Kurdish villages of al-Qataniyah and al-Adnaniyah, killing more than 300 Iraqis, injuring several hundred, and destroying dozens of homes. It is reportedly the worst terrorist attack in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.⁸¹
- **December 2007:** The top U.S. commander in Iraq, General David Petraeus, claims that the "number of high-profile attacks, that is car bombs, suicide car bombs and suicide vest attacks, is...down, roughly 60 percent" since March. A spokesman for Iraq's Interior Ministry claims that "75 percent of Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia's networks and safe havens [were] destroyed," noting that 18,000 people have been killed in 2007.⁸²
- **Early-Mid 2008:** By early 2008, Coalition and Sunni Awakening forces have killed around 2,400 members of AQI/ISI, and captured 8,800.⁸³ Between March and April, U.S. and Iraqi forces have "killed or captured 53 senior members of AQI's network," including numerous provincial leaders, cell leaders, and facilitators who are "in charge of moving men, weapons, explosive, and money to allow al Qaeda to continue

⁷⁷ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007,

http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁷⁸ Kirk Semple, "Bombings Kill at Least 171 Iraqis in Baghdad," *New York Times*, April 18, 2007,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/18/world/middleeast/18cnd-baghdad.html?pagewanted=all>.

⁷⁹ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007,

http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁸⁰ Stephen Farrell, "Around 150, Death Toll in Iraq Attack among War's Worst," *New York Times*, July 9, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/09/world/middleeast/09iraq.html>.

⁸¹ Tim Butcher, "Iraq Bombs: 250 Die in Worst Terror Attack," *Telegraph*, August 16, 2007,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1560477/Iraq-bombs-250-die-in-worst-terror-attack.html>.

⁸² Stephen Farrell and Solomon Moore, "Iraq Attacks Fall 60 Percent, Petraeus Says," *New York Times*, December 30, 2007,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/30/world/middleeast/30iraq.html?pagewanted=print>.

⁸³ M.J. Kirdar, "Al Qaeda in Iraq," *The Future of Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) | Center for Strategic and International Studies*, June 2011, 5,

http://csis.org/files/publication/110614_Kirdar_AlQaedaIraq_Web.pdf.

operations.”⁸⁴ In addition to General Petraeus, other high level U.S. officials state publicly that AQI has been severely degraded. In May, CIA Director Michael Hayden reports that al-Qaeda is on “the verge of a strategic defeat in Iraq,” and in August, Marine Corps Commandant General James Conway says that AQI has been driven from large parts of Iraq, its leaders turning their attention to Afghanistan.⁸⁵

- **September 1, 2008:** U.S. forces transfer responsibility for maintaining security in Anbar Province back to Iraqi forces. As of 2006, Anbar has been the “most lethal place for Americans in Iraq,” with more than 1,000 U.S. troops killed.⁸⁶
- **October 16, 2008:** The U.S. military announces that it has killed Abu Qaswarah, al-Qaeda in Iraq’s second-in-command, during an operation in Mosul.⁸⁷
- **December 2008:** U.S. forces pull out of Fallujah, handing over control to the Iraqi Army.⁸⁸
- **2009:** As U.S. forces withdraw from Iraq amidst relatively low levels of violence at the end of 2008, car bombings and suicide attacks make a comeback in 2009. While the nature of the attacks fit the profile of AQI/ISI-style bombings, the group’s culpability is unclear.
 - **January 2, 2009:** A suicide bomber detonates himself during a meeting of nearly 1,000 tribal leaders in Yusufiya, killing at least 24 and wounding about 40.⁸⁹
 - **February 9, 2009:** Four American soldiers are killed in Mosul when a suicide bomber detonates his vehicle near the soldier’s Humvee. The attack is the “deadliest single loss in nine months” for U.S. forces in Iraq.⁹⁰
 - **April 6, 2009:** Six car bombs detonate in Shi’ite neighborhoods in Baghdad, killing at least 33 and wounding dozens.⁹¹

⁸⁴ Bill Roggio, “Targeting Al Qaeda in Iraq’s Network, March-April 2008,” Long War Journal, April 16, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/04/targeting_al_qaeda_i.php#.

⁸⁵ Kenneth Katzman, “Al Qaeda in Iraq: Assessment and Outside Links,” Congressional Research Service, August 15, 2008, 15, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL32217.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Dexter Filkins, “U.S. Hands Off Pacified Anbar, Once Heart of Iraq Insurgency,” *New York Times*, September 1, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/02/world/middleeast/02anbar.html?pagewanted=all>.

⁸⁷ Ernesto Londoño, “No. 2 Leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq Killed,” *Washington Post*, October 16, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/15/AR2008101500682.html>.

⁸⁸ Timothy Williams, “American Exit Increases Optimism in Falluja,” *New York Times*, December 29, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/30/world/middleeast/30falluja.html?pagewanted=all>.

⁸⁹ Timothy Williams and Riyadh Mohamed, “Suicide Attack Kills 24 at Iraqi Tribal Gathering,” *New York Times*, January 2, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/03/world/middleeast/03iraq.html>.

⁹⁰ Alissa J. Rubin, “Northern Iraq Suicide Blast Kills 4 American Soldiers,” *New York Times*, February 9, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/10/world/middleeast/10iraq.html>.

⁹¹ Steven Lee Myers, “Six Car Bombs Kill at Least 33 in Iraq,” *New York Times*, April 6, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/07/world/middleeast/07iraq.html>.

- **April 10, 2009:** A suicide truck bomber strikes the main military base in Mosul, killing 5 American soldiers and two Iraqis. It is “the deadliest attack against American soldiers [in Iraq] in 13 months...”⁹²
- **April 23-24, 2009:** Three separate suicide bombings in Baghdad and Muqdadia kill at least 80 and injure 120. The attack in Baghdad is perpetrated by a woman who detonates herself among a group of women and children waiting for emergency food aid.⁹³ The next day, two suicide bombings near the revered Shi’ite shrine of Imam Musa al-Kadhim and his grandson kill at least 60.⁹⁴
- **July 17, 2009:** Militants attack an army base in Basra with mortar rounds, killing three Americans.⁹⁵
- **October 25, 2009:** ISI claims responsibility for two car bombings that strike the Iraqi Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works, killing more than 155 and injuring more than 500.⁹⁶
- **January 25, 2010:** Three bombs explode within 10 minutes of each other in Baghdad during rush hour, striking the Ishtar Sheraton, Babylon Hotel, and Hamra Hotel—all popular hotels for foreign businessmen and journalists. The blasts kill 36 and wound more than 70.⁹⁷
- **April 20, 2010:** Iraqi and American officials announce the deaths of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al-Masri, the top leaders of al-Qaeda in Iraq.⁹⁸ Shortly thereafter, AQI appoints Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who had been detained for four years by American troops at Camp Bucca before being released in 2009, to lead the organization.⁹⁹

⁹² Sam Dagher, “Suicide Attack Kills 5 G.I.’s and 2 Iraqis in Northern City,” *New York Times*, April 10, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/11/world/middleeast/11iraq.html>.

⁹³ Timothy Williams, “80 Are Killed in 3 Suicide Bombings in Iraq,” *New York Times*, April 23, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/24/world/middleeast/24iraq.html>.

⁹⁴ Steven Lee Myers and Sam Dagher, “Storm of Violence in Iraq Strains Its Security Forces,” *New York Times*, April 24, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/25/world/middleeast/25iraq.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

⁹⁵ Timothy Williams, “3 U.S. Soldiers Die in Attack at a Base in Southern Iraq,” *New York Times*, July 17, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/18/world/middleeast/18iraq.html>.

⁹⁶ Rod Nordland, “Iraq Reaches Voting Deal as Toll Rises in Bombings,” *New York Times*, October 26, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/27/world/middleeast/27iraq.html>.

⁹⁷ Anthony Shadid and John Leland, “Baghdad Blasts Shatter Sense of Security in Capital,” *New York Times*, January 25, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/26/world/middleeast/26iraq.html>.

⁹⁸ Tim Arango, “Top Qaeda Leaders in Iraq Reported Killed in Raid,” *New York Times*, April 20, 2010, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE7DA1F3DF933A15757C0A9669D8B63>.

⁹⁹ “Profile: Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi,” BBC News, June 11, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27801676>.

- **April 23, 2010:** A series of bombings strike near the headquarters belonging to Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr in Sadr City, Baghdad, killing at least 59 and wounding dozens.¹⁰⁰
- **May 10, 2010:** A series of shooting and bombing attacks in Baghdad, Fallujah, Samarra, Tarmiya, and Suwayra, kill more than 100 and wound hundreds more.¹⁰¹
- **June 4, 2010:** The top U.S. commander in Iraq, General Ray Odierno, announces that Iraqi and American forces have killed or captured 34 of AQI's top 42 leaders. Odierno tells reporters, "I think they're struggling now, and I think it's going to be difficult for them to continue to recruit."¹⁰²
- **September 1, 2010:** The U.S. military officially marks the end of combat operations in Iraq and begins the "post-combat" phase (called Operation New Dawn).¹⁰³
- **October 31, 2010:** Gunmen strapped with suicide vests attack a Catholic church in Baghdad, taking more than 100 people hostage. During the ensuing siege, at least 30 hostages are killed and 41 wounded.¹⁰⁴
- **November 2, 2010:** Militants set off a wave of car bombs and roadside improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that target Sunni and Shi'ite areas across Baghdad, killing at least 63 and wounding about 285.¹⁰⁵
- **May 5, 2011:** A suicide bomber detonates himself at a police-training center in the majority Shi'ite city of Hilla, killing 25 and wounding at least 75.¹⁰⁶
- **August 15, 2011:** ISI is suspected of carrying out a series of 42 "apparently coordinated" attacks using suicide bombs, car bombs, and gunmen. At least 89 people are killed and 315 wounded. The attacks target Iraqi policemen and soldiers, as well as a market in Kut, and a mosque in Yusufiya.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ Steven Lee Myers and Duraid Adnan, "Wave of Fatal Bombings Widens Fissures in Iraq," *New York Times*, April 23, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/world/middleeast/24iraq.html>.

¹⁰¹ Steven Lee Myers, "Coordinated Attacks in Iraqi Cities Kill More Than 100," *New York Times*, May 10, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/11/world/middleeast/11iraq.html>.

¹⁰² Thom Shanker, "Qaeda Leaders in Iraq Neutralized, U.S. Says," *New York Times*, June 4, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/05/world/middleeast/05military.html>.

¹⁰³ Michael R. Gordon and Elisabeth Bumiller, "In Baghdad, U.S. Officials Take Note of Milestone," *New York Times*, September 1, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/02/world/middleeast/02iraq.html>.

¹⁰⁴ John Leland, "Iraqi Forces Storm a Church with Hostages in a Day of Bloodshed," *New York Times*, October 31, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/01/world/middleeast/01iraq.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Jack Healy, "Coordinated Bombings Strike across Baghdad," *New York Times*, November 2, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/03/world/middleeast/03iraq.html>.

¹⁰⁶ Michael S. Schmidt, "Qaeda Affiliate Is Blamed in Iraq Suicide Bombing," *New York Times*, May 5, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/06/world/middleeast/06hilla.html>.

¹⁰⁷ Michael S. Schmidt, "Threat Resurges in Deadliest Day of Year for Iraq," *New York Times*, August 15, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/16/world/middleeast/16iraq.html>.

- **August 20, 2011:** AQI announces that it is launching a campaign, called “the battle of revenge for Sheik Osama bin Laden and other senior leaders,” whereby it would carry out 100 attacks.¹⁰⁸
- **December 2011:** U.S. forces complete their withdrawal from Iraq.¹⁰⁹
- **January 14, 2012:** Militants detonate a bomb near a tent in Basra where Shi’ite pilgrims are celebrating the holiday of Arbaeen and eating breakfast. The explosion kills at least 53 and wounds more than 130.¹¹⁰
- **January 24, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusra (the al-Nusra Front), the al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria that the U.S. State Department will designate as an alias of AQI, officially announces its formation with a video statement, claiming it is “bringing the law of Allah back to His land.”¹¹¹
- **February 10, 2012:** Several car bombs explode minutes apart from each other at a military security headquarters and police compound in Aleppo, Syria, killing 28 people and wounding more than 200.¹¹² Jabhat al-Nusra eventually claims responsibility for the attack.¹¹³
- **March 17, 2012:** Two powerful car bombs explode near Syrian intelligence and security buildings in Damascus, killing more than 25 people and injuring nearly 100.¹¹⁴
- **April 17, 2012:** A suicide bomber detonates himself near a mosque in the Midan neighborhood of Damascus, killing at least 9 and wounding dozens.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ Michael S. Schmidt, “Iraq Militants Say Violence Is to Avenge Bin Laden,” *New York Times*, August 20, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/21/world/middleeast/21iraq.html>.

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Logan, “Last U.S. Troops Leave Iraq, Ending War,” Reuters, December 18, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/12/18/us-iraq-withdrawal-idUSTRE7BH03320111218>.

¹¹⁰ Michael S. Schmidt, “Blast Kills Dozens of Shiite Worshipers in Southern Iraq,” *New York Times*, January 14, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/15/world/roadside-bomb-kills-dozens-in-southern-iraq.html>.

¹¹¹ Noman Benotman and Roisin Blake, “Jabhat al-Nusra: A Strategic Briefing,” Quilliam Foundation, January 8, 2013, <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/jabhat-al-nusra-a-strategic-briefing.pdf>.

¹¹² Neil MacFarquhar, “2 Security Complex Car Bombings Kill Dozens, Syria Says,” *New York Times*, February 10, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/11/world/middleeast/blasts-in-aleppo-syria-homs-violence-said-to-continue.html?pagewanted=all>.

¹¹³ “Unknown Islamist group claims suicide attacks in Syria,” Agence France-Presse, February 29, 2012, <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/02/29/197781.html>.

¹¹⁴ Anne Barnard, “Two Blasts Strike Near Security Agencies in Syria,” *New York Times*, March 17, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/world/middleeast/damascus-syria-two-large-explosions-reported.html>.

- **April 24, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusra claims responsibility for a suicide bombing attack on the Iranian Cultural Consulate in Damascus. According to the group, one of its security battalions attached explosives to a Syrian army vehicle and detonated them when it arrived at the Consulate.¹¹⁶
- **April 30, 2012:** Two suicide bombers detonate vehicles laden with explosives near a Syrian military compound and the Carlton Hotel in Idlib, killing at least 9 and wounding dozens.¹¹⁷
- **May 10, 2012:** Two suicide bombers carried out car bombings that targeted “a notorious military intelligence compound” and another security building in Damascus, killing 55 and wounding 400.¹¹⁸
- **May 12, 2012:** Syrian security forces kill a suicide bomber who is attempting to drive a minibus packed with explosives into a densely populated neighborhood in Aleppo.¹¹⁹
- **May 19, 2012:** A suicide bomber detonates a car bomb near a Syrian military post in Deir Ezzor, killing 9 people and wounding nearly 100.¹²⁰
- **June 1, 2012:** In retaliation for the Syrian government’s massacre in Houla, Jabhat al-Nusra carries out multiple attacks on Syrian military targets, including a suicide attack on the al Nayrab Camp in Idlib, as well as ambush and IED attacks on military units responding to the attack at al Nayrab.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ J. David Goodman and Hwaida Saad, “Suicide Attack Kills 9 Near Damascus as Cease-Fire Erodes,” *New York Times*, April 27, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/28/world/middleeast/suicide-attack-kills-9-near-damascus-as-cease-fire-erodes.html>.

¹¹⁶ “Islamist group says behind Damascus bombing,” Reuters, May 1, 2012, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-05-01/news/sns-rt-syria-bombclaim15e8g196r-20120501_1_al-nusra-front-syrian-president-bashar-al-assad-islamist-group.

¹¹⁷ “Syrian city hit by two suicide bombings,” Associated Press, April 30, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/30/syria-two-suicide-bombings-idlib>.

¹¹⁸ Neil MacFarquhar, “Dozens Killed in Large Explosions in Syrian Capital,” *New York Times*, May 10, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/11/world/middleeast/damascus-syria-explosions-intelligence-headquarters.html>.

¹¹⁹ Rick Gladstone, “Syria: A Suicide Bomber is Foiled in Aleppo, the State News Agency Says,” *New York Times*, May 12, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/12/world/middleeast/syria-suicide-bomber-foiled-in-aleppo-news-agency-says.html>.

¹²⁰ Joseph Logan, “Syria bomb kills 9, Damascus blames foreign plot,” *Reuters*, May 19, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/19/us-syria-carbomb-idUSBRE84I04F20120519>.

¹²¹ Bill Roggio, “Al Nusrah Front Claims Latest Suicide Attack in Syria,” *Long War Journal*, June 13, 2012, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/06/al_nusrah_front_clai_2.php#.

- **June 26, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusra claims responsibility for an attack on the private Syrian television station *Alikhbaria*, killing 7 people and reportedly destroying the station.¹²²
- **July 19, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusra claims responsibility for kidnapping and executing Syrian television presenter Mohamed al-Saeed. The group warned supporters of the Syrian regime that "...the swords of the mujahideen will cut off their heads and purify the Levant from their obscenity."¹²³ On the same date, Jabhat al-Nusra claims that it conducted a suicide bombing on a security post in Ma'arat al-Nu'man, killing 60 Syrian soldiers.¹²⁴
- **September 8, 2012:** A suicide bomber from Jabhat al-Nusra attacks al-Haya hospital in Aleppo. The group claims that it killed more than 200 military officers and soldiers, while the Syrian government reports that 27 soldiers died and 64 were wounded.¹²⁵
- **October 9, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusra claims responsibility for multiple suicide attacks against an air force intelligence branch in Harasta, a suburb of Damascus. The group claims that one suicide bomber detonated a vehicle packed with 9 tons of explosives, while another attacker drove an ambulance loaded with explosives to the scene 25 minutes later.¹²⁶

¹²² Elizabeth A. Kennedy, "Syria Crisis: Al-Nusra Front Jihadists Claim Responsibility for Attacks," Associated Press, July 4, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/04/al-nusra-front-syria_n_1649248.html; Robert Mackey, "Attack on Pro-Assad Television Studio Raises Questions on Rules of War," *New York Times*, June 27, 2012, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/attack-on-pro-assad-television-studio-raises-questions-on-rules-of-war/?module=ArrowsNav&contentCollection=General&action=keypress®ion=FixedLeft&pgtype=Bl ogs>.

¹²³ "Mohammed Al-Saeed Dead: Militant Group Claims Kidnapping, Killing of Syrian TV Presenter," Reuters, August 5, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/05/mohammed-al-saeed-dead-militant-group-kidnapping-killing_n_1743392.html.

¹²⁴ Thomas Joscelyn, "Suicide Bombings Become Commonplace in Syria," Long War Journal, August 24, 2012, <http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/suicide-bombings-become-commonplace-in-syria>.

¹²⁵ Bill Roggio, "Al Nusrah Front Claims 5 Suicide Attacks in Syria in Past Month," Long War Journal, September 25, 2012, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/09/al_nusrah_front_clai_4.php#.

¹²⁶ Anne Barnard and Christine Hauser, "Qaeda-Linked Group Claims Responsibility for Syrian Blasts," *New York Times*, October 9, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/10/world/middleeast/qaeda-linked-group-says-it-struck-compound-on-edge-of-damascus.html>.

- **December 11, 2012:** The U.S. Department of the Treasury designates Jabhat al-Nusra leaders Maysar Ali Musa Abdallah al-Juburi and Anas Hasan Khattab for “acting on behalf of [al-Qaeda] in Iraq (AQI).”¹²⁷
- **January 11, 2013:** Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham lead an offensive on the Taftanaz air base in Idlib province, seizing large caches of weapons and ammunition—and also taking out the base that served as the launching point for “barrel bomb” attacks against civilians.¹²⁸
- **February 11, 2013:** Syrian rebels, including battalions from Jabat al-Nusra, take control of the Tabqa Dam, Syria’s largest hydroelectric dam, in Raqqa Province.¹²⁹
- **March 11, 2013:** ISI claims responsibility for ambushing and gunning down more than 40 Syrian soldiers in Anbar Province who have temporarily travelled to Iraq for safety.¹³⁰
- **April 8, 2013:** A car bomb explodes near the Syrian Central Bank in Damascus, killing at least 15 and wounding 53.¹³¹
- **April 9, 2013:** ISI leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announces that his organization has officially merged with Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria, forming the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS).¹³²
- **June 9, 2013:** Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri issues a letter nullifying the merger between Jabhat al-Nusra and ISI, notifying each side where they are to operate. “The seat of the Islamic State in Iraq is in Iraq. The seat of Jabhat al-Nusra for the people of al-Sham, is in Syria.”¹³³
- **June 15, 2013:** AQI leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi releases a message rejecting Ayman al-Zawahiri’s orders to dissolve his group’s merger with Jabhat al-Nusra. Baghdadi says

¹²⁷ “Treasury Sanctions Al-Nusrah Front Leadership in Syria and Militias Supporting the Asad Regime,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, December 11, 2012, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tq1797.aspx>.

¹²⁸ Anne Barnard, “Syrian Rebels Say They Seized Helicopter Base in the North,” *New York Times*, January 11, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/12/world/middleeast/syria-war-developments.html>.

¹²⁹ Hwaida Saad and Rick Gladstone, “Syrian Insurgents Claim to Control Large Hydropower Dam,” *New York Times*, February 11, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/12/world/middleeast/syrian-insurgents-claim-to-control-large-hydropower-dam.html>.

¹³⁰ Hania Mourtada and Rick Gladstone, “Qaeda Group in Iraq Says It Killed Syrian Soldiers,” *New York Times*, March 11, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/12/world/middleeast/islamic-state-of-iraq-says-it-killed-syrian-soldiers.html>.

¹³¹ Anne Barnard, “Wider Use of Car Bombs Angers Both Sides in Syrian Conflict,” *New York Times*, April 8, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/09/world/middleeast/syria-explosion-damascus.html>.

¹³² Hania Mourtada and Rick Gladstone, “Iraq’s Branch of Al Qaeda Merges with Syria Jihadists,” *New York Times*, April 9, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/10/world/middleeast/Iraq-and-Syria-jihadists-combine.html>.

¹³³ Basma Atassi, “Qaeda Chief Annuls Syrian-Iraqi Jihad Merger,” *Al Jazeera*, June 9, 2013, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/06/2013699425657882.html>.

that ISIS “will remain, as long as we have a vein pumping or an eye blinking. It remains and we will not compromise nor give it up.”¹³⁴

- **June 17, 2013:** A suicide bomber detonates a truck, allegedly laden with 6 tons of explosives, near a Syrian military base in Aleppo, killing up to 60 soldiers.¹³⁵
- **June-July 2013:** ISIS escalates attacks against members of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) in an apparent attempt to take out the FSA’s leadership. ISIS reportedly kills “prominent” FSA commander Kamal Hamami for planning operations without consulting it. The organization also beheads two FSA soldiers and leaves their heads next to a garbage can.¹³⁶
- **July 23, 2013:** As part of its “Breaking the Walls” campaign, ISIS militants stage “carefully synchronized operations” to break members of the organization out of the Abu Ghraib and Taji prisons. Al-Qaeda claims that 500 inmates have been freed from the prisons, while Iraqi officials put the total at 800 – with 400 of them recaptured or killed.¹³⁷
- **July 26, 2013:** Fighters from Jabhat al-Nusra and Ansar al-Khalafa al-Islamiya Brigade kill as many as 150 Syrian soldiers during a battle in Khan al-Assal, a suburb of Aleppo. 51 of the soldiers are summarily executed after surrendering, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.¹³⁸
- **August 28, 2013:** A series of more than a dozen explosions hit Shi’ite neighborhoods of Baghdad during the morning commute, killing at least 65 and wounding dozens more. The attacks follow a string of recent beheadings that are claimed by ISIS.¹³⁹
- **September 12, 2013:** Ayman al-Zawahiri released a message the day after the 12th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, calling on his followers to carry out “a few

¹³⁴ “Iraqi Al-Qaeda Chief Rejects Zawahiri Orders,” Al Jazeera, June 15, 2013,

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/06/2013615172217827810.html>.

¹³⁵ Rick Gladstone, “Large Truck Bomb Reported to Kill 60 Syrian Troops,” *New York Times*, June 17, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/18/world/middleeast/large-truck-bomb-reported-to-kill-60-syrian-troops.html>.

¹³⁶ Anne Barnard and Hwaida Saad, “Syrian Rebel Infighting Undermines Anti-Assad Effort,” *New York Times*, July 12, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/13/world/middleeast/syrian-rebel-infighting-undermines-anti-assad-effort.html?pagewanted=all>.

¹³⁷ Michael R. Gordon and Duraid Adnan, “Brazen Attacks at Prisons Raise Worries of Al Qaeda’s Strength in Iraq,” *New York Times*, July 23, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/24/world/middleeast/al-qaeda-asserts-responsibility-for-iraqi-prison-breaks.html>.

¹³⁸ Hania Mourtada and Rick Gladstone, “Soldiers’ Mass Execution Reported by Syria Group,” *New York Times*, July 26, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/27/world/middleeast/soldiers-mass-execution-reported-by-syria-group.html>.

¹³⁹ Yasir Ghazi and Tim Arango, “Deadly Blasts Stoke Fears of Sectarian Strife in Iraq,” *New York Times*, August 28, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/29/world/middleeast/iraq-explosions.html>.

disparate attacks” against the American homeland and to “bleed America economically.” Part of his message refers to the war in Syria, where he tells Islamist fighters not to cooperate with secular rebel forces.¹⁴⁰

- **September-October 2013:** ISIS and a rebel brigade called Northern Storm battle for control of Azaz, a Syrian town strategically located along the Turkish border. In late September, ISIS wrestles control of Azaz from Northern Storm.¹⁴¹
- **October 31, 2013:** Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki travels to Washington, D.C. to request increased military assistance from the U.S., including “Apache helicopter gunships, more American intelligence and other forms of counterterrorism support like reconnaissance drone that would be operated by Americans.”¹⁴²
- **December 19, 2013:** Jabhat al-Nusra leader Abu Mohamed al-Jolani conducts his first televised interview with Al Jazeera, telling the network that he believed victory was near. Jolani also says that his organization is “not seeking to rule the country... We want the Islamic Shariah to prevail.”¹⁴³
- **December 21, 2013:** 18 Iraqi soldiers, including a high-ranking commander, are killed during a raid on a training camp where ISIS was teaching recruits how to make roadside explosives.¹⁴⁴
- **December 25, 2013:** After Prime Minister al-Maliki’s visit to Washington, the U.S. reportedly begins “quietly rushing dozens of Hellfire missiles and low-tech surveillance drones to Iraq to help government forces combat an explosion of violence” by ISIS in western Iraq.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Alan Cowell, “Attack U.S., Qaeda Chief Tells Muslims in a Speech,” *New York Times*, September 13, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/14/world/al-qaeda-leader-ayman-al-zawahiri-urges-muslims-to-attack-america.html>.

¹⁴¹ Ben Hubbard, “Fighting between Rebels Intensifies over a Strategic Town in Syria,” *New York Times*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/04/world/middleeast/syria.html>.

¹⁴² Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, “As Security Deteriorates at Home, Iraqi Leaders Arrives in U.S. Seeking Aid,” *New York Times*, October 31, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/01/world/middleeast/iraqi-leader-on-fighting-terrorism.html?pagewanted=all>.

¹⁴³ Anne Barnard, “Jihadist Leader Envisions an Islamic State in Syria,” *New York Times*, December 19, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/20/world/middleeast/jihadist-leader-envisions-an-islamic-state-in-syria.html?ref=middleeast>.

¹⁴⁴ Duraid Adnan, “18 Soldiers in Iraq Are Killed during Raid on Rebel Group’s Training Camp,” *New York Times*, December 21, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/22/world/middleeast/in-iraq-18-soldiers-are-killed-during-raid-on-rebel-groups-training-camp.html>.

¹⁴⁵ Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, “U.S. Sends Arms to Aid Iraq Fight with Extremists,” *New York Times*, December 25, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/26/world/middleeast/us-sends-arms-to-aid-iraq-fight-with-extremists.html>.

- January 2014:** After days of intense fighting, ISIS militants take over major parts of Fallujah, destroy the police headquarters, and declare the city an Islamic state.¹⁴⁶ ISIS is accused of carrying out mass executions against civilians, prisoners, and other rebel fighters in Aleppo, Idlib, and Raqq. According to reports, bodies were found handcuffed and blindfolded at a children's hospital used as a base by ISIS.¹⁴⁷ In early January, after ISIS had asserted control over Aleppo for months, opposing Syrian rebel factions drive the group from its headquarters in the city.¹⁴⁸ However, by mid-January, ISIS has reclaimed much of its territory. On January 23, Ayman al-Zawahiri releases an audio statement pleading with *jihadi* factions to stop fighting each other, and to set up an Islamic arbitration court. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reports that during two weeks of intense fighting between rebel groups and ISIS, approximately 1,400 people were killed.¹⁴⁹ After taking control of Syria's oil and gas resources, reports surface in late January that Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS are selling those resources back to the Assad regime. According to one intelligence source, "The regime is paying al-Nusra to protect oil and gas pipelines under al-Nusra's control in the north and east of the country..."¹⁵⁰
- February 2014:** British Islamist fighter Abdul Waheed Majeed reportedly carries out a suicide truck bombing at the Aleppo Central Prison. If true, Majeed's attack becomes the "first known case of a British suicide bomber in Syria."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ Yasir Ghazi and Tim Arango, "Iraq Fighters, Qaeda Allies, Claim Falluja as New State," *New York Times*, January 3, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/04/world/middleeast/fighting-in-falluja-and-ramadi.html>.

¹⁴⁷ Nick Cumming-Bruce, "U.N. Says Executions in Syria by Rebels May Be War Crimes," *New York Times*, January 16, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/17/world/middleeast/syria.html>.

¹⁴⁸ Ben Hubbard, "Syrian Rebels Deal Qaeda-Linked Group a Reversal," *New York Times*, January 8, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/09/world/middleeast/syrian-rebels-said-to-oust-qaeda-linked-group-from-its-aleppo-headquarters.html>.

¹⁴⁹ Ben Hubbard, "Al Qaeda Calls for Rebel Unity in Syria," *New York Times*, January 23, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/24/world/middleeast/al-qaeda-calls-for-rebel-unity-in-syria.html?module=ArrowsNav&contentCollection=Middle%20East&action=keypress®ion=FixedLeft&pgtype=article>.

¹⁵⁰ Ruth Sherlock and Richard Spencer, "Syria's Assad Accused of Boosting Al-Qaeda with Secret Oil Deals," *Telegraph*, January 20, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10585391/Syrias-Assad-accused-of-boosting-al-Qaeda-with-secret-oil-deals.html>.

¹⁵¹ Robert Mackey and Christine Hauser, "Deferential Remarks in Martyrdom Video Said to Show Briton's Last Words before Suicide Attack in Syria," *New York Times*, February 14, 2014, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/14/deferential-remarks-in-martyrdom-video-said-to-show-britons-last-words-before-suicide-attack-in-syria>.

- **February 3, 2014:** Al-Qaeda's senior leadership issues a statement formally severing ties with ISIS, saying that the group is "not an affiliate with the [al-Qaeda] group and has no organizational relation with it."¹⁵²
- **February 22, 2014:** A Kurdish rebel group recaptures the northeastern town of Tell Brak from ISIS after a battle that killed at least 25 Islamist fighters.¹⁵³
- **February 23, 2014:** A suicide bomber from ISIS reportedly launches an attack against a rebel base that kills Abu Khalid al-Suri, who was chosen by Ayman al-Zawahiri to mediate disputes between Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS.¹⁵⁴
- **May 2014:** American citizen Moner Mohammad Abusalha, who goes by the *nom de guerre* Abu Huraira al-Amriki, reportedly carries out a suicide truck bombing on a mountaintop restaurant in Syria that had been a gathering spot for Syrian soldiers.¹⁵⁵ Also in May, French citizen Mehdi Nemmouche, who reportedly fought in Syria with ISIS, shoots and kills three people at a Jewish museum in Brussels. The attack is the first instance of a European Islamist fighter returning home from the conflict in Syria to commit acts of violence.¹⁵⁶
- **May 15, 2014:** an ISIS car bombing near the Turkish border kills at least 43 people. The bombing is reportedly intended to target the Tawhid Brigade—part of the rebel coalition called the Islamic Front—which controlled the border crossing.¹⁵⁷
- **June 10, 2014:** ISIS insurgents takes over Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, as Iraqi soldiers flee on foot and leave behind their weapons, vehicles and uniforms. After seizing Mosul and securing its hold over Nineveh Province, the militants move south toward Baghdad, taking

¹⁵² Thomas Joscelyn, "Al Qaeda's General Command Disowns the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham," Long War Journal, February 3, 2014,

http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/02/al_qaedas_general_co.php.

¹⁵³ "Nearly 30 Die as Kurds Take a Syrian Town," Reuters, February 22, 2014,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/23/world/middleeast/syria.html>.

¹⁵⁴ Ben Hubbard, "Jihadist Mediator Killed in Suicide Attack by Rival Extremists," *New York Times*,

February 23, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/24/world/middleeast/jihadist-mediator-killed-in-suicide-attack-by-rival-](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/24/world/middleeast/jihadist-mediator-killed-in-suicide-attack-by-rival-extremists.html?module=ArrowsNav&contentCollection=Middle%20East&action=keypress®ion=FixedLeft&pgtype=article)

[extremists.html?module=ArrowsNav&contentCollection=Middle%20East&action=keypress®ion=FixedLeft&pgtype=article](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/24/world/middleeast/jihadist-mediator-killed-in-suicide-attack-by-rival-extremists.html?module=ArrowsNav&contentCollection=Middle%20East&action=keypress®ion=FixedLeft&pgtype=article).

¹⁵⁵ Frances Robles and Emma G. Fitzsimmons, "Before Syrian Suicide Blast, a Quiet Life in the Suburbs," *New York Times*, May 31, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/01/us/Moner-](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/01/us/Moner-Mohammad-Abusalha-Vero-Beach-Florida-Syria.html)

[Mohammad-Abusalha-Vero-Beach-Florida-Syria.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/01/us/Moner-Mohammad-Abusalha-Vero-Beach-Florida-Syria.html).

¹⁵⁶ Scott Sayare, "Suspect Held in Jewish Museum Killings," *New York Times*, June 1, 2014,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/02/world/europe/suspect-arrested-in-jewish-museum-killings-in-belgium.html>.

¹⁵⁷ Anne Barnard, "Car Bomb Kills More than 40 at Syrian Border Crossing," *New York Times*, May 15,

2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/16/world/middleeast/car-bomb-syrian-border-crossing.html>.

over parts of Salahuddin Province along the way.¹⁵⁸ Five days after its offensive, ISIS claims that it had executed 1,700 Iraqi soldiers, many of whom are Shi'ites. Those claims could not be immediately verified, though the Iraqi military admitted that at least 800 soldiers had been taken prisoner.¹⁵⁹ ISIS also robs local banks and seizes U.S. military equipment left for the Iraqi army.¹⁶⁰

- **June 11, 2014:** ISIS insurgents take over Tikrit, home town of Saddam Hussein and his clan.¹⁶¹
- **June 17, 2014:** ISIS tries but fails to seize Iraq's largest oil refinery outside the northern Iraqi town of Baiji.¹⁶² Further such attempts in the ensuing weeks also do not succeed.
- **June 20, 2014:** Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the leading Iraqi Shi'ite cleric, urges the speedy expulsion of the insurgents and says that the next Iraqi government must steer clear of "past mistakes." This is perceived as a reference to Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's purported bias against Iraq's Sunni minority.¹⁶³ Maliki's bias is widely considered to have exacerbated Sunnis' alienation from and grievances against the Iraqi government, creating an opening that ISIS has exploited.
- **June 23, 2014:** Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani urges Iraqis to join Iraq's security forces in order to combat ISIS.¹⁶⁴
- **June 29, 2014:** ISIS declares an "Islamic caliphate" from Diyala province in Iraq to Aleppo in northern Syria, and renames itself simply the "Islamic State."¹⁶⁵ ISIS proclaims the

¹⁵⁸ Suadad Al-Salhu and Tim Arango, "Sunni Militants Drive Iraqi Army Out of Mosul," *New York Times*, June 10, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/11/world/middleeast/militants-in-mosul.html>.

¹⁵⁹ Rod Nordland and Alissa J. Rubin, "Militants Claim Mass Execution of Iraqi Forces," *New York Times*, June 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/16/world/middleeast/iraq.html?hp>.

¹⁶⁰ Jack Moore, "Mosul Seized: Jihadis Loot \$429m from City's Central Bank to Make Isis World's Richest Terror Force," *International Business Times*, June 11, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/mosul-seized-jihadis-loot-429m-citys-central-bank-make-isis-worlds-richest-terror-force-1452190>.

¹⁶¹ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

¹⁶² Qassim Abdul-Zahra, "Iraq says it has repelled insurgent attack on oil refinery," Associated Press, June 18, 2014, <http://www.pressherald.com/2014/06/18/militants-lay-siege-to-iraqs-largest-oil-refinery>.

¹⁶³ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

¹⁶⁴ "Key events on Sunni militants surge in Iraq," Associated Press, August 18, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/key-events-sunni-militants-surge-iraq>.

¹⁶⁵ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

group's leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, as caliph, and urges Muslims to pledge their allegiance to him.¹⁶⁶

- **July 1, 2014:** The UN states that more than 2,400 Iraqis were killed in June, the most fatalities in one month in Iraq since April 2005.¹⁶⁷
- **July 5, 2014:** A man claiming to be ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi makes his first public appearance, speaking at a mosque in Mosul¹⁶⁸ and calling for Muslims to wage jihad and accept the authority of ISIS's self-proclaimed caliphate.¹⁶⁹
- **July 18, 2014:** Virtually the entire remaining Christian community in ISIS-controlled Mosul flees after receiving an ultimatum that Christians convert to Islam, pay the special *jizya* tax for non-Muslims, leave, or be killed. ISIS members are observed marking Christian-owned houses with the Arabic letter *nun*, short for the Arabic word for "Christian."¹⁷⁰
- **July 25, 2014:** ISIS blows up the shrine at the reputed burial site of the Biblical prophet Jonah in Mosul.¹⁷¹ ISIS has destroyed numerous shrines and mosques that it considers in conflict with early Islamic principles.
- **August 1-5, 2014:** Around this time, ISIS militants crucify, behead and shoot over 700 members of the Shaitat tribe in eastern Syria, in what is one of ISIS's bloodiest advances.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁶ "Sunni rebels declare new 'Islamic caliphate,'" Al Jazeera, last modified June 30, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/isil-declares-new-islamic-caliphate-201462917326669749.html>.

¹⁶⁷ "Key Events on Sunni Militants Surge in Iraq," Associated Press, August 18, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/key-events-sunni-militants-surge-iraq>.

¹⁶⁸ "Key Events on Sunni Militants Surge in Iraq," Associated Press, August 18, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/key-events-sunni-militants-surge-iraq>.

¹⁶⁹ Aaron Y. Zelin, "al-Furqan Media presents a new video message from the Islamic State's Abu Bakr al-Hussayn al-Quraysh al-Baghdadi "Khuṭbah and Jum'ah Prayer in the Grand Mosque of Mosul (Mosul)," Jihadology, last modified July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/05/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-khu%E1%B9%ADbah-and-jumah-prayer-in-the-grand-mosque-of-mu>.

¹⁷⁰ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>. "Iraqi Christians flee after Isis issue Mosul ultimatum," BBC News, July 18, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28381455>; Fazel Hawramy, "'They are savages,' say Christians forced to flee Mosul by Isis," *Guardian*, July 24, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/24/iraqi-christians-mosul-isis-convert-islam-or-be-executed>; Alissa J. Rubin, "ISIS Forces Last Iraqi Christians to Flee Mosul," *New York Times*, July 18, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/19/world/middleeast/isis-forces-last-iraqi-christians-to-flee-mosul.html>.

¹⁷¹ "Iraq jihadists blow up 'Jonah's tomb' in Mosul: official," Agence France-Presse, July 24, 2014, <http://news.yahoo.com/iraq-jihadists-blow-jonahs-tomb-mosul-official-220531959.html>.

- **August 2-3, 2014:** ISIS defeats Kurdish peshmerga fighters and takes over several Kurdish towns, Sinjar and Zumar near Iraq's border with Syria, as well as two small oil fields. During its conquest, ISIS kills up to 500 Yazidis, ethnic Kurds whom ISIS despises as "devil worshipers"¹⁷³ and heretics subject to death¹⁷⁴ for practicing an ancient, pre-Abrahamic religion. Upon entering Sinjar, ISIS notes the occasion by exploding a Shi'ite shrine and demanding that Sinjar residents convert to Islam or be killed.¹⁷⁵ As many as 200,000 local residents flee, including other Yazidis.¹⁷⁶ Many of the Yazidis (estimates range from 10,000 to 50,000) take refuge on Mount Sinjar. There, the Yazidis lack sufficient food, water, and medicine. They are besieged by ISIS and threatened with death if they attempt to come down from the mountains. The UN warns of a pending "humanitarian tragedy."¹⁷⁷ As one besieged Yazidi notes, "We cannot get out of here; we cannot move. It's all [ISIS] fighters around us. If we move down they will kill us."¹⁷⁸
- **August 5, 2014:** Iraqi MP delivers an impassioned plea on behalf of the 30,000 Yazidi families besieged on Mount Sinjar. The MP reports that 500 Yazidis boys and men have been slaughtered thus far while Yazidi girls and women are being sold on the slave market. The 30,000 families besieged on Mr. Sinjar have reportedly been without food or water for 48

¹⁷² Liz Sly, "Syria tribal revolt against Islamic State ignored, fueling resentment," *The Washington Post*, October 20, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/syria-tribal-revolt-against-islamic-state-ignored-fueling-resentment/2014/10/20/25401beb-8de8-49f2-8e64-c1cfbee45232_story.html.

¹⁷³ Loveday Morris, "Islamic State seizes town of Sinjar, pushing out Kurds and sending Yazidis fleeing," *Washington Post*, August 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/islamic-state-seize-town-of-sinjar-pushing-out-kurds-and-sending-yazidis-fleeing/2014/08/03/52ab53f1-48de-4ae1-9e1d-e241a15f580e_story.html.

¹⁷⁴ Daa Hadid and Bassem Mroue, "Syrian Kurdish fighters rescue stranded Yazidis," Associated Press, August 12, 2014, <http://news.yahoo.com/syrian-kurdish-fighters-rescue-stranded-yazidis-172250184.html>.

¹⁷⁵ Loveday Morris, "Islamic State seizes town of Sinjar, pushing out Kurds and sending Yazidis fleeing," *Washington Post*, August 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/islamic-state-seize-town-of-sinjar-pushing-out-kurds-and-sending-yazidis-fleeing/2014/08/03/52ab53f1-48de-4ae1-9e1d-e241a15f580e_story.html.

¹⁷⁶ "UN warns of 'humanitarian tragedy' as militants seize town in northern Iraq," UN News Centre, August 3, 2014, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48397#.VAmZFGRdVXa>.

¹⁷⁷ UN warns of 'humanitarian tragedy' as militants seize town in northern Iraq," UN News Centre, August 3, 2014, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48397#.VAmZFGRdVXa>.

¹⁷⁸ Mohammed A Salih and Wladimir van Wilgenburg, "Surrounded by Islamic State fighters, members of the Yazidi religious minority fear an onslaught of violence," Al Jazeera, last modified August 5, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/iraqi-yazidis-if-move-they-will-kill-us-20148513656188206.html>.

hours. The MP calls the crisis a genocide campaign, reporting that 70 children have died of thirst and suffocation as well as 50 elderly.¹⁷⁹

- **August 2-7, 2014:** Fighters from ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra overrun the Lebanese town of Arsal by the Syrian border, killing several Lebanese soldiers, following repeated tensions with the Lebanese military.¹⁸⁰ The fighters withdraw from Arsal on August 7 after Sunni clerics negotiate a truce, but they take a reported 19 Lebanese soldiers captive.¹⁸¹
- **August 7, 2014:** ISIS fighters take control of Qaraqosh, the largest Christian municipality in Iraq. Tens of thousands of its residents flee.¹⁸²
- **August 7, 2014:** ISIS takes the strategically vital Mosul dam, driving out peshmerga forces from several towns. Hundreds of thousands of Yazidis flee the area.¹⁸³
- **August 7, 2014:** U.S. President Barack Obama approves U.S. air strikes in Iraq against ISIS fighters “to prevent a potential act of genocide” against religious minorities¹⁸⁴ and to protect U.S. government personnel in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil, capital of the Kurdistan Region.¹⁸⁵
- **August 7-8, 2014:** Syrian Kurdish fighters successfully establish an escape route for tens of thousands of Yazidis besieged on Mount Sinjar. The Yazidis who escape in the ensuing days are transported into Syrian territory to receive food, water, and first aid, before some are returned to Iraq through a pontoon bridge.¹⁸⁶ The Kurdish fighters are members of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), a Syrian Kurdish party affiliated with the Kurdistan

¹⁷⁹ “Iraqi MP Breaks Down in Tears Pleading Parliament to Save Yazidis from Genocide,” August 5, 2014, YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Qvqezt7jiY>.

¹⁸⁰ “Chaos as Syria rebels raid Lebanon border town of Arsal,” BBC News, August 3, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28624524>.

¹⁸¹ “Syrian Islamist rebels ‘withdraw from Lebanese town after truce,’” BBC News, August 7, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28693530>.

¹⁸² “The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline,” Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

¹⁸³ “Key Events on Sunni Militants Surge in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 18, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/key-events-sunni-militants-surge-iraq>.

¹⁸⁴ “The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline,” Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

¹⁸⁵ Mohammed A Salih and Wladimir van Wilgenburg, “Iraqi Yazidis: ‘If we move they will kill us,’” Al Jazeera, last modified August 5, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/iraqi-yazidis-if-move-they-will-kill-us-20148513656188206.html>.

¹⁸⁶ Daa Hadid and Bassem Mroue, “Syrian Kurdish fighters rescue stranded Yazidis,” Associated Press, August 12, 2014, <http://news.yahoo.com/syrian-kurdish-fighters-rescue-stranded-yazidis-172250184.html>.

Workers Party (PKK). The PKK is designated as a foreign terrorist organization in the United States and European Union.¹⁸⁷

- **August 8, 2014:** Daily U.S. air strikes begin against ISIS fighter positions, the first American military operation in Iraq since the Obama administration withdrew U.S. troops from Iraq in 2011.¹⁸⁸
- **August 10, 2014:** The United States and United Kingdom begin airdrops of food, and water to the Yazidis besieged by ISIS on the Sinjar Mountains.¹⁸⁹
- **August 10, 2014:** Tens of thousands of Yazidis escaped to Iraq's Kurdistan Region from Mount Sinjar. The escape is made possible in part by U.S. airstrikes, as well as Syrian Kurdish fighters who have combatted ISIS in order to establish an escape route. Thousands of Yazidis remained on the mountain because they are too sick, weak, or old to escape, or because they are still surrounded by ISIS fighters.¹⁹⁰
- **August 10, 2014:** Kurdish peshmerga forces regain control of the Iraqi municipalities of Makhmur and Gwer from ISIS.¹⁹¹
- **August 11, 2014:** Iraqi President Fouad Massoum acts to replace polarizing Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, nominating Haider al-Abadi, deputy speaker of Iraq's parliament and a member of Maliki's Dawa Party, as the new prime minister.¹⁹² The United States backs Massoum's decision, with President Barack Obama calling the leadership change "a promising step forward," speaking to Abadi by telephone, and emphasizing that "[t]he only lasting solution is for Iraqis to come together and form an inclusive government."¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ Liz Sly, "Exodus from the mountain: Yazidis flood into Iraq following U.S. airstrikes," *Washington Post*, August 10, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/exodus-from-the-mountain-yazidis-flood-into-iraq-following-us-airstrikes/2014/08/10/f8349f2a-04da-4d60-98ef-85fe66c82002_story.html.

¹⁸⁸ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

¹⁸⁹ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

¹⁹⁰ Liz Sly, "Exodus from the mountain: Yazidis flood into Iraq following U.S. airstrikes," *Washington Post*, August 10, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/exodus-from-the-mountain-yazidis-flood-into-iraq-following-us-airstrikes/2014/08/10/f8349f2a-04da-4d60-98ef-85fe66c82002_story.html.

¹⁹¹ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

¹⁹² Patrick J. McDonnell, "Iraq's Maliki defiant as new prime minister nominated to succeed him," *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 2014, <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-iraq-leadership-20140811-story.html>.

¹⁹³ Julie Pace and Nedra Pickler, "Obama welcomes new Iraqi leaders as 'step forward,'" Associated Press, August 11, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/apnewsbreak-us-sending-arms-kurds-iraq>.

However, Maliki refuses to step aside, going on national television to call the move “a coup against the constitution and the political process.” Maliki supporters protest in the streets.¹⁹⁴

- **August 11, 2014:** The U.S. government announces that it has begun taking the unprecedented step of providing weapons directly to Kurdish peshmerga forces fighting ISIS, instead of solely to the Iraqi government. The arms transfers are going through a CIA back channel.¹⁹⁵ The peshmerga has been losing ground to ISIS fighters, partly due to ammunition shortages and inferior weaponry.¹⁹⁶ The Iraqi federal government has largely failed to transfer arms bought from the U.S. to the peshmerga in recent years.¹⁹⁷ The new direct transfers of U.S. arms to the Kurds consist mainly of light arms and ammunition.¹⁹⁸ The State Department plays down the significance of the policy shift, but Lt. Gen. William Mayville, director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, acknowledges the importance of the new U.S. move and says that the U.S. wanted to do more. However, Mayville said, “There are no plans to expand the current air campaign” to include targeting ISIS leaders or logistical centers.¹⁹⁹ Mayville reiterates the Obama administration’s policy that the purpose of the U.S. airstrikes is to prevent ISIS from advancing towards Irbil or on Mount Sinjar.²⁰⁰
- **August 11, 2014:** ISIS militants defeat Kurdish peshmerga forces in the municipality of Jalawla.²⁰¹
- **August 12, 2014:** The United States sends 130 military advisers to Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq, to assess how else the U.S. can aid the Yazidis besieged on Mount Sinjar. The 130 advisers join 40 U.S. military personnel already in Erbil staffing a Joint Operations Center together with Kurdish forces. U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel

¹⁹⁴ Patrick J. McDonnell, “Iraq’s Maliki defiant as new prime minister nominated to succeed him,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 2014, <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-iraq-leadership-20140811-story.html>.

¹⁹⁵ Craig Whitlock and Greg Jaffe, “U.S. sending weapons directly to Kurdish forces, officials say,” *Washington Post*, August 11, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-sending-weapons-directly-to-kurdish-forces-officials-say/2014/08/11/7055b98c-2165-11e4-8593-da634b334390_story.html.

¹⁹⁶ Julie Pace and Nedra Pickler, “Obama welcomes new Iraqi leaders as ‘step forward,’” *Associated Press*, August 11, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/apnewsbreak-us-sending-arms-kurds-iraq>.

¹⁹⁷ Julie Pace and Nedra Pickler, “Obama welcomes new Iraqi leaders as ‘step forward,’” *Associated Press*, August 11, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/apnewsbreak-us-sending-arms-kurds-iraq>.

¹⁹⁸ Julie Pace and Nedra Pickler, “Obama welcomes new Iraqi leaders as ‘step forward,’” *Associated Press*, August 11, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/apnewsbreak-us-sending-arms-kurds-iraq>.

¹⁹⁹ Julie Pace and Nedra Pickler, “Obama welcomes new Iraqi leaders as ‘step forward,’” *Associated Press*, August 11, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/apnewsbreak-us-sending-arms-kurds-iraq>.

²⁰⁰ Julie Pace and Nedra Pickler, “Obama welcomes new Iraqi leaders as ‘step forward,’” *Associated Press*, August 11, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/apnewsbreak-us-sending-arms-kurds-iraq>.

²⁰¹ “The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline,” *Agence France-Presse*, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

stresses that the new advisers do not constitute “a combat boots on the ground operation. As the president has made very clear, we are not going back into Iraq in any of the same combat missions dimensions that we once were in in Iraq.”²⁰²

- **August 13, 2014:** France announces that it would start supplying “sophisticated” weapons directly to Kurdish forces fighting ISIS.²⁰³
- **August 13, 2014:** U.S. Defense Department officials state that ISIS’s besiegement of the Yazidis on Mount Sinjar has been broken by a combination of U.S. air strikes and humanitarian airdrops, as well as Kurdish peshmerga forces. Most of the Yazidis are reported to escape. Several thousand remain on the mountain, some indicating that they considered it a home and place of refuge. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel says that a U.S. rescue mission involving ground forces is “far less likely now,” thanks to the success of other measures and the relatively few Yazidis left on the mountain.²⁰⁴
- **August 14, 2014:** U.S. President Barack Obama says that the U.S. military has broken ISIS’s siege of the Yazidis on Mount Sinjar, declaring the “almost flawless” humanitarian operation a success. According to President Obama, “We helped vulnerable people reach safety, and we helped saved many innocent lives,” He adds that the U.S. can undertake similar humanitarian missions elsewhere in Iraq, and that the U.S. “will continue airstrikes to protect our facilities and people in Iraq.”²⁰⁵
- **August 14, 2014:** Polarizing Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki succumbs to pressure at home and internationally to abandon opposition to his replacement, Haider al-Abadi.²⁰⁶
- **August 18, 2014:** Aided by the continuing U.S. airstrike campaign, Iraqi and Kurdish forces take back control of the Mosul Dam from ISIS.²⁰⁷
- **August 20, 2014:** ISIS releases a video, entitled “A Message to America,” showing a masked ISIS militant beheading kidnapped American journalist James Foley and, speaking with a British accent, threatening to kill another such journalist, Steven Sotloff, if U.S. President

²⁰² Luis Martinez and Elise Widerlite, “U.S. Sends 130-Member Military Assessment Team to Erbil,” ABC News, August 12, 2014, <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2014/08/u-s-sends-130-member-military-assessment-team-to-erbil>.

²⁰³ Greg Keller, “France to send weapons to Kurds in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 13, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/france-sends-2nd-aid-shipment-iraq>.

²⁰⁴ Helene Cooper and Michael D. Shearug, “Militants’ Siege on Mountain in Iraq Is Over, Pentagon Says,” *New York Times*, August 14, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/14/world/middleeast/iraq-yazidi-refugees.html>.

²⁰⁵ Kathleen Hennessey, “Obama: U.S. has broken Islamists’ siege on Iraq mountaintop,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 14, 2014, <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-obama-iraq-20140814-story.html>.

²⁰⁶ Sameer N. Yacoub and Qassim Abdul-Zahra, “Iraq’s al-Maliki gives up post to rival,” Associated Press, August 14, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/un-says-iraq-humanitarian-crisis-highest-level>.

²⁰⁷ “Key events on Sunni militants surge in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 18, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/key-events-sunni-militants-surge-iraq>.

Barack Obama does not stop U.S. military operations in Iraq.²⁰⁸ Obama responds by condemning ISIS as a “cancer” engaging in “hateful terrorism,” saying that “[t]hey terrorize their neighbors and offer them nothing but an endless slavery to their empty vision, and the collapse of any definition of civilized behavior.” Obama pledges that the U.S. “will continue to do what we must do to protect our people. We will be vigilant and we will be relentless. When people harm Americans, anywhere, we do what’s necessary to see that justice is done. And we act against ISIL, standing alongside others.”²⁰⁹

- **August 28, 2014:** U.S. President Barack Obama states that the U.S. does not yet have a strategy to deal with ISIS, spurring criticism.²¹⁰ Asked about potential U.S. military action against ISIS in Syria, Obama replies, “I don’t want to put the cart before the horse. We don’t have a strategy yet... We need to make sure that we’ve got clear plans, that we’re developing them. At that point, I will consult with Congress and make sure that their voices are heard. But there’s no point in me asking for action on the part of Congress before I know exactly what it is that is going to be required for us to get the job done.”²¹¹ Days later, Obama claims that he was simply saying the U.S. did not yet have a *military* strategy for operations in Syria.²¹² However, at the time, Obama clearly referred to a military strategy as part of a broader, comprehensive strategy that still needed to be developed. “I don’t want to put the cart before the horse,” Obama said. “And in some of the media reports, the suggestion seems to have been that, you know, we’re about to go full scale on an elaborate strategy for defeating [ISIS]. And the suggestion, I guess, has been that we’ll start moving forward imminently, and somehow Congress, still out of town, is gonna be left in the dark. That’s not what’s gonna happen... we’re gonna cobble together the kind of coalition that we need for a long-term strategy as soon as we are able to fit together the military, political and economic

²⁰⁸ Chelsea J. Carter, “Video shows ISIS beheading U.S. journalist James Foley,” CNN, August 20, 2014, http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/19/world/meast/isis-james-foley/index.html?hpt=hp_t1.

²⁰⁹ “Statement by the President,” The White House, August 20, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/08/20/statement-president>.

²¹⁰ Karen DeYoung, “Obama: U.S. doesn’t ‘have a strategy yet’ to comprehensively respond to Islamic State,” *Washington Post*, August 28, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/obama-us-doesnt-have-a-strategy-yet-to-comprehensively-respond-to-islamic-state/2014/08/28/25513d94-2ed5-11e4-994d-202962a9150c_story.html.

²¹¹ “Transcript: President Obama’s Aug. 28 remarks on Ukraine, Syria and the economy,” *Washington Post*, August 28, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/transcriptpresident-obamas-aug-28-remarks-on-ukraine-and-syria/2014/08/28/416f1336-2eec-11e4-bb9b-997ae96fad33_story.html.

²¹² “Remarks by President Obama and President Ilves of Estonia in Joint Press Conference,” The White House, September 3, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/03/remarks-president-obama-and-president-ilves-estonia-joint-press-confer-0>.

components of that strategy. There will be a military aspect to that. And it's gonna be important for Congress to know what that is, in part because it may cost some money.”²¹³

- **August 30, 2014:** ISIS posts a video of their fighters beheading one of the Lebanese soldiers they kidnapped when they and Jabhat al-Nusra captured and briefly held the Lebanese border town of Arsal in early August. The soldier, Ali al-Sayyed, was a Sunni Muslim. ISIS also posted another video of nine other captive soldiers pleading for their lives and calling on their families to hold street protests to seek the release of Islamist prisoners by the Lebanese government. ISIS has sought the release of Imad Ahmad Jomaa, an ISIS commander (formerly in Jabhat al-Nusra) who was arrested in Arsal in early August, as well as several other imprisoned Islamists.²¹⁴
- **Early September 2014:** “The Islamic State is coming” is spray-painted on the walls of two churches in northern Lebanon, deepening worries among Lebanese citizens that the country will be ISIS’s next target.²¹⁵ Groups of Lebanese Christians begin rearming and establishing self-defense units to protect against an attack by ISIS or other Islamist militant groups in Syria.²¹⁶
- **September 1, 2014:** The United Nations Human Rights Council adopts a resolution to dispatch investigators to Iraq to investigate human rights violations by ISIS fighters, with the intent of holding the perpetrators accountable.²¹⁷
- **September 2, 2014:** Amnesty International reports that ISIS “has carried out ethnic cleansing on a historic scale in northern Iraq... systematically target[ing] non-Arab and non-Sunni Muslim communities, killing or abducting hundreds, possibly thousands, and forcing more than 830,000 others to flee the areas it has captured” since June 10, 2014.²¹⁸

²¹³ “Transcript: President Obama’s Aug. 28 remarks on Ukraine, Syria and the economy,” *Washington Post*, August 28, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/transcriptpresident-obamas-aug-28-remarks-on-ukraine-and-syria/2014/08/28/416f1336-2eec-11e4-bb9b-997ae96fad33_story.html.

²¹⁴ “ISIS Militants Behead Lebanese Soldier and Hold 18 More,” Reuters, August 30, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/world/middleeast/isis-militants-behead-lebanese-soldier-and-hold-more.html>.

²¹⁵ Donna Abu-Nasr, “Islamic State Is Coming, Graffiti Warns Lebanese, as the Band Plays On,” September 4, 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-09-03/lebanon-band-plays-on-as-fears-mount-islamic-state-lies-in-wait.html>.

²¹⁶ Bassem Mroue and Zeina Karam, “Some Christians arm as Mideast perils mount,” Associated Press, September 5, 2014, <http://news.yahoo.com/christians-arm-mideast-perils-mount-053505095.html>.

²¹⁷ “UN to Send Team to Investigate Islamic State Crimes in Iraq,” Reuters, September 1, 2014, <http://www.voanews.com/content/reu-un-debate-iraq-fight-guilty-atrocities/2434666.html>.

²¹⁸ “Iraq: Ethnic cleansing on historic scale: the Islamic State’s systematic targeting of minorities in northern Iraq,” Amnesty International, September 2, 2014, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE14/011/2014/en/1af20d2f-501a-4d5d-b7fc-b52719e8dfdf/mde140112014en.html>.

- September 3, 2014:** ISIS releases another video, entitled “A Second Message to America,” showing a masked ISIS militant beheading kidnapped American journalist Steven Sotloff, as previously threatened. Before being killed, Sotloff is made to say that he is “paying the price” for U.S. military intervention in Iraq. After the beheading, the ISIS militant, speaking with a British accent, said to U.S. President Barack Obama, “Just as your missiles continue to strike our people, our knife will continue to strike the necks of your people.” The militant also “warn[s] those governments who've entered this evil alliance of America against the Islamic State to back off and leave our people alone.”²¹⁹ He threatens another captive, David Cawthorne Haines, a British aid worker kidnapped last year on the Turkish-Syrian border.²²⁰ The *Washington Post* reported that the U.S. government believes “as many as a dozen Americans may be fighting alongside [ISIS] and that the group holds at least two other American hostages, both aid workers.”²²¹
- September 3, 2014:** U.S. President Barack Obama says at a press conference that “We will not be intimidated” by ISIS’s killing of American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, adding “Their horrific acts only unite us as a country and stiffen our resolve to take the fight against these terrorists. And those who make the mistake of harming Americans will learn that we will not forget, and that our reach is long and that justice will be served.” Obama states that the U.S. goal is “to degrade and destroy [ISIS] so that it’s no longer a threat not just to Iraq but also the region and to the United States.” However, later in the press conference, Obama describes a much more limited goal of “continu[ing] to shrink [ISIS]’s sphere of influence, its effectiveness, its financing, its military capabilities to the point where it is a manageable problem.” Obama adds, “Our objective is to make sure that ISIL is not an ongoing threat to the region. And we can accomplish that. It’s going to take some time and it’s going to take some effort. As we’ve seen with al Qaeda, there are always going to be remnants that can cause havoc of any of these networks, in part because of the nature of terrorist activities. You get a few individuals, and they may be able to carry out a terrorist act. But what we can do is to make sure that the kind of systemic and broad-based aggression

²¹⁹ Chelsea J. Carter and Ashley Fantz, “ISIS video shows beheading of American journalist Steven Sotloff,” CNN, September 3, 2014, http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/02/world/meast/isis-american-journalist-sotloff/index.html?iid=article_sidebar.

²²⁰ Greg Miller, “U.S. confirms authenticity of second journalist beheading video,” *Washington Post*, September 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamic-state-claims-to-have-beheaded-american-journalist-steven-sotloff/2014/09/02/ae5e8ffa-32c3-11e4-9e92-0899b306bbea_story.html.

²²¹ Greg Miller, “U.S. confirms authenticity of second journalist beheading video,” *Washington Post*, September 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamic-state-claims-to-have-beheaded-american-journalist-steven-sotloff/2014/09/02/ae5e8ffa-32c3-11e4-9e92-0899b306bbea_story.html.

that we've seen out [ISIS]... is degraded to the point where it is no longer the kind of factor that we've seen it being over the last several months."²²²

- **September 3, 2014:** U.S. Vice President Joe Biden condemns ISIS as “barbarians,” proclaiming, “They should know we will follow them to the gates of hell until they are brought to justice. Because hell is where they will reside. Hell is where they will reside.”²²³
- **September 3, 2014:** Israel designates ISIS as an “unauthorized organization,” enabling the Israeli government to crack down on ISIS operations and fundraising if discovered in Israel or the West Bank.²²⁴
- **September 4, 2014:** Israel’s Channel 2 reports that Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza are traveling to Iraq and Syria to join ISIS.²²⁵
- **September 5, 2014:** U.S. President Barack Obama clarifies previous seemingly contradictory comments about U.S. objectives regarding ISIS. This time, Obama states, “We are going to degrade and ultimately defeat [ISIS], the same way that we have gone after al Qaeda, and the same way that we have gone after the al Qaeda affiliate in Somalia...” Obama emphasizes that achieving the goal would take time and involve multiple phases, and that the next phase “will allow us to take the fight to [ISIS], broaden the effort.” He cautions that the next phase has to be executed carefully, including with “a strong political coalition, diplomatic effort that is matching it; a strong strategic communications effort so that we are discouraging people from thinking somehow that ISIL represents a state, much less a caliphate.”²²⁶
- **September 5, 2014:** At what the *New York Times* calls a “hastily organized meeting” on the sidelines of the NATO summit, the U.S. government assembles what U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel calls a “core coalition” of ten countries to fight ISIS: the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, and Turkey.²²⁷ The *Times* describes the plan developed by the coalition as a “two-pronged strategy: strengthening allies on the ground in Iraq and Syria, while bombing Sunni militants

²²² “Remarks by President Obama and President Ilves of Estonia in Joint Press Conference,” The White House, September 3, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/03/remarks-president-obama-and-president-ilves-estonia-joint-press-confer-0>.

²²³ Ashley Killough, “Biden’s warning to ISIS militants: ‘We will follow them to the gates of hell,’” CNN, September 3, 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/03/politics/joe-biden-isis-gates-of-hell>.

²²⁴ Gili Cohen, “Israel prepares for possibility of local Islamic State cells,” *Haaretz*, September 3, 2014, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.613958>.

²²⁵ “Palestinians said heading to Syria, Iraq to join Islamic State,” *Times of Israel*, September 4, 2014, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/palestinians-said-heading-to-syria-iraq-to-join-islamic-state>.

²²⁶ “Remarks by President Obama at NATO Summit Press Conference,” The White House, September 5, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/05/remarks-president-obama-nato-summit-press-conference>.

²²⁷ Helene Cooper, “Obama Enlists 9 Allies to Help in the Battle Against ISIS,” *New York Times*, September 5, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/06/world/middleeast/us-and-allies-form-coalition-against-isis.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>.

from the air.”²²⁸ Secretary of State John Kerry emphasizes how seriously the coalition would have to take the threat from ISIS. “There is no containment policy for [ISIS],” Kerry said. “They’re an ambitious, avowed, genocidal, territorial-grabbing, caliphate declaring quasi state with an irregular army, and leaving them in some capacity intact anywhere would leave a cancer in place that will ultimately come back to hurt us.”²²⁹ However, Kerry notes that any ground forces combating ISIS would have to be provided by the Iraqi security forces, the Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga, or moderate Syrian rebels—and not from the armies of the coalition members. “Obviously, I think that’s a red line for everybody here: no boots on the ground,” Kerry said.²³⁰ Obama administration officials note that they hoped to expand the coalition, including to countries in the Middle East. In particular, the U.S. hopes to obtain intelligence assistance from Jordan and funding from Saudi Arabia for moderate Syrian rebel organizations. The United Arab Emirates also indicated its support in a statement by its ambassador to the U.S.²³¹

- **September 5, 2014:** The Canadian government announces it would send 50 to 100 military advisers to Iraq to join U.S. military personnel in advising Kurdish forces in northern Iraq on how to fight ISIS militants. Prime Minister Stephen Harper says the deployment was made in response to U.S. President Barack Obama’s request and would last 30 days, subject to reassessment thereafter.²³²
- **September 5, 2014:** Reuters reports that ISIS has advised Egyptian violent extremist groups, including the Sinai-based Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, on operations.²³³
- **September 6, 2014:** Images on Twitter depict ISIS executing a second Lebanese soldier kidnapped when the group and Jabhat al-Nusra overran the Lebanese town of Arsal by the

²²⁸ Helene Cooper, “Obama Enlists 9 Allies to Help in the Battle Against ISIS,” *New York Times*, September 5, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/06/world/middleeast/us-and-allies-form-coalition-against-isis.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>.

²²⁹ Helene Cooper, “Obama Enlists 9 Allies to Help in the Battle Against ISIS,” *New York Times*, September 5, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/06/world/middleeast/us-and-allies-form-coalition-against-isis.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>.

²³⁰ Helene Cooper, “Obama Enlists 9 Allies to Help in the Battle Against ISIS,” *New York Times*, September 5, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/06/world/middleeast/us-and-allies-form-coalition-against-isis.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>.

²³¹ Helene Cooper, “Obama Enlists 9 Allies to Help in the Battle Against ISIS,” *New York Times*, September 5, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/06/world/middleeast/us-and-allies-form-coalition-against-isis.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>.

²³² Rob Gillies, “Canada to send military advisers to Iraq,” Associated Press, September 5, 2014, http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/C/CN_CANADA_IRAQ_MILITARY?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT.

²³³ “Exclusive: Islamic State guides Egyptian militants, expanding its influence,” Reuters, September 5, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/05/us-egypt-islamicstate-idUSKBN0H018F20140905>.

Syrian border in August. The soldier is identified as Abbas Medlij, a Shi'ite Muslim.²³⁴ ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra reportedly continue to hold 17 Lebanese soldiers captive.

- **September 6, 2014:** The U.S. launches a new series of airstrikes on ISIS to prevent the group from taking the Haditha Dam and having the ability to release its floodwaters toward Baghdad.²³⁵
- **September 7, 2014:** U.S. President Barack Obama tells NBC News that in a speech to the American people set for September 10, he would lay out the third phase of his administration's strategy in combating ISIS (following an initial assessment and a follow-up campaign of air strikes to protect U.S. citizens and facilities and prevent the mass killing of Yazidis). Obama emphasizes that his plan would resemble U.S. counterterrorism campaigns in recent years (such as against al-Qaeda) and would not include ground troops. "We are going to be as part of an international coalition, carrying out air strikes in support of work on the ground by Iraqi troops, Kurdish troops," Obama declares. "We are going to be helping to put together a plan for them, so that they can start retaking territory that ISIL had taken over." While acknowledging that air strikes alone are insufficient to address the threat from ISIS, Obama says, "[You] cannot, over the long term or even the medium term, deal with this problem by having the United States serially occupy various countries all around the Middle East. We don't have the resources. It puts enormous strains on our military. And at some point, we leave. And then things blow up again. So we've gotta have a more sustainable strategy, which means the boots on the ground have to be Iraqi. And in Syria, the boots on the ground have to be Syrian." Obama adds that while "we have not seen any immediate intelligence about threats to the homeland from ISIL... [it is] an organization that, if allowed to control significant amounts of territory, to amass more resources, more arms to attract more foreign fighters, including from areas like Europe, who have Europeans who have visas and then can travel to the United States unimpeded, that over time, that can be a serious threat to the homeland." Obama also sets out robust objectives for his plan, claiming, "We are going to be able to not just blunt the momentum of ISIL. We are going to systematically degrade their capabilities. We're going to shrink the territory that they control. And ultimately we're going to defeat 'em."²³⁶
- **September 7, 2014:** Senior U.S. officials tells the *New York Times* that the phased, U.S.-led campaign against ISIS may take up to three years to defeat the group, extending beyond President Barack Obama's tenure in office. The first phase is the ongoing airstrike campaign. The second phase would include "an intensified effort to train, advise or equip the Iraqi military, Kurdish fighters and possibly members of Sunni tribes." And the final phase would involve destroying ISIS in its Syrian sanctuary. The military campaign would last at least 3 years, in the views of Department of Defense planners. The administration expects significant difficulties in convincing its coalition partners to participate in military efforts in

²³⁴ "Islamic State says executes second Lebanese soldier," Reuters, September 6, 2014,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/06/us-lebanon-security-iduskbn0h10ko20140906>.

²³⁵ Helene Cooper, "U.S. Launches New Airstrikes on ISIS to Protect Dam in Iraq," *New York Times*,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/08/world/middleeast/iraq.html>.

²³⁶ "Meet the Press Transcript - September 7, 2014," NBC News, September 7, 2014,

<http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-transcript-september-7-2014-n197866>.

Syria. Convincing Sunni tribes currently supporting ISIS to realign with the coalition is also likely a tall order.²³⁷

- **September 7, 2014:** A young Yazidi woman kidnapped by ISIS during its seizure of Sinjar tells *La Repubblica* that ISIS keeps her and 40 other Yazidi women captive as sex slaves. Militants have boasted on Twitter that kidnapped Yazidi women have been utilized as “slave girls.” According to the Yazidi woman, “Our torturers do not even spare the women who have small children with them. Nor do they spare the girls – some of our group are not even 13 years old... They treat us as if we are their slaves. The men hit us and threaten us when we try to resist. Often I wish that they would beat me so severely that I would die... They keep telling us that we are unbelievers because we are non-Muslims and that we are their property, like war booty. They say we are like goats bought at a market.”²³⁸

September 8, 2014: United States Secretary of State Chuck Hagel meets with Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan to discuss Turkish participation in the growing US-led coalition against ISIS. Hagel describes Turkey as “absolutely indispensable” in the fight against ISIS, but Erdogan expresses concern for the 49 Turkish citizens being held hostage by ISIS. Turkey’s other concerns include emboldening the P.K.K.- Turkey’s Kurdish minority that populates the southeast of the country and that Turkey (as well as the European Union) consider a terrorist group- in fear that they will fight to nationalize and break off from Turkey. Chuck Hagel also stresses that the Obama administration wishes to use military sites within Turkey for launching airstrikes on ISIS forces within Iraq, and possibly Syria as well. No conclusion or course of action is drawn.²³⁹

September 10, 2014: “We will degrade, and ultimately destroy ISIL.” Using the acronym ISIL, President Obama makes a speech on primetime television in which he lays out his coalition-based plan to defeat ISIS. The President’s plan includes: 1) expanding the airstrike campaign in Iraq against Islamic State militants, 2) training and equipping the Iraqi army, Kurdish troops and moderate Syrian rebels, 3) expanding the U.S.-led coalition to include necessary regional actors such as Saudi Arabia, as well as relevant EU actors, and 4) the refusal to work with either the Syrian or Iranian governments. President Obama also reiterates his unwillingness to commit U.S. ground troops in either Iraq or Syria.²⁴⁰

²³⁷ Eric Schmitt, Michael R. Gordon, and Helene Cooper, “Destroying ISIS May Take 3 Years, White House Says,” *New York Times*, September 7, 2014,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/08/world/middleeast/destroying-isis-may-take-3-years-white-house-says.html>.

²³⁸ Nick Squires, “Yazidi girl tells of horrific ordeal as Isil sex slave,” *Telegraph*, September 7, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/11080165/Yazidi-girl-tells-of-horrific-ordeal-as-Isil-sex-slave.html>.

²³⁹ Helene Cooper, “Turkey is courted by US to help fight ISIS,” *The New York Times*, September 8, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/09/world/europe/turkey-is-courted-by-us-to-help-fight-isis.html>.

²⁴⁰ Zack Beauchamp, “Obama’s 6-point plan for defeating ISIS,” *Vox*, September 10, 2014, <http://www.vox.com/2014/9/10/6132815/obama-isis-syria-iraq-war-strategy>: “A Timeline of ISIS Terror,” *World Watch Monitor*, August 15, 2014,

September 11, 2014: Secretary of State John Kerry seeks broad support from Arab states against ISIS. He starts his tour in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, whose government agrees to provide bases in Syria for the training of moderate rebels. Other regional countries already in the coalition at this point include the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq.²⁴¹

September 12, 2014: Australia raises its terrorism alert level to high, after the Australia Security Intelligence Organization estimates that 60 Australians are currently fighting with ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Prime Minister Toby Abbott also states that “there are people with the intent and the capability to mount attacks [within Australia].”²⁴²

September 13, 2014: ISIS releases another video, “A Message to the Allies of America,” in which British aid worker David Cawthorne Haines is executed. Some analysts see it as a warning to the British Government for supporting the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS. The video is filmed in the same setting as the previous videos that ISIS has created: a nondescript area of what seems to be arid land beneath a blue sky. As in the other beheading videos disseminated by ISIS, “Jihadi John”, stands by a kneeling Haines. The still anonymous British terrorist says to the camera that “this British man has to pay the price for your promise, Cameron, to arm the peshmerga against the Islamic State. Ironically, he has spent a decade of his life serving under the same Royal Air Force that is responsible for delivering those arms.” At the end of the video, “Jihadi John” names the next victim as British citizen Alan Henning.²⁴³

September 15, 2014: ISIS targets near Baghdad are hit as part of the United States’ broadened airstrike campaign. According to the Pentagon, the airstrikes destroy six ISIS vehicles near Sinjar, as well as a combat post used for attacking Iraqi troops.²⁴⁴ It is also reported that ISIS has been especially successful in attracting Turkish recruits, who at this point number as many as

https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2014/08/article_3288644.html/; “Transcript of Obama’s Remarks on the Fight Against ISIS,” *The New York Times*, September 10, 2014,

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/11/world/middleeast/obamas-remarks-on-the-fight-against-isis.html?_r=0.

²⁴¹ Michael R. Gordon, “Kerry Seeks Arab Consensus in Campaign Against ISIS,” *The New York Times*, September 11, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/12/world/middleeast/john-kerry-saudi-arabia-isis-strategy.html>.

²⁴² Michelle Innis, “Australia Raises Terrorism Alert Level to High,” *The New York Times*, September 12, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/13/world/asia/australia-raises-terrorism-alert-level-to-high.html>.

²⁴³ Rukmini Callimachi and Kimko de Freytas-Tamura, “ISIS Video Shows Execution of David Cawthorne Haines, British Aid Worker,” *The New York Times*, September 13, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/14/world/middleeast/islamic-state-says-it-has-executed-david-cawthorne-haines-british-aid-worker.html>.

²⁴⁴ Steve Kenny, “U.S. Airstrikes Hit Target Near Baghdad Held by ISIS,” *The New York Times*, September 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/16/world/middleeast/us-airstrikes-hit-targets-near-baghdad-held-by-isis.html>.

1,000.²⁴⁵ Meanwhile, ISIS releases chlorine gas in the first documented chemical attack by the group on the town, wounding 11 Iraqi police officers in Duluiyeh, Iraq.²⁴⁶

September 16, 2014: Mufid A. Elfgeeh, a Rochester, New York resident, is indicted on charges that he “materially supported” three men en route to fight alongside ISIS in Syria. The “three men” were actually working with the federal authorities. According to Attorney General Eric H. Holder, the Western District of New York “will remain aggressive in identifying and disrupting those who seek to provide support to ISIL and other terrorist groups that are bent on inflicting harm upon Americans.”²⁴⁷

September 17, 2014: ISIS releases a video warning against the possibility of U.S. troops on the ground in Iraq and Syria, an action that Obama had repeatedly promised to not undertake. The video depicts Obama’s speech from September 10th, and then the words “Flames of War” appear on the screen, followed by “Fighting has just begun.” The video ends with the text “Coming soon.”²⁴⁸

September 18, 2014: ISIS releases a video featuring John Cantlie, a British journalist being held hostage by ISIS. Vastly different from previous beheading videos, this video depicts Cantlie arguing further Western military involvement against ISIS.²⁴⁹ In the larger context of ISIS’s normally violent videos, this clip has been analyzed as fulfilling the “good cop, bad cop” approach. This video might have also been a way for ISIS to appear rational, reasoned and united.²⁵⁰

September 18, 2014: Australian police foil a “beheading plot” by Australian militants connected to ISIS.²⁵¹

²⁴⁵ Ceylan Yeginsu, “ISIS Draws a Steady Stream of Recruits from Turkey,” *The New York Times*, September 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/16/world/europe/turkey-is-a-steady-source-of-isis-recruits.html>.

²⁴⁶ Loveday Morris, “Islamic State Militants Allegedly Used Chlorine Gas Against Iraqi Security Forces,” *The Washington Post*, October 23, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/islamic-state-militants-allegedly-used-chlorine-gas-against-iraqi-security-forces/2014/10/23/c865c943-1c93-4ac0-a7ed-033218f15cbb_story.html.

²⁴⁷ Michael S. Schmidt, “New York Man Charged With Trying to Support ISIS,” *The New York Times*, September 16, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/17/nyregion/rochester-man-charged-with-trying-to-finance-isis.html>.

²⁴⁸ Michael S. Schmidt, “Islamic State issues video challenge to Obama,” *The New York Times*, September 17, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/17/world/middleeast/isis-issues-video-riposte-to-obama.html>.

²⁴⁹ “John Cantlie Lend Me Your Ears - ”مك عمس ينوري عأ” YouTube video, 3:21, posted by “Times of Lebanon,” September 18, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vcew3qmidRI>.

²⁵⁰ Shiraz Maher and Peter Neumann, “Analysis: What was the aim of IS’ John Cantlie video,” BBC News, September 23, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-29331757>.

²⁵¹ Matt Siegel, “Australian PM says police raids follow IS linked beheading plot,” *Reuters*, September 18, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/18/us-australia-security-raids-idUSKBN0HC2FJ20140918>.

September 18, 2014: In a near-total vote, the U.S. Congress gives tremendous approval to President Obama's plan to aid moderate Syrian rebels. The bill, in the following days, is signed into law.²⁵²

September 20, 2014: Turkey's 49 citizens, who had been held hostage for more than three months by ISIS, are freed. The hostages include diplomats and their families, as well as soldiers. They had been taken hostage in June at the Turkish consulate in Mosul, Iraq. Although Turkey did not initially give details surrounding the negotiations that led to the release, Turkish media claimed there was an exchange of ISIS prisoners held by a moderate Syrian rebel group with ties to Turkey.²⁵³

September 21, 2014: The U.S.-led coalition against ISIS begins airstrikes in Syria, hitting the towns of Raqqa, Dayr az Zawr, Al Hasakah, and Abu Kamal. The targets include ISIS fighters, headquarters, command and control facilities, training compounds, supply trucks, armed vehicles and finance centers, according to a release from the U.S. Central Command. The coalition did inform Syria of the airstrikes before they took place, but did not ask for permission. By 10 pm ET on September 22, 2014, it is reported that at least 20 ISIS fighters have been wounded or killed.²⁵⁴

September 22, 2014: ISIS releases John Cantlie's second propaganda video, in which Cantlie questions Obama's strategy of funding Syrian rebels, and picks apart several claims that are made about the group. He says, "The Free Syrian Army are proven to be an undisciplined, corrupt, and largely ineffective fighting force... Giving the FSA 500 million [dollars] now is a completely pointless exercise." He continues by saying, "Never mind the fact that the FSA sells the weapons the West gives them to arms dealers and smugglers, and much of it then ends up with the Islamic State."²⁵⁵

September 23, 2014: The Algerian group linked to ISIS, Jund al-Khalifah, decapitates French mountaineer Hervé Gourdel, who they had held hostage for three days. The group says that they chose to behead Gourdel after the French government ignored the group's call to end airstrikes on ISIS.²⁵⁶

²⁵² Johathan Weisman and Jeremy Peters, "Congress gives final approval to aid rebels in fight with ISIS," *The New York Times*, September 18, 2014,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/19/world/middleeast/senate-approves-isis-bill-avoiding-bigger-war-debate.html>.

²⁵³ "ISIL released Turks held hostage in Iraq," *Al Jazeera English*, last modified September 21, 2014,

[http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/turkish-hostages-seized-iraq-freed-](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/turkish-hostages-seized-iraq-freed-201492035248486996.html)

[201492035248486996.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/turkish-hostages-seized-iraq-freed-201492035248486996.html); Mustafa Akyol, "Will Turkey Fight ISIS?" *The New York Times*, September 23, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/24/opinion/mustafa-akyol-will-turkey-fight-isis.html>.

²⁵⁴ "Pentagon: US and partner nations launch airstrikes in Syria against ISIL," *Al Jazeera*, September 22, 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/22/us-launches-airstrikesinsyriaagainstisil.html>.

²⁵⁵ "Second video of British hostage John Cantlie released," BBC, September 23, 2014,

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-29323283>.

²⁵⁶ Al Jazeera Staff, "ISIS Linked Group Executes French Hostage," *Al Jazeera*, September 24, 2014,

<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/24/algeria-isis-decapitated.html>.

September 23, 2014: Fighting between incoming ISIS militants and Kurdish forces intensifies in the Kurdish town of Kobani in northern Syria along the Turkish border. By September 24, at least 140,000 Syrian Kurdish refugees cross the border into Turkey.²⁵⁷

September 23, 2014: An 18-year old terror suspect in Australia is fatally shot by police after he attempts to stab two counter-terrorism officials. The suspect had displayed an ISIS flag and was shouting insults about Prime Minister Tony Abbott before his death.²⁵⁸

September 24, 2014: President Obama makes a speech at the UN in which he vows to fight extremism and more specifically ISIS, which he calls the “network of death.” He directly warns ISIS fighters of impending targeted airstrikes. Many in the international community are impressed and remark that Obama spoke for the first time like a “war president.”²⁵⁹ On this same day, ISIS militants blow up the “Green Church” in Tikrit, Iraq, an ancient and holy site for Christians.²⁶⁰

September 25, 2014: Joint airstrikes led by the US, Saudi Arabia and the UAE attack ISIS’s 12 oil refineries in Syria. Airstrikes also continue in Iraq on ISIS militants, armed vehicles, Humvees, checkpoints, guard towers and a command post.²⁶¹ Additionally, James B. Comey, the director of the FBI, announces that the militant in the beheading videos has been identified. Comey would not release the name of the British citizen while agents search for him.²⁶²

September 26, 2014: Iraq’s Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi tells U.S. officials that ISIS planned to attack subways in Paris and the United States. Western officials were skeptical of the news, and al-Abadi was unable to provide concrete evidence for his claim.²⁶³

²⁵⁷ “Kurds flee as clashes rage in northern Syria,” *Al Jazeera*, 2014,

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/syria-kurds-kobane-201492410309256379.html>.

²⁵⁸ Reuters, “Man shot in attack on counterterrorism officials in Australia,” *The New York Times*, September 23, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/24/world/asia/man-shot-in-attack-on-counterterrorism-officers-in-australia.html>.

²⁵⁹ Mark Landler, “In U.N. speech, Obama vows to fight ISIS ‘network of death,’” *The New York Times*, September 24, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/25/world/middleeast/obama-syria-un-isis.html>.

²⁶⁰ David D. Kirkpatrick, “Iraq: militants destroy historic church,” *The New York Times*, September 24, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/25/world/middleeast/iraq-militants-destroy-historic-church.html>.

²⁶¹ Helene Cooper and Anne Barnard, “Warplanes blast militants’ refineries in Syria, targeting a source of cash,” *The New York Times*, September 25, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/26/world/middleeast/isis-revenue-sources-remain-crucial-target-us-says.html>.

²⁶² David E. Sanger, “Militant in beheading videos has been identified, F.B.I. chief says,” *The New York Times*, September 25, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/26/world/middleeast/militant-in-beheading-videos-has-been-identified-fbi-chief-says.html>.

²⁶³ “Iraqi PM reveals ‘ISIL plot to attack west,’” *Al Jazeera*, September 26, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2014/09/iraqi-pm-reveals-isis-plot-attack-west-2014925212535183281.html>.

September 26, 2014: ISIS militants persist in their conquest of the Syrian Kurdish town of Kobani, amidst airstrikes. Mass numbers of Kurdish Syrian refugees continue to pile into Turkey. Growing anger from Turkish and Syrian Kurds towards the Turkish government's apparent lack of action concerning ISIS result in clashes between Turkish Kurds and Turkish military.

September 29, 2014: Due to the intensified fighting in Kobani, mortar shells fall into Turkish territory, prompting the Turkish military to send tanks to its border with Syria.²⁶⁴

September 30, 2014: Kurdish peshmerga forces reclaim villages and a border crossing that ISIS had previously controlled in Rabia, an area in Iraq close to the Syrian border. At the same time, U.S. warplanes carry out a total of nine airstrikes against ISIS targets in northwest Iraq and areas near the Mosul dam.²⁶⁵

October 2, 2014: The Turkish parliament votes 298-98 in favor of military operations against ISIS. This vote includes the potential use of Turkish bases by US-led coalition troops. However, it remains unclear if this vote will lead to deliverable military action. Defense Minister Ismet Yilmaz says to not expect "immediate steps."²⁶⁶

October 2, 2014: The UN publishes a report stating that upwards of 5,500 people have been killed by ISIS in Iraq alone since June, 2014. This includes hundreds of Yazidis who were "slaughtered en masse."²⁶⁷

October 3, 2014: ISIS releases a video depicting the beheading of English taxi-driver Alan Henning. The video takes place in the same area that James Foley, Steven Sotloff, and David Haines were beheaded. In the video, Henning, wearing the usual orange jumpsuit, says: "Hi, I am Alan Henning. Because of our Parliament's decision to attack the Islamic State, I — as a member of the British public — will now pay the price for that decision." Right before the decapitation, 'Jihadi John', the executioner, says: "Obama, you have started your air bombardment in Sham [an area referring to greater Syria] which keeps on striking our people. It is only right that we continue to strike the necks of your people." According to some analysts, ISIS seems to have waited to behead Henning until after the start of Britain's airstrikes on the group. The video ends

²⁶⁴ Erin Banco, "US Airstrikes in Syria Cripple ISIS Funding by Hitting Oil Refineries," *International Business Times*, September 30, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.com/us-airstrikes-syria-cripple-isis-funding-hitting-oil-refineries-1696902>.

²⁶⁵ Kirk Semple, "Kurds in Iraq's North Make Gains Against Islamic State," *The New York Times*, September 30, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/01/world/middleeast/isis-iraq-kurds-peshmerga-syria.html>.

²⁶⁶ Ceylan Yeginsu, "Turkey Votes to Allow Operations Against ISIS," *The New York Times*, October 2, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/03/world/europe/turkey-votes-to-allow-operations-against-isis.html?_r=0; "Turkish parliament approves military operations in Syria, Iraq," *Al Jazeera*, October 2, 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/10/2/turkey-parliamentisil.html>.

²⁶⁷ Nick Cumming-Bruce, "5,500 Iraqis Killed Since Islamic State Began Its Military Drive, U.N. Says," *The New York Times*, October 2, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/03/world/middleeast/un-reports-at-least-26000-civilian-casualties-in-iraq-conflict-this-year.html?_r=0.

with Jihadi John threatening the execution of American hostage Peter Kassig if the airstrikes on ISIS do not cease.²⁶⁸

October 3, 2014: Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott tells the public that Australia will join the U.S.-led coalition in launching airstrikes in Iraq, but not Syria. He also offers special operations personnel to advise Iraqi troops on the ground. Australia had already sent several military aircraft and hundreds of personnel to friendly countries neighboring Iraq and Syria in anticipation of the growing campaign against ISIS.²⁶⁹

October 5, 2014: A document found by Iraqi special forces, believed to be written by Abdullah Ahmed al-Meshedani, a member of ISIS's six-man war cabinet, states that ISIS plans to steal Tehran's 'nuclear secrets' and wage war on Iran's Shi'ite government. Meshedani writes that ISIS will depend on Russia to "give up Iran and its nuclear... secrets" by offering Russia access to Iraqi gas fields controlled by the group. First, Meshedani writes, Moscow must give up its support for Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria, and join in the Gulf States' coalition against Iran. The document also lists 70 plans of ethnic cleansing to target Shi'ite Iraqi authorities- as well as Shi'ite Iran- in the interest of building the 'new caliphate'. The manifesto also calls for the assassination of Iranian diplomats, teachers and businessmen, along with Iraqi military chiefs, Iranian-backed militias fighting for the Iraqi government, and Shiite officials.²⁷⁰

October 5, 2014: The fighting in the Syrian Kurdish town of Kobani intensifies, with ISIS sending rockets into the town and neither side claiming victory. Kurdish peshmerga forces state that Western-led airstrikes are not enough to stop ISIS militants from taking Kobani.²⁷¹

October 8, 2014: ISIS militants shoot down an Iraqi military helicopter with a shoulder-fired missile, killing two onboard, for the second time in less than a week. The helicopter was believed to be a Bell 407 aircraft, generally used for surveillance.²⁷²

²⁶⁸ Rukmini Callimachi and Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura, "ISIS releases video of execution of British aid worker," *The New York Times*, October 3, 2014,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/04/world/middleeast/islamic-state-releases-video-of-execution-of-alan-henning-british-aid-worker.html>; "ISIL release beheading video of aid worker," *Al Jazeera*, October 3, 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/10/3/video-islamic-stategroupbeheadsbritishhostage.html>.

²⁶⁹ Michelle Innis, "Australia Says It Will Join Airstrikes Against Islamic State in Iraq," *The New York Times*, October 3, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/04/world/asia/australia-says-it-will-join-airstrikes-against-islamic-state-in-iraq.html?_r=0.

²⁷⁰ "Rport: ISIS plots to seize Iran's nuclear secrets," *Al Arabiya News*, October 5, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/10/05/ISIS-plots-to-seize-Iran-s-nuclear-secrets-.html>.

²⁷¹ "ISIL shells besieged Kurdish town in Syria," *Al Jazeera*, October 5, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/10/isil-syria-kurdish-town-kobane-2014105113130688232.html>.

October 10, 2014: At least a third of the Syrian Kurdish town of Kobani is reported to be under the control of ISIS, despite continued airstrikes on the group. Turkey continues to call for a no-fly buffer zone on the Syrian border, which would prevent Syrian government aircraft from flying overhead. Turkey's reasoning includes humanitarian motives such as protecting refugees, as well as Turkey's border. The more private argument is made that the buffer zone would be used to train moderate rebels in fighting Assad's government, something that the United States may not want to get involved in.²⁷³

October 12, 2014: ISIS is responsible for a triple suicide bombing, killing 58 and wounding 107. ISIS claims that three foreign jihadists are responsible for the attack.²⁷⁴

October 12, 2014: ISIS releases its third propaganda video with British hostage John Cantlie. Cantlie warns that "anyone hoping for a nice neat surgical operation without getting their hands dirty is in for a horrible surprise once it gets under way." He speaks about the beheading videos, and how ISIS profits from them. He says, "If these executions force public outcry or a policy change, that is a huge victory. And if they only goad our governments into dropping more bombs and spending millions more dollars, making our countries weaker in the process, that is a victory, too." Cantlie continues to explain the group's actions and reasoning. The video ends on a grim note, when Cantlie says, "Unless something changes very quickly and very radically, I await my turn."²⁷⁵

October 12, 2014: U.S. Military Strategic Advisor Martin Dempsey warns that ISIS may be able to attack Baghdad in the coming days, including through the use of indirect fire, (e.g. mortar, rockets and artillery). Other advisors believe that ISIS is capable of orchestrating car bombs within and around Baghdad.²⁷⁶

²⁷² Kirk Semple and Omar al-Jawshy, "ISIS Militants Shoot Down Iraqi Helicopter, Killing 2," *The New York Times*, October 8, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/09/world/middleeast/isis-iraq-violence.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>.

²⁷³ Tim Arango and Ceylan Yeginsu, "Turkey seeks buffer zone on the border with Syria," *The New York Times*, October 9, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/10/world/middleeast/turkish-support-of-coalition-fighting-isis-centers-on-border-buffer-zone-.html>.

²⁷⁴ "Peshmerga among dead in triple suicide bomb blast," Rudaw Kurdistan Newspaper, October 12, 2014, <http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/121020141>.

²⁷⁵ Shiv Malik, "British hostage John Cantlie appears in fourth ISIS propaganda video," *The Guardian*, October 12, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/12/british-hostage-john-cantlie-fourth-isis-video>.

²⁷⁶ Brian Knowlton, "Obama's Top Military Advisor Warns of Possible ISIS Attacks in Baghdad," *The New York Times*, October 12, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/13/world/middleeast/obamas-top-military-adviser-warns-of-possible-isis-attacks-in-baghdad.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&_r=0.

October 14, 2014: An ISIS bomber kills 24 and wounds 40 at a crowded checkpoint into a majority Shi'ite neighborhood in Baghdad. Among the dead was Ahmed al-Khafaji, a Shi'ite member of Parliament as well as the Shi'ite military group, the Badr Organization.²⁷⁷

October 14, 2014: Six people are arrested in Britain on terrorism charges related to ISIS. The police said that the individuals were being held on suspicion of “engaging in conduct in preparation of terrorist acts and arranging availability of money and property for use in terrorism.”²⁷⁸

October 15, 2014: ISIS fighters are reported to be encroaching on a strategically significant rural town in the Anbar province using tanks, armored vehicles and heavy weaponry.²⁷⁹

October 15, 2014: The U.S. Department of Defense names the airstrike campaign against ISIS “Operation Inherent Resolve.” According to a statement released by the U.S. Central Command, “The name Inherent Resolve is intended to reflect the unwavering resolve and deep commitment of the U.S. and partner nations in the region and around the globe to eliminate the terrorist group ISIL and the threat they pose to Iraq, the region and the wider international community.”²⁸⁰

October 17, 2014: The U.S. Central Command reports that ISIS fighters have begun to retreat from the northern Iraqi border with Turkey, especially from the Kurdish city of Kobani. This is due in part to dozens of U.S.-led coalition airstrikes against ISIS targets, which have killed hundreds of ISIS fighters. The airstrikes have also given Kurdish fighters time to regain control of strategically important territory.²⁸¹

October 19, 2014: A Syrian rebel commander is reportedly shot and wounded in a kidnapping attempt by ISIS militants within Turkish borders. In the southern Turkish city of Urfa, ISIS has safe houses and is believed to “operate with impunity.” It was in Urfa that ISIS militants kidnapped Abu Issa, but ultimately failed to bring him into Turkey. There is increasing international condemnation on Turkey concerning Turkey’s apparent relaxed stance on ISIS

²⁷⁷ Kirk Semple and Omar al-Jawshy, “ISIS Bomber Hits Baghdad, Killing 24,” *The New York Times*, October 14, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/15/world/middleeast/-isis-bomber-hits-baghdad-killing-24-.html>.

²⁷⁸ Alan Cowell, “Britain Arrests 6 in Counterterrorism Raids,” *The New York Times*, October 14, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/15/world/europe/britain-terrorism-arrests.html>.

²⁷⁹ Kirk Semple and Ali Hamza, “Siege Possible as ISIS Nears Strategic Town in Iraq,” *The New York Times*, October 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/16/world/middleeast/isis-isil-islamic-state-iraq.html>.

²⁸⁰ “Finally, a Name for ISIS Strikes: Operation Inherent Resolve,” *The New York Times*, October 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/16/us/politics/finally-a-name-for-isis-strikes.html>.

²⁸¹ Kareem Fahim and Helene Cooper, “ISIS Militants in Syrian Border Town Begin to Retreat After a Monthlong Battle,” *The New York Times*, October 17, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/18/world/middleeast/isis-militants-in-syrian-border-town-begin-to-retreat-after-a-monthlong-battle.html>.

militants in the south of Turkey, including ISIS's smuggling operations from Turkey into Syria.²⁸²

October 20, 2014: A quadruple car bombing and a suicide bombing effort by ISIS kills 40. Local officials remarked that the attacks were specifically aimed against Shi'ites, as they took place near holy Shi'ite shrines and a Shi'ite mosque.²⁸³

October 20, 2014: The U.S. drops weaponry and other lethal aid to Kurdish fighters struggling to keep hold of Kobani. According to Kurdish officials, the aid contains weapons, ammunition and medical aid.²⁸⁴

October 21, 2014: ISIS releases a video in which seventeen-year-old Australian Abdullah Elmira, *nom de guerre* Abu Khaled, speaks to the camera with dozens of young jihadists by his side. He says: "I say this about your coalition: you threaten us with your countries, bring every nation that you wish to us, bring every nation that you want to come and fight us... we will not put down our weapons until we reach your lands, until we take the head of every tyrant and until the black flag is flying high in every single land, until we put the black flag on top of Buckingham Palace, until we put the black flag on top of the White House."²⁸⁵ In Canada, a gunman whose photo is tweeted by an ISIS-linked account kills a reservist before storming into Ottawa's parliament.²⁸⁶

October 22, 2014: The U.S. airdrops medical supplies and weapons to Kurdish forces in Kobani. ISIS militants reportedly gain access to one of the 28 bundles of supplies when a parachute drifts from its intended target.²⁸⁷

October 23, 2014: According to David Cohen, the U.S. Treasury Department's under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, ISIS earns around \$1 million per day in oil sales. Cohen

²⁸² Ruth Sherlock, "Islamic State foiled in attempt to kidnap Syrian rebel leader in Turkey," *The Guardian*, October 19, 2014,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/11173013/Islamic-State-foiled-in-attempt-to-kidnap-Syrian-rebel-leader-in-Turkey.html>.

²⁸³ Kirk Semple, "40 Are Killed in Attacks Targeting Shiites in Iraq," *The New York Times*, October 20, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/21/world/middleeast/dozens-are-killed-in-attacks-on-shiite-targets-in-iraq.html>.

²⁸⁴ "US Sends Lethal Aid to Kurdish Forces Fighting ISIS in Kobani," *Reuters*, October 20, 2014, <http://rt.com/news/197360-isis-kobani-usa-weapons/>.

²⁸⁵ "Australian teenager with ginger hair joins ISIS," news.com.au, October 21, 2014, <http://www.news.com.au/world/middle-east/australian-teenager-with-ginger-hair-joins-isis/story-fnh81ifq-1227097303972>.

²⁸⁶ Faith Karimi, "Canada Shooting Raises Fears of ISIS Connection," CNN News, October 23, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/23/world/canada-isis-role/>.

²⁸⁷ Ivan Watson and Holly Yan, "U.S. Airdrops Give Much Needed Aid in Kobani, But Did ISIS Get Some?," CNN News, October 22, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/22/world/meast/isis-threat/>.

also reports that ISIS “has netted approximately \$20 million in ransom payments this year.”²⁸⁸ The Treasury Department calls ISIS the “best-funded” terrorist organization the U.S. has ever confronted. An Iraqi Defense Minister confirms that ISIS used chemical weapons in a September 15 attack.²⁸⁹

October 24, 2014: Iraqi forces regain control of the area of Jurf al-Sakhar, south of Baghdad. Meanwhile, Kurdish peshmerga forces liberate the northern Iraqi town of Zumar, west of the Mosul Dam. Coalition forces conduct 22 airstrikes against ISIS from October 22-October 23. Turkey pledges to allow a maximum of 150 peshmerga militants to travel through Turkey to defend the Syrian town of Kobani.²⁹⁰

October 26, 2014: Casualties over the fight for Kobani reveal at least 302 Kurdish fighters and 21 civilians have been killed in 40 days of fighting over the town, two of the civilians killed by beheadings.²⁹¹ Evidence surfaces that ISIS may be using advanced surface-to-air missile systems to shoot down coalition missiles.²⁹²

October 27, 2014: ISIS releases a video of hostage John Cantlie in Kobani, indicating that ISIS has gained control over the city.²⁹³

October 28, 2014: PBS releases a documentary that holds the U.S. administration to task for allegedly enabling the rise of ISIS.²⁹⁴

October 30, 2014: As many as 30 former Guantanamo Bay detainees, some of whom were released within the last three years, are suspected of joining ISIS and Syrian militant groups.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁸ Brett Logiurato, “ISIS Is Making An Absurd Amount Of Money On Ransom Payments And Black-Market Oil Sales,” *Business Insider*, October 23, 2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/isis-ransoms-20-million-treasury-says-2014-10>.

²⁸⁹ Loveday Morris, “Islamic State Militants Allegedly Used Chlorine Gas Against Iraqi Security Forces,” *The Washington Post*, October 23, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/islamic-state-militants-allegedly-used-chlorine-gas-against-iraqi-security-forces/2014/10/23/c865c943-1c93-4ac0-a7ed-033218f15cbb_story.html.

²⁹⁰ Laura Smith-Spark and Kareem Khadder, “Iraqi Forces, Peshmerga Claim Gains Against ISIS; Battle for Kobani Continues,” CNN News, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/25/world/meast/isis-threat/>.

²⁹¹ Nick Paton Walsh, Zeynep Bilginsoy and Chandrika Narayan, “More than 800 Killed in 40 Days of Clashes in Syrian City of Kobani,” CNN News, October 26, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/26/world/meast/kobani-isis-deaths/>.

²⁹² Kirk Semple and Eric Schmitt, “Missiles of ISIS May Pose Peril for Aircrews in Iraq,” *The New York Times*, October 26, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/27/world/middleeast/missiles-of-isis-may-pose-peril-for-aircrews.html>.

²⁹³ Catherine E. Shoichet, “Hostage in Video Claims Syrian City of Kobani is Under ISIS Control,” CNN News, October 27, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/27/world/meast/isis-british-hostage-syria-kobani/>.

²⁹⁴ Mike Hale, “Beyond Beheadings,” *The New York Times*, October 27, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/28/arts/television/the-rise-of-isis-a-pbs-frontline-documentary.html>.

The U.S. stages 10 airstrikes against ISIS near the city of Kobani.²⁹⁶ Human Rights Watch releases a report on the group, saying that summary executions of ISIS prisoners “amount to war crimes and most likely crimes against humanity.”²⁹⁷

October 31, 2014: ISIS fighter claims the group controls 90% of the city of Kobani.²⁹⁸ That same day, the United Nations releases a press statement condemning ISIS and expressing “deep outrage” at the group’s actions.²⁹⁹

November 1, 2014: Turkey allows precisely 150 Iraqi Kurdish forces to arrive in the Syrian city of Kobani.³⁰⁰ ISIS summarily executes 50 members of the Sunni Al Bu Nimr tribe.³⁰¹

November 2, 2014: ISIS continues summarily killing members of the Sunni Al Bu Nimr tribe. 50 members are found dead in a water well. ISIS summarily executes 50 additional members of the tribe and kidnaps 65 members of the tribe. According to the Iraqi government, ISIS has thusfar killed 322 members of the Al Bu Nimr tribe.³⁰² Canada launches its first airstrike against ISIS.³⁰³

²⁹⁵ Justin Fishel and Jennifer Griffin, “Sources: Former Guantanamo Detainees Suspected of Joining ISIS, Other Groups in Syria,” Fox News, October 30, 2014,

<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2014/10/30/sources-former-guantanamo-detainees-suspected-joining-isis-other-groups-in/>.

²⁹⁶ Armin Rosen, “The US Is Hammering ISIS Near Kobane,” *Business Insider*, October 30, 2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/the-us-is-now-hammering-isis-outside-kobane-2014-10>.

²⁹⁷ “Iraq: ISIS Executed Hundreds of Prison Inmates,” Human Rights Watch, October 30, 2014, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/10/30/iraq-isis-executed-hundreds-prison-inmates>.

²⁹⁸ “ISIS Bomb Threat to Kurdish Forces Bound For Syria's Kobani,” NBC News, October 31, 2014, <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/isis-bomb-threat-kurdish-forces-bound-syrias-kobani-n238406>.

²⁹⁹ “U.N. Expresses ‘Deep Outrage’ at ISIS,” CBS News, October 31, 2014, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/u-n-expresses-deep-outrage-at-isis/>.

³⁰⁰ Mariam Karouny and Michael Georgy, “Iraqi Kurds Reinforce Kobani; U.S. Planes Pound Islamic State Targets,” *Reuters*, November 1, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/01/us-mideast-crisis-idUSKBN0IK15M20141101>.

³⁰¹ Associated Press, “ISIS Militants Kill 50 Tribesmen, Women and Children, Officials Say,” Fox News, November 2, 2014, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/11/02/isis-militants-line-up-kill-50-tribesmen-and-women-in-iraq-town/>.

³⁰² “Islamic State ‘Kills 322’ From Single Sunni Tribe,” BBC, November 2, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29871068>.

³⁰³ “Canada Launches First Airstrikes Against ISIS in Iraq,” NBC News, <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/canada-launches-first-airstrikes-against-isis-iraq-n239741>.

November 3, 2014: Human Rights Watch releases a report on ISIS’s practice of taking child hostages from the city of Kobani and torturing them.³⁰⁴

November 6, 2014: News outlets expose a secret letter from President Obama to Iran’s Ayatollah Khamenei regarding ISIS.³⁰⁵

Designations by U.S. Government:

Date	Designated Entity	Designation	Designating Entity	Effects of Designation	Reference
October 15, 2004	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (previously listed as “al-Qa’ida in Iraq)	Specially Designated Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13224)	Department of State	Blocks all property in U.S. or under possession of control of U.S. persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	³⁰⁶
December 17, 2004	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (previously listed as “al-Qa’ida in Iraq)	Foreign Terrorist Organization (under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act)	Department of State	Freeze of assets in U.S. financial institutions; ban on admission of members to U.S.; ban on providing “material support or resources” to entity	³⁰⁷
October 4, 2011	Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri	Specially Designated Global Terrorist	Department of State	Blocks all property in U.S. or under	³⁰⁸

³⁰⁴ “Syria: ISIS Tortured Kobani Child Hostages,” Human Rights Watch,, November 4, 2014, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/11/04/syria-isis-tortured-kobani-child-hostages>.

³⁰⁵ Elise Labott, “President Obama Writes to Iran’s Ayatollah Khamenei about ISIS Fight,” CNN News, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/11/06/politics/obama-iran-isis-letter/index.html>.

³⁰⁶ “Individuals and Entities Designated by the State Department Under E.O. 13224,” U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/143210.htm>.

³⁰⁷ “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>.

³⁰⁸ “Terrorist Designation of Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri,” U.S. Department of State, October 4, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/10/174971.htm>.

	, AKA Abu Du'a [AKA Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi]	(under Executive Order 13224)		possession of control of U.S. persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	
December 11, 2012 (designation amended May 14, 2014 to reflect Al-Nusrah Front's break with ISIS) ³⁰⁹	al-Nusrah Front (as an alias for al-Qa'ida in Iraq)	Specially Designated Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13224)	Department of State	Blocks all property in U.S. or under possession of control of U.S. persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	³¹⁰
May 14, 2014	The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), ad-Dawla al-Islamiyya fi al-'Iraq wa-sh-Sham, Daesh, Dawla al Islamiya, and Al-Furqan Establishment for Media Production (as aliases for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant)	Specially Designated Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13224)	Department of State	Blocks all property in U.S. or under possession of control of U.S. persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	³¹¹
May 14, 2014	Abd Al-Rahman Muhammad Zafir Al-Dubaysi Al-Juhni (Al-Juhni) and 'Abd Al-Rahman Mustafa Al-Qaduli (Al-Qaduli)	Specially Designated Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13224)	Department of the Treasury	Blocks all property in U.S. or under possession of control of U.S. persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or	³¹²

³⁰⁹ "Terrorist Designations of Groups Operating in Syria," U.S. Department of State, May 14, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/05/226067.htm>.

³¹⁰ "Terrorist Designations of the al-Nusrah Front as an Alias for al-Qa'ida in Iraq," U.S. Department of State, December 11, 2012, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/12/201759.htm>.

³¹¹ "Terrorist Designations of Groups Operating in Syria," U.S. Department of State, May 14, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/05/226067.htm>.

³¹² "Treasury Designates Al-Qa'ida Leaders In Syria," U.S. Department of the Treasury, May 14, 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2396.aspx>.

				within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	
August 6, 2014	'Abd al-Rahman Khalaf 'Ubayd Juday' al-'Anizi	Specially Designated Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13224)	Department of the Treasury	Blocks all property in U.S. or under possession of control of U.S. persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	³¹³
August 18, 2014	Abu Mohammed al-Adnani	Specially Designated Global Terrorist (under Executive Order 13224)	Department of State	Blocks all property in U.S. or under possession of control of U.S. persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	³¹⁴

Designations by Foreign Governments and International Organizations:

Government/Organization	Date	Designated Entity	Designation	Reference
Australia	March 2, 2005	Islamic State (previously listed as Al-Qa'ida in Iraq and as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant)	terrorist organization	³¹⁵
Canada	August 20, 2012	Al Qaida in Iraq	Terrorist Entity	³¹⁶
Indonesia	August 2, 2014	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria	terrorist organization	³¹⁷

³¹³ "Treasury Designates Three Key Supporters of Terrorists in Syria and Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, August 6, 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2605.aspx>.

³¹⁴ "Terrorist Designation of Abu Mohammed al-Adnani," U.S. Department of State, August 18, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/230676.htm>.

³¹⁵ "Islamic State," Australian National Security, <http://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/Listedterroristorganisations/Pages/IslamicState.aspx>.

³¹⁶ "Currently listed entities," Public Safety Canada, <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrct/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/crnt-lstd-ntts-eng.aspx>.

³¹⁷ "BNPT Declares ISIS a Terrorist Organization," TEMPO.co, August 2, 2014, <http://en.tempo.co/read/news/2014/08/02/055596766/BNPT-Declares-ISIS-a-Terrorist-Organization>.

Israel	January 18, 2004	Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai [AKA Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi]	Declared Individual under Article 2 of the Prohibition of Financing Terrorism	³¹⁸
Israel	January 18, 2004	Djamel Moustafa	Declared Individual under Article 2 of the Prohibition of Financing Terrorism	³¹⁹
Israel	January 18, 2004	Mubarak Mushakhas Sanad Mubarak al-Bathali	Declared Individual under Article 2 of the Prohibition of Financing Terrorism	³²⁰
Israel	January 18, 2004	Ismail Abdallah Sbaitan Shalabi	Declared Individual under Article 2 of the Prohibition of Financing Terrorism	³²¹
Israel	October 18, 2004	Hamid Abdallah Ahmad al-Ali	Declared Individual under Article 2 of the Prohibition of Financing Terrorism	³²²
Israel	October 18, 2004	Aschraf al-Dagma	Declared Individual under Article 2 of the Prohibition of Financing Terrorism	³²³
Israel	September 3, 2014	Islamic State	unauthorized organization	³²⁴
Saudi Arabia	March 7, 2014	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant	terrorist organization	³²⁵
United Kingdom	October 18, 2004	Al-Qaida in Iraq	Asset Freeze Target	³²⁶

³¹⁸ “נספחים - רשימות הארגונים והיחידים שהוכרו כפעילי טרור” Prime Minister’s Office, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Documents/des124B.doc>.

³¹⁹ “נספחים - רשימות הארגונים והיחידים שהוכרו כפעילי טרור” Prime Minister’s Office, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Documents/des124B.doc>.

³²⁰ “נספחים - רשימות הארגונים והיחידים שהוכרו כפעילי טרור” Prime Minister’s Office, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Documents/des124B.doc>.

³²¹ “נספחים - רשימות הארגונים והיחידים שהוכרו כפעילי טרור” Prime Minister’s Office, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Documents/des124B.doc>.

³²² “נספחים - רשימות הארגונים והיחידים שהוכרו כפעילי טרור” Prime Minister’s Office, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Documents/des124B.doc>.

³²³ “נספחים - רשימות הארגונים והיחידים שהוכרו כפעילי טרור” Prime Minister’s Office, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2013/Documents/des124B.doc>.

³²⁴ Gili Cohen, “Israel prepares for possibility of local Islamic State cells,” *Haaretz*, September 3, 2014, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.613958>.

³²⁵ “Saudi Arabia designates Muslim Brotherhood terrorist group,” *Reuters*, March 7, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/07/us-saudi-security-idUSBREA260SM20140307>.

³²⁶ “CONSOLIDATED LIST OF FINANCIAL SANCTIONS TARGETS IN THE UK,” GOV.UK, last modified September 3, 2014, <http://hmt-sanctions.s3.amazonaws.com/sanctionsconlist.htm>.

United Kingdom	April 7, 2010	Muthanna Harith al-Dari	Asset Freeze Target	³²⁷
United Kingdom	October 17, 2011	Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai [AKA Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi]	Asset Freeze Target	³²⁸
United Kingdom	June 2014	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (previously listed under "Al Qa'ida")	Proscribed Terrorist Organization	³²⁹
United Kingdom	August 15, 2014	Abou Mohamed al Adnani	Asset Freeze Target	³³⁰
United Kingdom	August 15, 2014	Hamid al-'Ali	Asset Freeze Target	³³¹
United Nations	October 18, 2004	Al-Qaida in Iraq	Listed under category "Entities and other groups and undertakings associated with Al Qaida"	³³²
United Nations	March 25, 2010	Muthanna Harith al-Dari	Individual associated with Al Qaida	³³³
United Nations	October 5, 2011	Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai [AKA Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi]	Individual associated with Al Qaida	³³⁴
United Nations	August 15, 2014	Abou Mohamed al Adnani	Individual associated with Al Qaida	³³⁵
United Nations	August 15, 2014	Hamid al-'Ali	Individual associated with Al Qaida	³³⁶

Media Coverage/Analysis:

³²⁷ "CONSOLIDATED LIST OF FINANCIAL SANCTIONS TARGETS IN THE UK," GOV.UK, last modified September 3, 2014, <http://hmt-sanctions.s3.amazonaws.com/sanctionsconlist.htm>.

³²⁸ "CONSOLIDATED LIST OF FINANCIAL SANCTIONS TARGETS IN THE UK," GOV.UK, last modified September 3, 2014, <http://hmt-sanctions.s3.amazonaws.com/sanctionsconlist.htm>.

³²⁹ "Proscribed terror groups or organisations – Publications," GOV.UK, last modified June 27, 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2>.

³³⁰ "CONSOLIDATED LIST OF FINANCIAL SANCTIONS TARGETS IN THE UK," GOV.UK, last modified September 3, 2014, <http://hmt-sanctions.s3.amazonaws.com/sanctionsconlist.htm>.

³³¹ "CONSOLIDATED LIST OF FINANCIAL SANCTIONS TARGETS IN THE UK," GOV.UK, last modified September 3, 2014, <http://hmt-sanctions.s3.amazonaws.com/sanctionsconlist.htm>.

³³² "Al-Qaida Sanctions List," United Nations, last modified August 26, 2014, <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/AQList.htm>.

³³³ "Al-Qaida Sanctions List," United Nations, last modified August 26, 2014, <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/AQList.htm>.

³³⁴ "Al-Qaida Sanctions List," United Nations, last modified August 26, 2014, <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/AQList.htm>.

³³⁵ "Al-Qaida Sanctions List," United Nations, last modified August 26, 2014, <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/AQList.htm>.

³³⁶ "Al-Qaida Sanctions List," United Nations, last modified August 26, 2014, <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/AQList.htm>.

Arab Media Coverage

The Connection between Iraq and Al-Qaeda

In October 2002, the Saudi paper *al-Riyadh* reported statements from al-Qaeda in response to the Bush administration's allegations that al-Qaeda and Iraq were connected. According to the paper, the organization claimed that Saddam Hussein was "on al-Qaeda's assassination list," and its spokesman, who called himself Abdulrahman al-Rashed, said that Saddam was just like Bush in terms of "barbarism, brutality, and [religious] disbelief," adding that Bush made allegations against Saddam "to control the oil of Iraq."³³⁷

Generally, the Arab media's coverage of alleged links between Saddam Hussein's regime and al-Qaeda was fairly neutral leading up to the war in Iraq. For example, Al Jazeera dedicated the bulk of its reporting on U.S. President George W. Bush's State of the Union address in late January 2003 to the issue of Iraq's suspected weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The only mention the network made of al-Qaeda was a brief portion of the speech where Bush claimed that there was intelligence and secret communications showing that Saddam "aids and protects terrorists, including members of al-Qaeda."³³⁸

Likewise, *Al-Hayat* also dedicated scant coverage to the al-Qaeda connection. On top of the same lines from Bush's speech that *Al Jazeera* reported, the paper included comments from the British Foreign Office saying that al-Qaeda agents had taken refuge in Iraq. "We believe that there have been al-Qaeda operatives in parts of Iraq controlled by Baghdad. It is hard to imagine that they are there without the knowledge and acquiescence of the Iraqi Government." *Al-Hayat* noted that it was the first time London had discussed connections between al-Qaeda and the Hussein regime. According to the paper, Prime Minister Blair had only spoken of the existence of "relationships" between the two, but that he "was not sure of the true extent of these relationships."³³⁹

Zarqawi Pledges Allegiance to Al-Qaeda

When Abu Musab al-Zarqawi pledged his allegiance to Osama Bin Laden, Al Arabiya noted that the announcement reinforced analysts' reports that Zarqawi's organization was indeed subordinate to al-Qaeda's central leadership. Likewise, the network said that Zarqawi's pledge

³³⁷ "Al-Qaeda: Saddam 'ala Qa'ima Al-Ightiyalat," *Al-Riyadh*, October 11, 2002, http://www.alriyadh.com/Contents/11-10-2002/Mainpage/POLITICS_2637.php.

³³⁸ "Bush Yataham Al-Ra'is Al-Iraqi bi Izdira' Al-Umam Al-Mutahida," Al Jazeera, January 29, 2003, <http://aljazeera.net/news/pages/de0c2868-c172-46e0-ae10-96bb46f58c7d>.

³³⁹ Ragida Dargam, Jalal Al-Mashata, Basil Rifa'ia, Arafan Rasheed and Zaki Shahab, "Bush Yataham Baghdad bi Alaqa ma' 'Al-Qaeda' wa Ya'idu Al-Amirkiyin bi Intidhar..." *Al Hayat*, January 30, 2003, http://daharchives.alhayat.com/issue_archive/Hayat%20INT/2003/1/30/-بوش-يتهم-بغداد-بعلاقة-مع-القاعدة-ويعد-الأميركيين-بانتصار-حوالأردن-يتسلم-6-طائرات-اف-16-الف-جندى-أميركي-الى-كرد.

represented a trump card for U.S. President George W. Bush's election campaign claims that he was fighting a war in Iraq against al-Qaeda. An analyst interviewed for the article noted that pledging allegiance to Bin Laden would enhance Zarqawi's legitimacy among jihadi groups in Iraq.³⁴⁰

Middle East Online reflected several points of view in its coverage. The outlet quoted Yasser Sirri, director of the Islamic Observatory in London, who said that the pledge proved the "invalidity of American allegations about the relationship between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein [who are allegedly connected through] al-Zarqawi."³⁴¹

However, Abdel Bari Atwan, who was then editor of *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, said that the pledge removed all doubt about al-Zarqawi's connection with Bin Laden... Al-Zarqawi is a graduate from Bin Laden's school, trained in Afghanistan. He went to Iraq and founded a wing of the organization... Al-Qaeda is a horizontal organization and not vertical. Bin Laden is the spiritual father."³⁴²

Al-Zarqawi's Death

While Al Jazeera reported details of the airstrike that killed al-Zarqawi in Diyala Province and remarks from Iraqi and U.S. leaders, the network also carried an acknowledgement of his death from the Mujahideen Shura Council. In addition, the report included a statement from the spokesman of the Islamic Army in Iraq, who said that his group and Zarqawi's were "brothers in religion and unity of purpose." Curiously, the network also dedicated part of its reporting to his family's reaction in Jordan, noting that they set up a tent at their home where they could grieve his martyrdom. According to the network, Jordanian authorities also briefly detained its Amman bureau chief and technical crew while they were interviewing Zarqawi's brother-in-law live in Zarqa.³⁴³

Al Arabiya devoted even more space to the reactions from Zarqawi's family in Jordan. After first reporting on the statement's issued by the Mujahideen Shura Council, the network transitioned to the scene in Zarqa, where Zarqawi's elder brother was accepting condolences. The women at the family's house were allegedly sobbing, wearing all black, as several of the men told them not to cry because "al-Zarqawi is a martyr, and [you] should not cry over the martyrs." According to

³⁴⁰ Omar Al-Ansari, "Al-Zarqawi Ya'lan 'Baya'tuhu Li Bin Laden 'ala Al-Sama' wa Al-Ta'a," *Al Arabiya*, October 17, 2004, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2004/10/17/7218.html>.

³⁴¹ Habib Trablusi, "Tahlil: Limatha Qarara Al-Zarqawi Mubaya'a Bin Laden Al-An?" *Middle East Online*, October 18, 2004, <http://www.middle-east-online.com/?id=26723>.

³⁴² Habib Trablusi, "Tahlil: Limatha Qarara Al-Zarqawi Mubaya'a Bin Laden Al-An?" *Middle East Online*, October 18, 2004, <http://www.middle-east-online.com/?id=26723>.

³⁴³ "Al-Jaysh Al-Amriki Yakshif Tafasil Ameliyah Muqatal Al-Zarqawi," *Al Jazeera*, June 9, 2006, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/8c438fb5-2b8c-48c4-a8cf-7ca0f06b1413>.

the network's sources, the women described those who killed Zarqawi as "traitors and criminals."³⁴⁴

Coverage from *Asharq al-Awsat*, in both English and Arabic, omitted the reaction from Zarqawi's grieving family. Instead the paper reported statements from top U.S. and Iraqi officials and details of the raid. The paper wrote that, "Suicide car bombers sent by Zarqawi have targeted Shi'ite mosques in the past as part of a campaign to plunge Iraq into sectarian civil war," noting a "boost of confidence among American and Iraqi officials" after his death.³⁴⁵

Al-Qaeda in Iraq's Decline

In May 2008, Al Arabiya reported that Iraqi military operations in Ninevah Province, home to Mosul—then one of the most dangerous cities in Iraq—had achieved their objectives of "dismantling al-Qaeda" and "weakening armed groups" by arresting senior leaders affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq. According to Iraq's Interior Ministry spokesman, the army had arrested 1480 men during its operations, half of them from ISI, Ansar al Sunna, the Mujahideen Army, and the Naqshbandi Brigades. According to the spokesman, "large numbers of those wanted surrendered to our forces and were released after making pledges through clan elders."³⁴⁶

In February 2008, an article in Egypt's *Al Ahram* highlighted the pros and cons of leveraging the Awakening Councils to weaken al-Qaeda in Iraq. The article noted that the councils had become an important cornerstone of the Iraqi security equation by reducing levels of violence in certain areas by as much as 60 percent, and achieving unexpected success in defeating the Islamic State of Iraq.

However, the article raised several concerns about the councils. One worry was that the councils would turn against the Shiites after American forces withdrew from the country, noting that council formations had begun taking the place of regular military formations. Another concern was that arming thousands of Sunnis would prompt the rise of Shiite militias in response, while failing to integrate the Sunnis into the government may push them back into insurgency. Finally, the article cautioned that the councils could maintain their own agendas separate from the central

³⁴⁴ "Al-Qaeda Tu'aki Muqatal Al-Zarqawi..wa Ishiqahu Yabdaun Talaqi Al-Aza' fi Al-Urdun," Al Arabiya, June 8, 2006, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2006/06/08/24475.html>.

³⁴⁵ "Iraq Hails Zarqawi Death As New Era," *Asharq Al-Awsat English*, June 9, 2006, <http://www.aawsat.net/2006/06/article55266415>; "Muqatal Al-Zarqawi fi Gara Jawiya Amrikiya 'ala Mukhibihi fi Reef B'Aquba," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, June 9, 2006, <http://aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=367369&issueno=10055#.U6CQy7HOddg>.

³⁴⁶ "Al-Dakhiliya Al-Iraqiya: 'Um Al-Rabiaeen'" Fakakat Tandhim 'Al-Qaeda' fi Ninewa," Al Arabiya, May 24, 2008, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2008/05/24/50357.html>.

government in Baghdad, imposing their control over provinces and further dividing Iraqi society.³⁴⁷

Death of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al-Masri

Unlike several reports on Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's death, Arab media reports on the deaths of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al-Masri offered little more than details on the raid and statements of praise from Iraqi and U.S. leaders. According to a statement from Nuri al-Maliki carried by *Asharq al-Awsat*, Iraqi and U.S. forces also arrested a majority of the Islamic State of Iraq's senior leaders who "were planning a large criminal act during the last two days, planning to target a large number of churches." Maliki also claimed that "[Al-Qaeda in Iraq] has become weaker than ever after this strike..."³⁴⁸

Egypt's *Al-Masri Al-Youm* carried slightly more hyperbolic statements from Maliki, including his assertion that the intelligence operation was able to "achieve a quality blow that broke the back of al-Qaeda." Furthermore, Maliki described their deaths as a "rush of good news to all of the Iraqi people and the civilized world..."³⁴⁹

Al Jazeera noted that the timing of the announcement was important for Maliki's credibility, pointing out that his government had declared Baghdadi dead the previous year on official TV, only to have those claims denied by al-Qaeda. Mustafa al-Ani, a security advisor from the Gulf Research Centre, was quoted saying that he didn't believe "Maliki is going to risk losing his credibility a second time without verifying the identity." At the same time, the article pointed to the importance of the operation for Maliki as he tried to gain support for his State of Law coalition after parliamentary elections.³⁵⁰

AQI: Neutralized or Resurgent?

In June 2010, *Asharq al-Awsat* carried reporting from *The New York Times* that alleged AQI's communication with al-Qaeda Central in Pakistan had been cut off. The report ran General Ray Odierno's statement that due to losses inflicted on the network, "it would be difficult for them to continue to recruit new members." Iraq's Defense Minister Abdel Qader Jassim also noted in the

³⁴⁷ Ahmad Diyab, "Majalis Al-Sahwa wa Al-Aman fi Al-Iraq," *Al Ahram*, February 1, 2008, <http://digital.ahram.org.eg/articles.aspx?Serial=703813&eid=35>.

³⁴⁸ "Muqatal Al-Baghdadi wa Al-Masri Za'imi 'Al-Qaeda' Qarb MUSAQAT Ras Saddam Bi-Daraba Iraqiyyah-Amirkiyyah," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, April 20, 2010, <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11466&article=566043%20#.U6CkkrH0doI>.

³⁴⁹ "Al-Maliki Ya'lan Muqatal Abu Omar Al-Baghdadi wa Abu Ayyub Al-Marsi Za'imay Tandhim Al-Qaeda Bil-Iraq," *Al-Masri Al-Youm*, April 19, 2010, <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/1570>.

³⁵⁰ "Al-Qaeda in Iraq Leaders 'Killed'," Al Jazeera English, April 19, 2010, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2010/04/2010419175741872481.html>.

story that security forces were in the final stages of clearing al-Qaeda members from Basra Province after numerous senior leaders were arrested.³⁵¹

After Osama Bin Laden was killed on May 2, 2011, Egypt's *Masrawy* quoted Iraq's Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari saying that Bin Laden "got what he deserved" and that his death would be a blow to his followers. Zebari alleged at the time that Iraq was weakening al-Qaeda there. "Al-Qaeda lost the ability to carry out terrorist campaigns permanently. Terrorists can no longer work from...liberated regions...They no longer have control over any cities – they now need a month or two for preparing attacks."³⁵²

However, by the following July, *Asharq al-Awsat* quoted Iraqi intelligence sources who said that they had registered a return to activities only carried out by al-Qaeda, particularly in western Iraq. The outlet pointed out that the organization's return to Iraq aligned with a recent statement from its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, calling on young Muslims to begin returning to parts of Iraq that the organization had left.

In October 2012, BBC Arabic highlighted an intelligence report from U.S. Inspector General Stuart Bowen that noted Iraq's security had deteriorated significantly over the past year amidst a revival of AQI. The report claimed that when American forces were leaving Iraq in late 2011, there were less than 800 al-Qaeda members in Iraq; as of late 2012, there were "at least 2,500" members who were living and training in five camps in Anbar Province and Salahuddin Province.³⁵³

Emerging in Syria or Regime Propaganda?

Two weeks after car bombs struck the State Security Directorate in Damascus on December 23, 2011, *Asharq Al-Awsat* ran a story titled "Syria: The Lie of Al-Qaeda," which featured Syrian opposition members pinning the blame for the attacks on Bashar al-Assad's regime. The article quoted Hani al-Sibai, director of the Al-Maqrizi Studies Center in London, saying that the explosions were strange "in a country governed by a totalitarian regime based on a security machine," and that the regime was using the al-Qaeda boogeyman to suspend its failure in dealing with demonstrators peaceful requests. The article also featured the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's former Supreme Guide, Ali Sadr al-Deen al-Bayouni, who claimed that several days before the bombings, one of the regime's media outlets carried a fabricated intelligence report on al-Qaeda elements infiltrating Syria from Lebanon. According to Bayouni, there were

³⁵¹ Jasim Dakhil, "Al-Qa'id Al-Askari Al-Amirki: 'Al-Qaeda' fi Al-Iraq Faqadat Al-Itisal bi Qiyadatiha Al-Markaziyyah fi Bakistan," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, June 6, 2010, <http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11513&article=572673&feature=#.U6DYHLH Oddg>.

³⁵² "Sahifa: Wazir Kharijya Al-Iraq Sa'id bi Muqatal Bin Laden," *Masrawy*, May 5, 2011, <http://www.masrawy.com/news/mideast/reuters/2011/may/5/5245985.aspx>.

³⁵³ "Taqrir Amriki: Al-'Anf Yatazayid fi Al-Iraq Wast Al-Fasad," *BBC Arabic*, October 31, 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/middleeast/2012/10/121031_iraq_corruption.shtml.

also leaked reports inside Syria that the regime had transferred hundreds of civilian detainees to the security centers that were bombed, and then buried them before identifying the bodies.³⁵⁴

Writing in *Al Arabiya* the day of the attacks, however, Faris Bin Hazam observed that the “presence of suicide bombers in the heart of Damascus is not a surprising step, and it is not possible for any sane person to rule it out. Didn’t Damascus control the passage of suicide bombers to Iraq?” Hazam concluded by saying that it was only natural for the Syrian regime to reap what it sowed over the years, citing an “established fact that the regime, which supported and nurtured killing in Iraq, will one day live the same scene.”³⁵⁵

Islamic State of Iraq Merges with Nusra

One month after ISI leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced his group’s merger with Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* reported that Nusra’s influence was waning against the more extreme ISI. The article alleged that Nusra had been gaining support with other Syrian opposition groups because of its discipline and battlefield successes. In contrast, Baghdadi was not popular among the opposition he focused too much attention on imposing his hardline Islamic rule, instead of trying to overthrow the Assad regime. The article quoted one source close to Nusra leader Abu Mohamad al-Jolani saying, “We reject his presence in Syria...He should take his fighters and return to Iraq. We do not accept his methods.”³⁵⁶

When al-Qaeda Central leader Ayman al-Zawahiri annulled the merger between the groups, Al Jazeera focused the blame on Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi for Nusra’s hardships, noting al-Zawahiri’s criticism that Baghdadi was wrong to announce the merger without consulting or notifying al-Qaeda’s leadership. The network cited a Nusra militant who said that when the two groups merged, nearly 70 percent of its members – especially the non-Syrians – joined the new organization in Idlib. According to him, the defection rates were even higher in eastern regions of Syria.³⁵⁷

Safe Haven for Foreign Fighters

In late 2013, Arabic media outlets picked up a report from the *BBC* that foreign jihadists were crossing into Syria via safe houses in southern Turkey. *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* cited the report’s claim that “more than 150 people [stayed] in the house” during the previous 90 days, including between 15 and 20 Britons. According to one fighter from the Free Syrian Army that *Al-Quds*

³⁵⁴ Mohamed Al-Shafa’I, “Suriya: Akdhuba ‘Al-Qaeda,’” *Asharq Al-Awsat*, January 6, 2012, <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=45&article=657599&issueno=12092#.U6GBNbH0doI>.

³⁵⁵ Faris Bin Hazam, “Liltadhkir: ‘Al-Qaeda’ fi Suriya..Haqiqqa,” *Al Arabiya*, December 23, 2011, <http://www.alarabiya.net/views/2011/12/23/184155.html>.

³⁵⁶ “Tarajji’a Nufudh Jabhat Al-Nusra fi Suriya amam Dawlat Al-Iraq Al-Islamiya,” *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, May 18, 2013, <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=45334>.

³⁵⁷ Basma Atassi, “Al-Zawahiri Yulghi Damaj ‘Jihadi’ Suriya wal Iraq,” *Al Jazeera*, June 9, 2013, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/a5a7d33e-3c9f-4706-b070-e358b5e67236>.

Al-Arabi quoted, the jihadists were not only fighting the Assad regime, but were also attacking other rebel groups. The FSA fighter said that they had “undertaken a revolution for freedom and equality, but the jihadists don’t want that. They have come to destroy Syria.”³⁵⁸

In May 2014, *Asharq Al-Awsat* reported on Washington’s increasing fears about the numbers of foreign fighters flooding into Syria, where they could receive combat training and become threats to national security when they return home. At the time, intelligence estimates put the number of American citizens fighting in Syria around 100, though sources indicated that the numbers were likely higher. The report cited figures from *Le Monde*, which alleged that there were 300 French jihadists, 200 from Belgium, 100 from the Netherlands, 300-400 Britons, dozens of Germans, and 15,000 foreign fighters from 70 other countries.³⁵⁹

Rebel Infighting

In January 2014, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* documented fighting in al-Raqqa between ISIS and the Islamic Front, an umbrella group of seven rebel factions. The paper’s report cited numbers from the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which claimed that almost 700 people were killed during nine days of fighting between ISIS and rebel groups. Like many other reports, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* mentioned that other opposition fighters have accused ISIS of kidnapping, detaining, and murdering its opponents. However, the paper also reported that members of an unnamed fighting group attacked an ISIS commander’s house, “kidnapped his mother and sister, and raped his mother...”³⁶⁰

In addition to fighting each other on the battlefield, Al Jazeera reported that rebel groups were trading insults on social media sites like WhatsApp and Twitter. According to the network, social media accounts that either supported or were affiliated with ISIS would accuse people linked to the Mujahideen Army, Islamic Front, and Syrian Rebel Front, of not supporting jihad in Syria, and of being like the Awakening Councils in Iraq who took money from Arab regimes to fight al-Qaeda.³⁶¹ Meanwhile, supporters of the other factions would accuse ISIS of being an Iranian agent, and call them Kharijites – a slanderous reference to early Muslims who rejected the rule of Prophet Mohamed’s grandson Ali.

In addition, Nusra and ISIS supporters also clashed online, as ISIS supporters accuses Nusra and its leader, Abu Mohamed al-Jolani, of betraying the mujahideen and standing on the sidelines

³⁵⁸ “BBC: Jihadiyun Ajanib Yastakhdamun Manazil Amina fi Junub Turkia Lil Intiqal ila Suria,” *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, December 7, 2013, <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=111342>.

³⁵⁹ Hiba al-Qudsi, “Akthar min 100 Amirki Andamu Lil Jihadiyin fi Suria,” *Asharq Al-Awsat*, May 21, 2014, <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=772665&issueno=12958#.U6GI17H0doI>.

³⁶⁰ “700 Qatil fi Al-Ma’rik bain Al-Jihadiyin wa Muqatilai Al-Ma’arida Al-Suriya...wa ‘Da’ash’ Tastawali ‘ala Ma’bar Tel Abyad,” *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, January 12, 2014, <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=122434>.

³⁶¹ Mohamed Al-Najar, “Harb bain ‘Al-Jihadiyin’ ‘ala Muwaq’a Al-Tawasul,” Al Jazeera, January 15, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/E7195226-CCFC-4F24-8841-697962C0CCD2>.

while the other factions fought it. In opposition, Nusra's followers focused on ISIS's executions of Nusra leaders and members.³⁶²

Al-Qaeda Central Cuts Off ISIS

After al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri officially cut off ISIS from the organization, Al Arabiya's Institute for Studies published an article which pointed out that infighting among Syria's Islamist groups has damaged the cause of jihad there, just as it did when Islamists fought each other during Algeria's civil war in the 1990s. The author hypothesized that, after watching how infighting collapsed the Islamist goal in Algeria, al-Qaeda Central decided to "pull the rug [from underneath] ISIS early on. However, the author cautioned, ISIS maintains substantial influence inside Syria, and "90 percent of Arab and foreign fighters going to fight in Syria are joining under its banner," making it the largest fighting faction among all other rebel groups.³⁶³

Al Jazeera English reported the news with the headline, "Al-Qaeda Disowns ISIL (ISIS) Rebels in Syria."³⁶⁴ The article highlighted that ISIS "consolidated its grip" on Raqqa, "imposing their strict version of Sharia law on residents." According to the report, ISIS ordered women to "wear the niqab in public," banned the sale of cigarettes and tobacco products, and also banned music and made "attendance of Friday prayers compulsory." Also noting ISIS's infighting with other rebels, the article stated, "[I]nternecine fighting...has undermined the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad and dismayed Western powers pushing for peace talks."³⁶⁵

Western Media

The Connection between Iraq and Al-Qaeda

³⁶² Mohamed Al-Najar, "Harb bain 'Al-Jihadiyin' 'ala Muwaq'a Al-Tawasul," Al Jazeera, January 15, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/E7195226-CCFC-4F24-8841-697962C0CCD2>.

³⁶³ Ahmad Nazif, "'Al-Qawa'id' Al-Jadida ba'd Al-Zawahiri..min Da'ish ila Ansar Al-Shari'ah," Al Arabiya Institute for Studies, March 2, 2014, <http://studies.alarabiya.net/hot-issues/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B8%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9>.

³⁶⁴ "Al-Qaeda Disowns ISIL Rebels in Syria," Al Jazeera English, February 3, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/02/al-qaeda-disowns-isil-rebels-syria-20142385858351969.html>.

³⁶⁵ "Al-Qaeda Disowns ISIL Rebels in Syria," Al Jazeera English, February 3, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/02/al-qaeda-disowns-isil-rebels-syria-20142385858351969.html>.

In the lead up to the Iraq War, President George W. Bush used his State of the Union address to document a connection between Saddam Hussein's government and al-Qaeda, saying that, "Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody, reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of Al Qaeda." As *The New York Times* reported, one of those links between al-Qaeda and Iraq was the "presence in Baghdad" of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who "had received medical treatment in Iraq for wounds supposedly suffered in Afghanistan."³⁶⁶

Nearly one week after President Bush's address, the paper reported that an "intelligence breakthrough," gathered through interrogations and an intercepted phone call, "made it possible for Secretary of State Colin L. Powell to [present evidence that] a well developed cell of Al Qaeda operating out of Baghdad that was responsible for the assassination of the American diplomat Laurence Foley last October."³⁶⁷

The British press was far more skeptical. As Colin Powell was set to present his case to the United Nations, the *BBC* reported on a leaked British intelligence report which concluded that there were "no current links" between Iraq and al-Qaeda. The article noted frustration among British "intelligence sources" that their work was being politicized to support the war, stated that the intelligence report's conclusion "flatly contradicts one of the main charges" against Saddam Hussein.³⁶⁸

The Guardian was even more skeptical in its coverage of the Iraq-al-Qaeda link. For an article titled, "False Trails That Lead to the Al-Qaeda 'Links,'" the outlet interviewed a former CIA analyst who said that his "sources at the CIA...are saying the evidence [of a link between al-Qaeda and Saddam] is simply not there." *The Guardian* claimed that his view "summarises what many in the intelligence community on both side of the Atlantic believe," and concluded bluntly that, "The evidence on al-Qaeda is very flimsy. Claims of a meeting between an Iraqi intelligence officer and Mohamed Atta, one of the 9/11 suicide bombers, are shaky at best. So too is knowledge of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an alleged associate of Osama bin Laden's, who is said to have been in Baghdad for medical treatment."³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ James Risen, "STATE OF THE UNION: Collecting PROOF; Bush's Speech Puts New Focus on State of Intelligence Data," *New York Times*, January 29, 2003,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/29/world/state-union-collecting-proof-bush-s-speech-puts-new-focus-state-intelligence.html>.

³⁶⁷ Patrick E. Tyler, "Intelligence Break Led U.S. to Tie Envoy Killing to Iraq Qaeda Cell," *New York Times*, February 6, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/06/world/threats-responses-terror-network-intelligence-break-led-us-tie-envoy-killing.html>.

³⁶⁸ "Leaked Report Rejects Iraqi Al-Qaeda Link," BBC News, February 5, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/2727471.stm.

³⁶⁹ Ed Vulliamy and Martin Bright, "False Trails that Lead to the Al-Qaeda 'Links,'" *Guardian*, February 1, 2003, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/feb/02/algaida.iraq>.

Zarqawi Pledges Allegiance to Al-Qaeda

When Zarqawi's Tawhid and Jihad organization pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda in October 2004, the Associated Press noted that al-Qaeda and Zarqawi had been in contact for eight months, and pointed out that "[Zarqawi's] relationship to bin Laden and the al-Qaeda leadership has long been the subject of considerable speculation."³⁷⁰ CNN noted that the report Colin Powell presented to the UN in 2003, which asserted a link between Zarqawi, al-Qaeda, and the Iraqi regime, "had been called into question," and that reports of Zarqawi having his leg amputated in Iraq "appeared to have been incorrect."³⁷¹

The Associated Press also pointed out that "terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi" and al-Qaeda had been in contact for eight months, though it similarly noted the "considerable speculation" that had long surrounded his relationship with the organization.³⁷²

The BBC hedged its report by referencing the "speculation before now about whether Zarqawi and Bin Laden are allies or rivals," and noting that, "Some reports claim the two men have little connection at all." Furthermore, the same report cautioned that "bogus messages" had been posted on Islamic websites before, though it cited analysts who said that the pledge "may well be genuine."³⁷³

Zarqawi's Death

In its obituary for Zarqawi, *The Guardian* called him the "self-styled leader" of AQI that Britons would "forever associate" with kidnapping and beheading British citizen Ken Bigley in October 2004. The obituary stated that Zarqawi "played a pivotal, if curious role, in the US decision to invade Iraq," but also highlighted much of Zarqawi's brutality in Iraq, and mentioned his plan for igniting civil war between Iraq's Sunnis and Shiites.³⁷⁴

NBC focused very little of its immediate coverage on the legacy and background of Zarqawi. Instead, the network reported details of the airstrike that killed him, while noting that his death

³⁷⁰ "Zarqawi Movement Vows Al-Qaeda Allegiance," Associated Press, October 18, 2004, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2004-10-18-iraq-alqaeda_x.htm.

³⁷¹ "Al-Zarqawi group claims allegiance to bin Laden," CNN.com, October 17, 2004, <http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/10/17/al.zarqawi.statement>.

³⁷² "Zarqawi Movement Vows Al-Qaeda Allegiance," Associated Press, October 18, 2004, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2004-10-18-iraq-alqaeda_x.htm.

³⁷³ David Bamford, "Zarqawi 'Shows Bin Laden Loyalty,'" BBC News, October 18, 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3752616.stm.

³⁷⁴ Lawrence Joffe, "Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi," *Guardian*, June 8, 2006, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/2006/jun/09/guardianobituaries.alqaida>.

“was not likely to end the insurgency” because another “foreign-born militant was poised to take over the terror network’s operations.”³⁷⁵

For its part, the BBC called Zarqawi “Iraq’s most notorious insurgent,” but highlighted that “most information on him is restricted to what his enemies and supporters have attributed to him.” Its obituary for him also hinted that the network was still unsure of Zarqawi’s links to Saddam Hussein’s regime. “Intelligence reports indicated he was in Baghdad and—according to Mr Powell—this was a sure sign that Saddam Hussein was courting al-Qaeda, which, in turn, justified an attack on Iraq.” In conclusion, the obituary surmised that, “like so much else about Zarqawi’s life, the true facts seem likely to remain shrouded in uncertainty.”³⁷⁶

Al-Qaeda in Iraq Declines

By mid 2008, the media narrative focused on the success of the Sunni Awakening – former insurgents who turned against al-Qaeda – and the decline of al-Qaeda’s strength in Iraq.

The Associated Press quoted General David Petraeus, who was then commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, saying that, “We do think that there is some assessment ongoing as to the continued viability of Al Qaeda’s fight in Iraq.”³⁷⁷

When Coalition forces killed AQI’s deputy leader Abu Qaswarah in October 2008, CNN reported that the Sunni Awakening Councils had “turned against al Qaeda in Iraq, helping to diminish its presence in several parts of the country.” The article concluded by quoting military officials who said that the deputy leader’s death “will significantly degrade AQI operations in Mosul and northern Iraq, leaving the network without a leader to oversee and coordinate its operations in the region.”³⁷⁸

Deaths of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al-Masri

When Coalition forces killed top AQI leaders Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al-Masri in April 2010, Fox News highlighted statements from Vice President Joe Biden and General Ray Odierno regarding the organization’s status. According to Biden, the deaths of the two leaders

³⁷⁵ “Al-Zarqawi Tried to Flee in Dying Moments,” Associated Press, June 10, 2006,

http://www.nbcnews.com/id/13222000/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/al-zarqawi-tried-flee-dying-moments/#.U58GmrH0ddg.

³⁷⁶ “Obituary: Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” BBC News, June 8, 2006,

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5058262.stm.

³⁷⁷ Petraeus: Al Qaeda Could Be Shifting Focus from Iraq to Afghanistan, Pakistan,” Associated Press, July 19, 2008, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2008/07/19/petraeus-al-qaeda-could-be-shifting-focus-from-iraq-to-afghanistan-pakistan>.

³⁷⁸ “U.S. Military: Senior Al Qaeda Chief Killed in Iraq,” CNN, October 15, 2008,

http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/meast/10/15/iraq.alqaeda.leader/index.html?eref=time_world.

marked a “potentially devastating” blow to the network, and the raid that killed them “demonstrates the improved security, strength and capacity of Iraqi security forces.” Odierno echoed similar sentiments, commenting, “The death of these terrorists is potentially the most significant blow to Al Qaeda in Iraq since the beginning of the insurgency.”³⁷⁹

The BBC noted the same comments from both men, but cautioned that “the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2006 did little to slow the insurgency...The militants’ fortunes in Iraq are at a low ebb...and the deaths of its leaders are no doubt a factor in that, but there are many other elements involved too.”³⁸⁰

The Associated Press said, “Though al-Qaida has shown it is still capable of staging its hallmark coordinated suicide attacks against high-profile targets in the heart of the capital, U.S. and Iraqi military operations have diminished its power since the height of the violence several years ago.” Furthermore, the network described their deaths as “a significant boost for [Iraqi Prime Minister] al-Maliki, who has staked his reputation on being the man who can restore stability to Iraq after years of bloodshed.”³⁸¹

AQI: Neutralized or Resurgent?

In June 2010, *The New York Times* carried General Odierno’s reports that AQI had “lost connection” to its central leadership, and would “face difficulties as it tried to promote new officers for its efforts to topple the Iraqi government and establish havens.” That news prompted the paper to run with the headline, “Qaeda Leaders in Iraq Neutralized, U.S. Says.”³⁸²

However, *The Guardian* offered a starkly different take. In an article just two months later, the outlet wrote that al-Qaeda was “attempting to make a comeback in Iraq” and “exploiting the imminent departure of US fighting troops” by recruiting former Sunni Awakening fighters who were disgruntled that they had not collected their paychecks for more than two months. One of the Awakening Council leaders was quoted saying, “Al-Qaida has made a big comeback here. This is my neighbourhood and I know every single person living here. And I know where their allegiances lie now.”

³⁷⁹ “2 Most Wanted Al Qaeda Leaders in Iraq Killed by U.S., Iraqi Forces,” Fox News, April 19, 2010, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2010/04/19/iraqi-al-qaeda-leader-killed-countrys-intelligence-team-pm-maliki-says>.

³⁸⁰ “Senior Iraqi Al-Qaeda Leaders ‘Killed,’” BBC, April 19, 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8630213.stm.

³⁸¹ Lara Jakes and Qassim Abdul-Zahra, “U.S.: Top Al-Qaida in Iraq Leaders Killed,” Associated Press, April 19, 2010, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/36647757/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/us-top-al-qaeda-iraq-leaders-killed/#.U580ObHOddg.

³⁸² Thom Shanker, “Qaeda Leaders in Iraq Neutralized, U.S. Says,” *New York Times*, June 4, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/05/world/middleeast/05military.html>.

At the end of 2011, *The New York Times* offered a starkly different assessment. The paper reported in November 2011 that, as U.S. combat troops prepared to leave the country, “senior American and Iraqi officials are expressing growing concern...[that AQI] is poised for a deadly resurgence.” The paper attributed AQI’s rebound to a change in tactics, allowing it to “exploit gaps left by the departing American troops...”³⁸³

By 2012, the Associated Press reported that AQI had established training camps for insurgents in western Iraq, drawing from a pool of men who either escaped or were released from Iraq’s prisons to double in size between late-2011 and late-2012. One “Shiite” government employee that the paper interviewed said that AQI “is much stronger than what the Iraqi officials are imagining...The terrorist group is able to launch big attacks and free its members from Iraqi prisons, and this indicates that al-Qaeda is stronger than our security forces.”³⁸⁴

Emerging in Syria or Regime Propaganda?

One of the problems with reporting on the Syrian civil war, especially in its early stage, was a relative dearth of media outlets actually reporting from inside the country. Journalists based in neighboring countries were still piecing together reports from accounts they were hearing from Syrian citizens on the ground and from the Syrian regime itself.

When al-Qaeda-style attacks began occurring more frequently in Syria between late 2011 and early 2012, reports from Syrian citizens and the regime tended to contradict each other entirely. For example, when two car bombs hit the State Security Directorate in Damascus on December 23, 2011, *The New York Times* wrote that it “appeared to be the most brazen and deadly attack” against the Assad regime since the uprising began, and Syria’s deputy foreign minister Faisal Mekdad remarked, “We said it from the beginning, this is terrorism...They are killing the army and civilians.” The paper also published reactions from opposition members who accused the regime of playing a role, but state that they “offered no proof for that claim.”³⁸⁵

Reporting the same news, *The Guardian* gave substantially more space to the opposition’s claims against the government, raising their accusations in the second paragraph of the article. *The Guardian* also highlighted the fact that the bombs detonated “shortly after the arrival of Arab League observers” to Damascus, and noted that it was the first large bombing in the capital since the uprising began. According to one opposition activist the paper interviewed, “The presence of the Arab League advance team of observers pushed the regime to give this story in order to scare

³⁸³ Michael S. Schmidt and Eric Schmitt, “Leaving Iraq, U.S. Fears New Surge of Qaeda Terror,” *New York Times*, November 5, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/06/world/middleeast/leaving-iraq-us-fears-new-surge-of-qaeda-terror.html?pagewanted=all>.

³⁸⁴ Qassim Abdul-Zahra, “Al-Qaeda Making Comeback in Iraq, Officials Say,” Associated Press, October 9, 2012, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2012/10/09/al-qaeda-iraq/1623297>.

³⁸⁵ Kareem Fahim, “Syria Blames Al Qaeda after Bombs Kill Dozens in Damascus,” *New York Times*, December 23, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/24/world/middleeast/syria-says-suicide-bombers-attack-in-damascus.html?_r=0.

the committee from moving around Syria.” Adding further skepticism to the regime’s position, the article noted foreign minister Walid Muallem’s prediction that the Arab League observers would “come and see that [terrorist groups] are present.”³⁸⁶

When the next major bombing struck on January 6, *The New York Times* seemed torn between which narratives to believe. The paper flatly noted that, “Evidence was scant for either the government’s or the opposition’s narrative, but the bombing seemed to underline each party’s version of events: a dictatorial government so cynical as to kill its own people or a religiously inspired opposition bent on sowing anarchy in an increasingly combustible country.”³⁸⁷

Haaretz was markedly less torn in its coverage. The Israeli newspaper opened by saying that the Syrian opposition “demanded an independent investigation” of the bombing, and then quoted “eyewitnesses” in the neighborhood who reported that “tens of ambulances were in the area approximately three hours prior” and “added that state-run news crews began their on-site coverage of the attack almost immediately after it occurred.” Meanwhile, the report gave almost no space to the government’s side of the story.³⁸⁸

However, as bombings continued to strike Damascus and Aleppo, the media quickly turned their attention to al-Qaeda’s affiliates in the region. When car bombs hit security buildings in Aleppo in February 2012, *The New York Times* conceded that, while the perpetrators were still unknown, “it seemed Syria was facing the kind of violence it had long been accused of supporting in neighboring Iraq and Lebanon.” The report went as far as to say that the attacks “suggest that now foreign fighters may indeed be jumping into the conflict...”³⁸⁹

The day after the bombings, McClatchy cited unnamed U.S. officials who pinned responsibility on al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). The report stated flatly that AQI “carried out two recent bombings” in Damascus, though noted it “likely was behind suicide bombings Friday that killed at least 28

³⁸⁶ Martin Chulov and Matthew Weaver, “Syria blames al-Qaida after two car bombs kill dozens in Damascus,” *Guardian*, December 23, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/dec/23/syria-blames-alqaida-bombs-damascus>.

³⁸⁷ Anthony Shadid, “Bomb Kills Dozens in Damascus, Stoking Suspensions,” *New York Times*, January 6, 2012, <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2012/01/07/world/middleeast/bomb-attack-in-syrian-capital-kills-25.html>.

³⁸⁸ Jack Khoury, “Syria Opposition Claims Assad behind Deadly Damascus Terrorist Attack,” *Haaretz*, January 7, 2012, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/syria-opposition-claims-assad-behind-deadly-damascus-terrorist-attack-1.406008>.

³⁸⁹ Neil MacFarquhar, “2 Security Complex Car Bombings Kill Dozens, Syria Says,” *New York Times*, February 10, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/11/world/middleeast/blasts-in-aleppo-syria-homs-violence-said-to-continue.html?pagewanted=all>.

people in the largest city, Aleppo...” According to one of the officials, the bombings in Aleppo were “[al-Qaeda leader] Zawahiri basically taking the shackles off.”³⁹⁰

ISI Merges with Nusra, Forming ISIS

When the Islamic State of Iraq merged with Jabhat al-Nusra to form the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in April 2013, *The New York Times* reported that the union “appeared to strengthen the role of Islamic militants in the Syrian insurgency and further complicate Western assistance efforts.” But it also highlighted pushback from the secular Free Syrian Army (FSA) in response to ISIS’s leader telling Syrians to not “make democracy a price for those thousands among you who have been killed.” An FSA spokesman retorted that, “No one has the right to impose any form of state on Syrians. Syrians will go to the polls to choose their leaders and form their own state.”³⁹¹

The Financial Times also reported that the merger would increase the power of “radical Islamist factions” and also “dismay western backers of the rebellion...”³⁹² *The Telegraph* noted that the U.S. designation of Jabhat al-Nusra in December 2012 showed “the ambiguous attitude of the West to the revolution in Syria,” while it claimed that the major dilemma for Western policy was embodied by Eric Harroun, a U.S. army veteran who fought alongside al-Nusra in Syria before a Virginia court charged him firing a rocket-propelled grenade while fighting with a terrorist group.³⁹³

Safe Haven for Foreign Fighters

During the late summer 2013, media outlets reported that jihadist groups had secured safe havens in Syria that posed a major terrorist threat. *The New York Times* reported that more than 6,000

³⁹⁰ Jonathan S. Landay, “U.S. Officials: Al Qaeda behind Syria Bombings,” McClatchy Newspapers, February 10, 2012, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2012/02/10/138593/us-officials-al-qaida-behind-syria.html>.

³⁹¹ Hania Mourtada and Rick Gladstone, “Iraq’s Branch of Al Qaeda Merges with Syria Jihadists,” *New York Times*, April 9, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/10/world/middleeast/Iraq-and-Syria-jihadists-combine.html>.

³⁹² Michael Peel and Borzou Daragahi, “Syria and Iraqi Radical Islamists Merge,” *Financial Times*, April 9, 2013, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/f27707c6-a12e-11e2-990c-00144feabdc0.html#axzz34LD14Jyj>.

³⁹³ Richard Spencer, “Al-Qaeda in Iraq Claims Merger with Syria’s Jabhat Al-Nusra,” *Telegraph*, April 9, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/9982477/Al-Qaeda-in-Iraq-claims-merger-with-Syrias-Jabhat-al-Nusra.html>.

foreign fighters had entered the conflict, and that as a result of the West's "fear of militants coming to dominate the opposition...[it] lost a chance to influence the battle in Syria."³⁹⁴

In September, *The Washington Post* editorial board argued that, while U.S. Members of Congress members were rightfully worried that Western military action in Syria could strengthen extremists, "[T]he threat to both Syria and U.S. national interests from the jihadists" would worsen if they failed to act. As the board further noted, "...They are determined to create a safe haven for al-Qaeda in Syria...while imposing a Taliban-style fundamentalist regime."

By October 2013, *The Washington Times* reported "Syria has become al Qaeda's largest safe haven, with more than 10,000 fighters" and "provides al Qaeda with a new base from which to attack Western targets."³⁹⁵

Rebel Infighting

Media coverage of rebel infighting has centered mostly on ISIS's brutal attacks against the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and other local rebel brigades, and how that fighting is undermining rebel efforts against the Syrian regime. For example, in July 2013, *The New York Times* reported that ISIS had shot and killed one of the FSA's commanders and had beheaded several of its foot soldiers. One FSA fighter told the paper that Syrians had "staged demonstrations to get freedom, not to have an emir ruling us."³⁹⁶

When ISIS battled local rebel groups in Azzaz, a group of 6 rebel brigades reportedly "took a jab at the strict ideology of the ISIS jihadists," telling them not "to shed the blood of Muslims and be hasty in calling them heretics and apostates."³⁹⁷ After rebel brigades pushed ISIS out of its headquarters in Aleppo in January 2014, *The New York Times* highlighted opposition members "who have compared the group's heavy-handed tactics to those of Mr. Assad's government,"

³⁹⁴ Anne Barnard and Eric Schmitt, "As Foreign Fighters Flood Syria, Fears of a New Extremist Haven," *New York Times*, August 8, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/09/world/middleeast/as-foreign-fighters-flood-syria-fears-of-a-new-extremist-haven.html?pagewanted=all>.

³⁹⁵ Kristina Wong, "Syria Becomes Largest Home to Al Qaeda; Jihadists Find Safe Haven to Plot Attacks," *Washington Times*, October 31, 2013, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/oct/31/syria-becomes-largest-home-to-al-qaeda/?page=all>.

³⁹⁶ Anne Barnard and Hwaida Saad, "Syrian Rebel Infighting Undermines Anti-Assad Effort," *New York Times*, July 12, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/13/world/middleeast/syrian-rebel-infighting-undermines-anti-assad-effort.html?pagewanted=all>.

³⁹⁷ Ben Hubbard, "Fighting between Rebels Intensifies over a Strategic Town in Syria," *New York Times*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/04/world/middleeast/syria.html>.

including one activist who said, “Now my neighborhood has been liberated twice. Once from the regime and the second time from ISIS.”³⁹⁸

Al-Qaeda Central Cuts Off ISIS

When al-Qaeda *emir* Ayman al-Zawahiri issued a statement cutting ties with ISIS in February, multiple outlets interpreted the move to mean that ISIS was too extreme its former mother organization.

CNN’s Peter Bergen wrote, “When even al Qaeda publicly rejects you because you are too brutal, it’s likely a reasonable indicator that you are.”³⁹⁹ Bergen also noted that al-Qaeda’s leadership has long been concerned about alienating Muslim populations—which became apparent when Ayman al-Zawahiri asked al-Qaeda in Iraq to stop killing Shiite civilians in 2005 and when Osama Bin Laden told al-Shabaab “to stop attacking in the central market” of Mogadishu.”⁴⁰⁰

The Huffington Post explained that “[T]he blunt statement from al-Qaeda reinforced [ISIS’s] pariah status as a militant body so inflexible that it is shunned even by other hardline Islamists.”⁴⁰¹ The article suggested that the move might isolate ISIS boost the credibility of Jabhat al-Nusra’s, which “has gained a reputation as a pragmatic group” despite its “hardline Islamist doctrine.”⁴⁰²

The Telegraph also continued with the same theme that al-Qaeda disavowed the group because it was “too extreme even for the organization founded by Osama bin Laden.”⁴⁰³ Like *The Huffington Post*, it also claimed that Jabhat al-Nusra “has grown in popularity in Syria” because

³⁹⁸ Ben Hubbard, “Syrian Rebels Deal Qaeda-Linked Group a Reversal,” *New York Times*, January 8, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/09/world/middleeast/syrian-rebels-said-to-oust-qaeda-linked-group-from-its-aleppo-headquarters.html>.

³⁹⁹ Peter Bergen, “A Terror Group Too Brutal for Al Qaeda?” *CNN*, February 5, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/04/opinion/bergen-al-qaeda-brutality-syria>.

⁴⁰⁰ Peter Bergen, “A Terror Group Too Brutal for Al Qaeda?” *CNN*, February 5, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/04/opinion/bergen-al-qaeda-brutality-syria>.

⁴⁰¹ Max J. Rosenthal, “Al Qaeda Cuts off Powerful but Brutal Islamist Group in Syria,” *Huffington Post*, February 3, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/03/al-qaeda-isis_n_4717567.html.

⁴⁰² Max J. Rosenthal, “Al Qaeda Cuts off Powerful but Brutal Islamist Group in Syria,” *Huffington Post*, February 3, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/03/al-qaeda-isis_n_4717567.html.

⁴⁰³ Ruth Sherlock, “Al-Qaeda Cuts Links with Syrian Group Too Extreme Even for Them,” *Telegraph*, February 3, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10614037/Al-Qaeda-cuts-links-with-Syrian-group-too-extreme-even-for-them.html>.

it has a smaller contingent of foreigners in its ranks, and “has used a more pragmatic, less dictatorial approach to imposing harldine Islamic law on the country.”⁴⁰⁴

Taking over Mosul

When ISIS fighters took control over Mosul on June 10, 2014, *The New York Times* reported that the Iraqi Army “apparently crumbled in the face of the militant assault, as soldiers dropped their weapons, shed their uniforms for civilian clothes and blended in with the fleeing masses. The story painted a picture of utter terror and submission, as one soldier told the paper, “They took control of everything, and they are everywhere.”

According to *Al Jazeera*, “Not since Osama bin Laden has a leader been held in such reverence among Sunni fighters, scored such stunning and shocking victories, and threatened so much of the established order.” The report almost seemed to praise Baghdadi’s rise from modest means to emir of ISIS, writing that, “Baghdadi has literally fought his way from ordinary beginnings in northern Iraq to lead what is perhaps the Middle East’s most feared irregular force.”⁴⁰⁵

One week later, *Al Arabiya* general manager Abdulrahman al-Rashed pinned the debacle on Prime Minister al-Maliki. He wrote that, “Events once again proved that the problem lies with Nuri al-Maliki’s leadership. He is an ignorant and authoritarian prime minister who is in control of all jurisdictions...One of his current follies is that he’s attacking his rivals and provoking them to collectively act against him.”⁴⁰⁶

Meanwhile, as the U.S. moved several navy ships to the Persian Gulf, NBC News noted “heightened concerns over deepening U.S. involvement in a conflict that most Americans thought was behind them.” The network also raised several questions, including “can the assault by the Sunni militants be stopped, will the U.S. military bolster its presence in Baghdad and how will the instability in Iraq affect the rest of the Middle East.”⁴⁰⁷

Violent Activities:

⁴⁰⁴ Ruth Sherlock, “Al-Qaeda Cuts Links with Syrian Group Too Extreme Even for Them,” *Telegraph*, February 3, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10614037/Al-Qaeda-cuts-links-with-Syrian-group-too-extreme-even-for-them.html>.

⁴⁰⁵ Graeme Baker, “The Fierce Ambition of ISIL’s Baghdadi,” *Al Jazeera English*, June 15, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/fierce-ambition-isil-baghdadi-2014612142242188464.html>.

⁴⁰⁶ Abdulrahman Al-Rashed, “Will Iran Invade Iraq?” *Al Arabiya English*, June 16, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2014/06/16/Will-Iran-invade-Iraq-.html>.

⁴⁰⁷ Tim Stelloh, “ISIS Brings More Chaos to Iraq: What Happened This Weekend,” *NBC News*, June 16, 2014, <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/iraq-turmoil/isis-brings-more-chaos-iraq-what-happened-weekend-n131821>.

- **1993:** Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Abu Mohamed al-Maqdisi returned to Jordan, and began plotting against the Hashemite monarchy. There, Zarqawi established an organization named Bayat al-Imam (Allegiance to the Imam). The first mission that Zarqawi directed—against a movie theater in Zarqa that was showing pornographic films—failed when the bomber “forgot about his bomb. It exploded and blew off his legs.”⁴⁰⁸
- **August 2003:** Zarqawi was allegedly responsible for the car bombing of the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad on August 7, which killed at least 10 and wounded about 40.⁴⁰⁹ Two weeks later, Zarqawi was reportedly behind the truck bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad, which killed 17—including the UN representative – and injured 100.⁴¹⁰ Finally, on August 29, Zarqawi was behind the car bombing outside of the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, Iraq—one of the holiest sites for Shiite Muslims—that killed revered cleric Ayatollah Mohamad Bakr al-Hakim and 100 others.⁴¹¹
- **May 2004:** In May, Zarqawi “inaugurated his notorious wave of hostage beheadings,” making American citizen Nicholas Berg his first victim.⁴¹² Later that month, a suicide bomber with suspected ties to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi detonated himself near the U.S.-led coalition headquarters in Baghdad, killing the acting president of the Iraqi Governing Council, Ezzedine Salim. Salim’s death came 45 days before the occupation forces were set to transfer limited political control back to the Iraqis.⁴¹³
- **2005:** Al-Qaeda in Iraq increased the frequency of attacks throughout the year, targeting Coalition forces and Iraqi Shiites. In late 2005, during operations in Iraq, U.S. forces confiscated a letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri that described the organization’s long-term global strategy. The letter also criticized al-Zarqawi for videotaping and distributing

⁴⁰⁸ Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/?single_page=true.

⁴⁰⁹ “Baghdad Blast Kills 10 at Jordanian Embassy,” CNN, August 7, 2003, <http://us.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/08/07/sprj.irq.main/>.

⁴¹⁰ “Truck Bomb Kills Chief U.N. Envoy to Iraq,” CNN, August 20, 2003, <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/08/19/sprj.irq.main/>.

⁴¹¹ Ben Wedeman, Ingrid Formanek, David Ensor, Shirzad Bozorgmehr, “Najaf Bombing Kills Shiite Leader, Followers Say,” CNN, August 30, 2003, <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/08/29/sprj.irq.najaf/index.html?iref=mpstoryview>.

⁴¹² Mary Anne Weaver, “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi,” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2006, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/?single_page=true.

⁴¹³ Ian Fisher, Christine Hauser, “The Struggle for Iraq: Political Violence; Suicide Bomber Kills President of Iraqi Council,” *New York Times*, May 18, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/18/world/struggle-for-iraq-political-violence-suicide-bomber-kills-president-iraqi.html>.

footage of beheadings, saying that such violence could alienate the Islamic world from al-Qaeda's cause.⁴¹⁴ Major attacks conducted by AQI that year included:

- **February 28:** A suicide bombing in Hilla reportedly targeted Shiite police and National Guard recruits, killing 125 and wounding hundreds.⁴¹⁵
- **April 29:** Numerous suicide bombings across Iraq killed as many as 50 people⁴¹⁶
- **July 2:** Egypt's envoy to Iraq, Ihab al-Sherif, was kidnapped and later executed⁴¹⁷
- **July 16:** A suicide bomber attacked a fuel truck in Musayyib, killing at least 98 and wounding at least 80.⁴¹⁸
- **July 29:** A suicide bombing on Iraqi army recruits in Rabia killed 52 and injured 57.⁴¹⁹
- **September 14:** A suicide bomber attacked a group of laborers in a predominantly Shiite neighborhood in Baghdad, killing 112.⁴²⁰
- **September 29:** Three suicide bombers detonated car bombs at a market and busy streets in the town of Balad, killing at least 102.⁴²¹
- **November 9:** Coordinated suicide bombings at three hotels in Amman, Jordan killed 58 and injured more than 90.⁴²²
- **February 22, 2006:** Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) bombed the Shiite Al Askari Mosque in Samarra, Iraq, one of the four major Shiite shrines in Iraq and the burial place for two of the 12 revered Shiite Imams. Reportedly, "a group of men dressed like Iraqi police

⁴¹⁴ Douglas Jehl and Thom Shanker, "Al Qaeda Tells ally in Iraq to Strive for Global Goals," *New York Times*, October 7, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/07/politics/07zargawi.html>.

⁴¹⁵ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁴¹⁶ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁴¹⁷ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁴¹⁸ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁴¹⁹ "Terrorism: Profile: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," Anti-Defamation League archive website, http://archive.adl.org/terrorism/profiles/al_zarqawi.html#.U5sXIbHOddg.

⁴²⁰ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁴²¹ "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁴²² "Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq," Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

commandos” walked into the shrine and set off the explosions.⁴²³ The mosque attack set off a wave of intensified Shiite-Sunni attacks across Iraq.⁴²⁴

- **November 23, 2006:** Car bombs and mortar attacks in Sadr City killed 215, setting off more sectarian violence.⁴²⁵
- **2007:** ISI continued its deadly bombing campaign, targeting predominantly Shiite populations. In January 2007, the U.S. began deploying an additional 30,000 troops to Iraq, completing the deployment in June that year and bringing the total number of troops in Iraq to 150,000.⁴²⁶
 - **January 22, 2007:** A suicide bomber and car bomb targeted a Shiite market in central Baghdad, killing 88.⁴²⁷
 - **February 3, 2007:** A suicide bomber detonated a truck bomb in a heavily Shiite populated neighborhood of Iraq, killing 135 in what was then the “deadliest single bombing” since the beginning of the Iraq war in 2003.⁴²⁸
 - **March 6, 2007:** Two suicide bombers detonated themselves among Shiite pilgrims in Hillah, killing 93.⁴²⁹
 - **April 18, 2007:** Five separate bombs, including 4 car bombs, targeted Shiite areas in Baghdad, killing more than 170. One of the bombs struck at a central bus station for Shiites travelling to Sadr City.⁴³⁰
 - **June 19, 2007:** A truck bomb exploded outside the Shiite Khulani mosque in Baghdad, killing more than 80 people.⁴³¹

⁴²³ Bill Roggio, “Dome of the Golden Mosque Destroyed,” Long War Journal, February 22, 2006, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2006/02/dome_of_the_golden_m_1.php#.

⁴²⁴ Robert F. Worth, “Blast Destroys Shrine in Iraq, Setting Off Sectarian Fury,” *New York Times*, February 22, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/22/international/middleeast/22cnd-iraq.html>.

⁴²⁵ Greg Bruno, “Profile: Al-Qaeda in Iraq (a.k.a. Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia),” *Washington Post*, November 19, 2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/19/AR2007111900721.html>.

⁴²⁶ Thom Shanker and Michael R. Gordon, “G.I.’s in Iraq Open Big Offensive against Al Qaeda,” *New York Times*, June 17, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/17/world/middleeast/17iraq.html>.

⁴²⁷ “Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁴²⁸ “CHRONOLOGY-The Deadliest Bomb Attacks in Iraq,” *Reuters*, February 3, 2007, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2007/02/03/us-iraq-bombings-idUSL0340037820070203>.

⁴²⁹ “Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

⁴³⁰ Kirk Semple, “Bombings Kill at Least 171 Iraqis in Baghdad,” *New York Times*, April 18, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/18/world/middleeast/18cnd-baghdad.html?pagewanted=all>.

⁴³¹ “Some of the Deadliest Attacks in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 15, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-08-15-iraq-bombings-glance_N.htm.

- **July 7, 2007:** A suicide bomber detonated a truck carrying 4.5 tons of explosives in the Shiite Turkmen village of Amerli, killing as many as 150 people.⁴³²
- **August 16, 2007:** Suicide bombers simultaneously detonated five fuel trucks in the Yazidi Kurdish villages of al-Qataniyah and al-Adnaniyah, killing more than 300 Iraqis, injuring several hundred, and destroying dozens of homes. It was reportedly the worst terrorist attack in Iraq during the post-Saddam Hussein era.⁴³³
- **2009:** As U.S. forces withdrew from Iraq amidst relatively low levels of violence at the end of 2008, car bombings and suicide attacks made a comeback in 2009. While the nature of the attacks fit the profile of AQI/ISI-style bombings, the group's culpability was unclear. The attacks included:
 - **January 2, 2009:** A suicide bomber detonated himself during a meeting of nearly 1,000 tribal leaders in Yusufiya, killing at least 24 and wounding about 40.⁴³⁴
 - **February 9, 2009:** Four American soldiers were killed in Mosul when a suicide bomber detonated his vehicle near the soldiers' Humvee. The attack was the "deadliest single loss in nine months" for U.S. forces in Iraq.⁴³⁵
 - **April 6, 2009:** Six car bombs detonated in Shiite neighborhoods in Baghdad, killing at least 33 and wounding dozens.⁴³⁶
 - **April 10, 2009:** A suicide truck bomber struck the main military base in Mosul, killing 5 American soldiers and two Iraqis. It was "the deadliest attack against American soldiers [in Iraq] in 13 months..."⁴³⁷
 - **April 23-24, 2009:** Three separate suicide bombings in Baghdad and Muqdadia killed at least 80 and injured 120. The attack in Baghdad was perpetrated by a woman who detonated herself among a group of women and children waiting for

⁴³² Stephen Farrell, "Around 150, Death Toll in Iraq Attack among War's Worst," *New York Times*, July 9, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/09/world/middleeast/09iraq.html>.

⁴³³ Tim Butcher, "Iraq Bombs: 250 Die in Worst Terror Attack," *Telegraph*, August 16, 2007, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1560477/Iraq-bombs-250-die-in-worst-terror-attack.html>.

⁴³⁴ Timothy Williams and Riyadh Mohamed, "Suicide Attack Kills 24 at Iraqi Tribal Gathering," *New York Times*, January 2, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/03/world/middleeast/03iraq.html>.

⁴³⁵ Alissa J. Rubin, "Northern Iraq Suicide Blast Kills 4 American Soldiers," *New York Times*, February 9, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/10/world/middleeast/10iraq.html>.

⁴³⁶ Steven Lee Myers, "Six Car Bombs Kill at Least 33 in Iraq," *New York Times*, April 6, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/07/world/middleeast/07iraq.html>.

⁴³⁷ Sam Dagher, "Suicide Attack Kills 5 G.I.'s and 2 Iraqis in Northern City," *New York Times*, April 10, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/11/world/middleeast/11iraq.html>.

emergency food aid.⁴³⁸ The next day, two suicide bombings near the revered Shiite shrine of Imam Musa al-Kadhim and his grandson killed at least 60.⁴³⁹

- **July 17, 2009:** 3 American soldiers were killed when militants attacked an army base in Basra with mortar rounds.⁴⁴⁰
- **October 25, 2009:** ISIS claimed responsibility for two car bombings that struck the Iraqi Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works, killing more than 155 and injuring more than 500.⁴⁴¹
- **January 25, 2010:** Three bombs exploded within 10 minutes of each other in Baghdad during rush hour, striking the Ishtar Sheraton, Babylon Hotel, and Hamra Hotel – all popular hotels for foreign businessmen and journalists. The blasts killed 36 and wounded more than 70.⁴⁴²
- **April 23, 2010:** A series of bombings struck near the headquarters belonging to Shiite cleric Moktada al-Sadr in Sadr City, Baghdad, killing at least 59 and wounding dozens.⁴⁴³
- **May 10, 2010:** A series of shooting and bombing attacks in Baghdad, Fallujah, Samarra, Tarmiya, and Suwayra, killed more than 100 people and wounded hundreds.⁴⁴⁴
- **October 31, 2010:** Gunmen strapped with suicide vests attacked a Catholic church in Baghdad, taking more than 100 people hostage. During the ensuing siege, at least 30 hostages were killed and 41 wounded.⁴⁴⁵
- **November 2, 2010:** Militants set off a wave of car bombs and roadside improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that targeted Sunni and Shiite area across Baghdad, killing at least 63 and wounding about 285.⁴⁴⁶

⁴³⁸ Timothy Williams, "80 Are Killed in 3 Suicide Bombings in Iraq," *New York Times*, April 23, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/24/world/middleeast/24iraq.html>.

⁴³⁹ Steven Lee Myers and Sam Dagher, "Storm of Violence in Iraq Strains Its Security Forces," *New York Times*, April 24, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/25/world/middleeast/25iraq.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

⁴⁴⁰ Timothy Williams, "3 U.S. Soldiers Die in Attack at a Base in Southern Iraq," *New York Times*, July 17, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/18/world/middleeast/18iraq.html>.

⁴⁴¹ Rod Nordland, "Iraq Reaches Voting Deal as Toll Rises in Bombings," *New York Times*, October 26, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/26/world/middleeast/26iraq.html>.

⁴⁴² Anthony Shadid and John Leland, "Baghdad Blasts Shatter Sense of Security in Capital," *New York Times*, January 25, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/26/world/middleeast/26iraq.html>.

⁴⁴³ Steven Lee Myers and Duraid Adnan, "Wave of Fatal Bombings Widens Fissures in Iraq," *New York Times*, April 23, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/world/middleeast/24iraq.html>.

⁴⁴⁴ Steven Lee Myers, "Coordinated Attacks in Iraqi Cities Kill More Than 100," *New York Times*, May 10, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/11/world/middleeast/11iraq.html>.

⁴⁴⁵ John Leland, "Iraqi Forces Storm a Church with Hostages in a Day of Bloodshed," *New York Times*, October 31, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/01/world/middleeast/01iraq.html>.

⁴⁴⁶ Jack Healy, "Coordinated Bombings Strike across Baghdad," *New York Times*, November 2, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/03/world/middleeast/03iraq.html>.

- **May 5, 2011:** A suicide bomber detonated himself at a police training center in the majority Shiite city of Hilla, killing 25 and wounding at least 75.⁴⁴⁷
- **August 15, 2011:** The Islamic State of Iraq was suspected of carrying out a series of 42 “apparently coordinated” attacks using suicide bombs, car bombs, and gunmen. At least 89 people were killed and 315 wounded. The attacks targeted Iraqi policemen and soldiers, as well as a market in Kut, and a mosque in Yusufiya.⁴⁴⁸
- **August 20, 2011:** AQI announced that it was launching a campaign whereby it would carry out 100 attacks, calling it “the battle of revenge for Sheik Osama bin Laden and other senior leaders.”⁴⁴⁹
- **December 23, 2011:** Two car bombs exploded near the State Security Directorate in Damascus, killing at least 44. Syria’s state news agency claimed that two suicide bombers affiliated with al-Qaeda were responsible for the attack, though members of the Syrian opposition accused the Assad regime of planning the attacks in order to crackdown harder on its opponents.⁴⁵⁰
- **January 6, 2012:** The Syrian government reported that a suicide bomber detonated himself in the Midan neighborhood in Damascus, killing 26 and wounding dozens. Again, the opposition accused the Syrian government of perpetrating the attacks to bolster its narrative that al-Qaeda was gaining influence among the opposition.⁴⁵¹ Jabhat al-Nusrah eventually claimed responsibility for the attack.⁴⁵²
- **January 14, 2012:** Militants detonated a bomb near a tent in Basra where Shiite pilgrims celebrating the holiday of Arbaeen were eating breakfast. The explosion killed at least 53 and wounded more than 130.⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁷ Michael S. Schmidt, “Qaeda Affiliate Is Blamed in Iraq Suicide Bombing,” *New York Times*, May 5, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/06/world/middleeast/06hilla.html>.

⁴⁴⁸ Michael S. Schmidt, “Threat Resurges in Deadliest Day of Year for Iraq,” *New York Times*, August 15, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/16/world/middleeast/16iraq.html>.

⁴⁴⁹ Michael S. Schmidt, “Iraq Militants Say Violence Is to Avenge Bin Laden,” *New York Times*, August 20, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/21/world/middleeast/21iraq.html>.

⁴⁵⁰ Kareem Fahim, “Syria Blames Al Qaeda after Bombs Kill Dozens in Damascus,” *New York Times*, December 23, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/24/world/middleeast/syria-says-suicide-bombers-attack-in-damascus.html?_r=0.

⁴⁵¹ Anthony Shadid, “Bomb Kills Dozens in Damascus, Stoking Suspensions,” *New York Times*, January 6, 2012, <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2012/01/07/world/middleeast/bomb-attack-in-syrian-capital-kills-25.html>.

⁴⁵² “Unknown Islamist group claims suicide attacks in Syria,” Agence France-Presse, February 29, 2012, <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/02/29/197781.html>.

⁴⁵³ Michael S. Schmidt, “Blast Kills Dozens of Shiite Worshipers in Southern Iraq,” *New York Times*, January 14, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/15/world/roadside-bomb-kills-dozens-in-southern-iraq.html>.

- **February 10, 2012:** Several car bombs exploded minutes apart from each other at a military security headquarters and police compound in Aleppo, killing 28 people and wounding more than 200.⁴⁵⁴ Jabhat al-Nusra eventually claimed responsibility for the attack.⁴⁵⁵
- **March 17, 2012:** Two powerful car bombs exploded near Syrian intelligence and security buildings in Damascus, killing more than 25 people and injuring nearly 100.⁴⁵⁶
- **April 17, 2012:** A suicide bomber detonated himself near a mosque in the Midan neighborhood of Damascus, killing at least 9 and wounding dozens.⁴⁵⁷
- **April 24, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusra claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing attack on the Iranian Cultural Consulate in Damascus. According to the group, one of its security battalions attached explosives to a Syrian army vehicle and detonated them when it arrived at the consulate.⁴⁵⁸
- **April 30, 2012:** Two suicide bombers reportedly detonated vehicles laden with explosives near a Syrian military compound and the Carlton Hotel in Idlib, killing at least 9 and wounding dozens.⁴⁵⁹
- **May 10, 2012:** Two suicide bombers carried out car bombings that targeted “a notorious military intelligence compound” and another security building in Damascus, reportedly killing 55 and wounding 400.⁴⁶⁰
- **May 12, 2012:** Syrian security forces reportedly killed a suicide bomber who was attempting to drive a minibus packed with explosives into a densely populated neighborhood in Aleppo.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁴ Neil MacFarquhar, “2 Security Complex Car Bombings Kill Dozens, Syria Says,” *New York Times*, February 10, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/11/world/middleeast/blasts-in-aleppo-syria-homs-violence-said-to-continue.html?pagewanted=all>.

⁴⁵⁵ “Unknown Islamist group claims suicide attacks in Syria,” Agence France-Presse, February 29, 2012, <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/02/29/197781.html>.

⁴⁵⁶ Anne Barnard, “Two Blasts Strike Near Security Agencies in Syria,” *New York Times*, March 17, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/world/middleeast/damascus-syria-two-large-explosions-reported.html>.

⁴⁵⁷ J. David Goodman and Hwaida Saad, “Suicide Attack Kills 9 Near Damascus as Cease-Fire Erodes,” *New York Times*, April 27, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/28/world/middleeast/suicide-attack-kills-9-near-damascus-as-cease-fire-erodes.html>.

⁴⁵⁸ “Islamist group says behind Damascus bombing,” Reuters, May 1, 2012, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-05-01/news/sns-rt-syria-bombclaiml5e8g196r-20120501_1_al-nusra-front-syrian-president-bashar-al-assad-islamist-group.

⁴⁵⁹ “Syrian city hit by two suicide bombings,” Associated Press, April 30, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/30/syria-two-suicide-bombings-idlib>.

⁴⁶⁰ Neil MacFarquhar, “Dozens Killed in Large Explosions in Syrian Capital,” *The New York Times*, May 10, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/11/world/middleeast/damascus-syria-explosions-intelligence-headquarters.html>.

- **May 19, 2012:** A suicide bomber reportedly detonated a car bomb near a Syrian military post in Deir Ezzor, killing 9 people and wounding nearly 100.⁴⁶²
- **June 1, 2012:** In retaliation for the Syrian government's massacre in Houla, Jabhat al-Nusra reportedly carried out multiple attacks on Syrian military targets, including a suicide attack on the al Nayrab Camp in Idlib, as well as ambush and IED attacks on military units responding to the attack at al Nayrab.⁴⁶³
- **June 26, 2012:** Al-Nusra claimed responsibility for an attack on the private Syrian television station *Alikhbaria*, killing 7 people and reportedly destroying the station.⁴⁶⁴
- **July 19, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusra claimed responsibility for kidnapping and executing Syria television presenter Mohamed al-Saeed. The group warned supporters of the Syrian regime that "...the swords of the mujahideen will cut off their heads and purify the Levant from their obscenity."⁴⁶⁵ On the same date, al-Nusra claimed that it conducted a suicide bombing on a security post in Ma'arat al-Nu'man, killing 60 Syrian soldiers.⁴⁶⁶
- **September 8, 2012:** A suicide bomber from Jabhat al-Nusra reportedly attacked al-Haya hospital in Aleppo. The group claimed that it killed more than 200 military officers and soldiers, while the Syrian government reported that 27 soldiers died and 64 were wounded.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶¹ Rick Gladstone, "Syria: A Suicide Bomber is Foiled in Aleppo, the State News Agency Says," *New York Times*, May 12, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/12/world/middleeast/syria-suicide-bomber-foiled-in-aleppo-news-agency-says.html>.

⁴⁶² Joseph Logan, "Syria bomb kills 9, Damascus blames foreign plot," *Reuters*, May 19, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/19/us-syria-carbomb-idUSBRE84I04F20120519>.

⁴⁶³ Bill Roggio, "Al Nusra Front Claims Latest Suicide Attack in Syria," *Long War Journal*, June 13, 2012, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/06/al_nusrah_front_clai_2.php#.

⁴⁶⁴ Elizabeth A. Kennedy, "Syria Crisis: Al-Nusra Front Jihadists Claim Responsibility for Attacks," *Associated Press*, July 4, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/04/al-nusra-front-syria_n_1649248.html; Robert Mackey, "Attack on Pro-Assad Television Studio Raises Questions on Rules of War," *New York Times*, June 27, 2012, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/attack-on-pro-assad-television-studio-raises-questions-on-rules-of-war/?module=ArrowsNav&contentCollection=General&action=keypress®ion=FixedLeft&pgtype=Bl ogs>.

⁴⁶⁵ "Mohammed Al-Saeed Dead: Militant Group Claims Kidnapping, Killing of Syrian TV Presenter," *Reuters*, August 5, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/05/mohammed-al-saeed-dead-militant-group-kidnapping-killing_n_1743392.html.

⁴⁶⁶ Thomas Joscelyn, "Suicide Bombings Become Commonplace in Syria," *Long War Journal*, August 24, 2012, <http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/suicide-bombings-become-commonplace-in-syria>.

⁴⁶⁷ Bill Roggio, "Al Nusra Front Claims 5 Suicide Attacks in Syria in Past Month," *Long War Journal*, September 25, 2012, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/09/al_nusrah_front_clai_4.php#.

- **October 9, 2012:** Jabhat al-Nusrah claimed responsibility for multiple suicide attacks against an air force intelligence branch in Harasta, a suburb of Damascus. The group claimed that one suicide bomber detonated a vehicle packed with 9 tons of explosives, while another attacker drove an ambulance loaded with explosives to the scene 25 minutes later.⁴⁶⁸
- **January 11, 2013:** Nusrah and Ahrar al-Sham led an offensive on the Taftanaz air base in Idlib province, seizing large caches of weapons and ammunition – and also taking out the base that served as the launching point for “barrel bomb” attacks against civilians.⁴⁶⁹
- **March 11, 2013:** ISI claimed responsibility for ambushing and gunning down more than 40 Syrian soldiers in Anbar Province who had temporarily travelled to Iraq for safety.⁴⁷⁰
- **April 8, 2013:** A car bomb exploded near the Syrian Central Bank in Damascus, killing at least 15 and wounding 53.⁴⁷¹
- **June 17, 2013:** A suicide bomber detonated a truck, allegedly laden with 6 tons of explosives, near a Syrian military base in Aleppo, killing up to 60 soldiers.⁴⁷²
- **June-July 2013:** ISIS escalated attacks against members of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) in an apparent attempt to take out the FSA’s leadership. ISIS reportedly killed “prominent” FSA commander Kamal Hamami for planning operations without consulting it. The organization also beheaded two FSA soldiers and left their heads next to a garbage can.⁴⁷³
- **July 23, 2013:** As part of its “Breaking the Walls” campaign, AQI militants staged “carefully synchronized operations” to break members of the organization out of the Abu Ghraib and Taji prisons. Al-Qaeda claimed that 500 inmates had been freed from the

⁴⁶⁸ Anne Barnard and Christine Hauser, “Qaeda-Linked Group Claims Responsibility for Syrian Blasts,” *New York Times*, October 9, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/10/world/middleeast/qaeda-linked-group-says-it-struck-compound-on-edge-of-damascus.html>.

⁴⁶⁹ Anne Barnard, “Syrian Rebels Say They Seized Helicopter Base in the North,” *New York Times*, January 11, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/12/world/middleeast/syria-war-developments.html>.

⁴⁷⁰ Hania Mourtada and Rick Gladstone, “Qaeda Group in Iraq Says It Killed Syrian Soldiers,” *New York Times*, March 11, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/12/world/middleeast/islamic-state-of-iraq-says-it-killed-syrian-soldiers.html>.

⁴⁷¹ Anne Barnard, “Wider Use of Car Bombs Angers Both Sides in Syrian Conflict,” *New York Times*, April 8, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/09/world/middleeast/syria-explosion-damascus.html>.

⁴⁷² Rick Gladstone, “Large Truck Bomb Reported to Kill 60 Syrian Troops,” *New York Times*, June 17, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/18/world/middleeast/large-truck-bomb-reported-to-kill-60-syrian-troops.html>.

⁴⁷³ Anne Barnard and Hwaida Saad, “Syrian Rebel Infighting Undermines Anti-Assad Effort,” *New York Times*, July 12, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/13/world/middleeast/syrian-rebel-infighting-undermines-anti-assad-effort.html?pagewanted=all>.

prisons, while Iraqi officials put the total at 800—with 400 of them recaptured or killed.⁴⁷⁴

- **July 26, 2013:** Fighters from Jabhat al-Nusrah and Ansar al-Khalafa al-Islamiya Brigade reportedly killed as many as 150 Syrian soldiers during a battle in Khan al-Assal, a suburb of Aleppo. 51 of the soldiers were summarily executed after surrendering, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.⁴⁷⁵
- **August 28, 2013:** A series of more than a dozen explosions hit Shiite neighborhoods of Baghdad during the morning commute, killing at least 65 and wounding dozens more. The attacks followed a string of recent beheadings that were claimed by AQL.⁴⁷⁶
- **September 12, 2013:** Ayman al-Zawahiri released a message the day after the 12th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, called on his followers to carry out “a few disparate attacks” against the American homeland and to “bleed America economically.” Part of his message referred to the war in Syria, where he told jihadists not to cooperate with secular rebel forces.⁴⁷⁷
- **December 21, 2013:** 18 Iraqi soldiers, including a high-ranking commander, were killed during a raid on a training camp where ISIS was teaching recruits how to make roadside explosives.⁴⁷⁸
- **January 2014:** After days of intense fighting, ISIS militants took over major parts of Fallujah, destroyed the police headquarters, and declared the city an Islamic state.⁴⁷⁹ ISIS was accused of carrying out mass executions against civilians, prisoners, and other rebel

⁴⁷⁴ Michael R. Gordon and Duraid Adnan, “Brazen Attacks at Prisons Raise Worries of Al Qaeda’s Strength in Iraq,” *New York Times*, July 23, 2013,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/24/world/middleeast/al-qaeda-asserts-responsibility-for-iraqi-prison-breaks.html>.

⁴⁷⁵ Hania Mourtada and Rick Gladstone, “Soldiers’ Mass Execution Reported by Syria Group,” *New York Times*, July 26, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/27/world/middleeast/soldiers-mass-execution-reported-by-syria-group.html>.

⁴⁷⁶ Yasir Ghazi and Tim Arango, “Deadly Blasts Stoke Fears of Sectarian Strife in Iraq,” *New York Times*, August 28, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/29/world/middleeast/iraq-explosions.html>.

⁴⁷⁷ Alan Cowell, “Attack U.S., Qaeda Chief Tells Muslims in a Speech,” *New York Times*, September 13, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/14/world/al-qaeda-leader-ayman-al-zawahiri-urges-muslims-to-attack-america.html>.

⁴⁷⁸ Duraid Adnan, “18 Soldiers in Iraq Are Killed during Raid on Rebel Group’s Training Camp,” *New York Times*, December 21, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/22/world/middleeast/in-iraq-18-soldiers-are-killed-during-raid-on-rebel-groups-training-camp.html>.

⁴⁷⁹ Yasir Ghazi and Tim Arango, “Iraq Fighters, Qaeda Allies, Claim Falluja as New State,” *New York Times*, January 3, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/04/world/middleeast/fighting-in-falluja-and-ramadi.html>.

fighters in Aleppo, Idlib, and Raqq. According to reports, bodies were found handcuffed and blindfolded at a children's hospital used as a base by ISIS.⁴⁸⁰

- **February 2014:** British jihadist Abdul Waheed Majeed reportedly carried out a suicide truck bombing at the Aleppo Central Prison. If true, Majeed's attack was the "first known case of a British suicide bomber in Syria."⁴⁸¹
- **February 23, 2014:** A suicide bomber from ISIS reportedly launched an attack against a rebel base, killing Abu Khalid al-Suri, who was chosen by Ayman al-Zawahiri to mediate disputes between Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS.⁴⁸²
- **May 2014:** American citizen Moner Mohammad Abusalha, who went by the *nom de guerre* Abu Huraira al-Amriki, reportedly carried out a suicide truck bombing on a mountaintop restaurant in Syria that was a gathering spot for Syrian soldiers.⁴⁸³ On May 15, a car bombing carried out by ISIS near the Turkish border killed at least 43 people. The bombing was reportedly intended to target the Tawhid Brigade—part of the rebel coalition called the Islamic Front—which controlled the border crossing.⁴⁸⁴ Also in May, French citizen Mehdi Nemmouche, who reportedly fought in Syria with ISIS, shot and killed 3 people at a Jewish museum in Brussels. The attack was the first instance of a European Islamist fighter returning home from the war to commit acts of violence.⁴⁸⁵
- **June 10, 2014:** ISIS insurgents took over Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, as Iraqi soldiers fled on foot and left behind their weapons, vehicles and uniforms. After seizing Mosul and securing its hold over Nineveh Province, the militants moved south toward

⁴⁸⁰ Nick Cumming-Bruce, "U.N. Says Executions in Syria by Rebels May Be War Crimes," *New York Times*, January 16, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/17/world/middleeast/syria.html>.

⁴⁸¹ Robert Mackey and Christine Hauser, "Deferential Remarks in Martyrdom Video Said to Show Briton's Last Words before Suicide Attack in Syria," *New York Times*, February 14, 2014, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/14/deferential-remarks-in-martyrdom-video-said-to-show-britons-last-words-before-suicide-attack-in-syria>.

⁴⁸² Ben Hubbard, "Jihadist Mediator Killed in Suicide Attack by Rival Extremists," *New York Times*, February 23, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/24/world/middleeast/jihadist-mediator-killed-in-suicide-attack-by-rival-extremists.html?module=ArrowsNav&contentCollection=Middle%20East&action=keypress®ion=FixedLeft&pgtype=article>.

⁴⁸³ Frances Robles and Emma G. Fitzsimmons, "Before Syrian Suicide Blast, a Quiet Life in the Suburbs," *New York Times*, May 31, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/01/us/Moner-Mohammad-Abusalha-Vero-Beach-Florida-Syria.html>.

⁴⁸⁴ Anne Barnard, "Car Bomb Kills More than 40 at Syrian Border Crossing," *New York Times*, May 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/16/world/middleeast/car-bomb-syrian-border-crossing.html>.

⁴⁸⁵ Scott Sayare, "Suspect Held in Jewish Museum Killings," *New York Times*, June 1, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/02/world/europe/suspect-arrested-in-jewish-museum-killings-in-belgium.html>.

Baghdad, taking over parts of Salahuddin Province along the way.⁴⁸⁶ Five days after its offensive, ISIS claimed that it had executed 1,700 Iraqi soldiers, many of whom were Shiites. Those claims could not be immediately verified, though the Iraqi military admitted that at least 800 soldiers had been taken prisoner.⁴⁸⁷ ISIS also robs local banks and seizes U.S. military equipment left for the Iraqi army.⁴⁸⁸

- **June 11, 2014:** ISIS insurgents took over Tikrit, home town of Saddam Hussein and his clan.⁴⁸⁹
- **July 1, 2014:** The UN stated that more than 2,400 Iraqis were killed in June, the most fatalities in one month in Iraq since April 2005.⁴⁹⁰
- **August 1-5, (estimate):** ISIS militants crucify, behead and shoot over 700 members of the Shaitat tribe in eastern Syria, in what is one of ISIS's bloodiest advances.⁴⁹¹
- **August 2-3, 2014:** ISIS defeated Kurdish peshmerga fighters and takes over several towns previously held by the Kurds, including the towns of Sinjar and Zumar near Iraq's border with Syria, as well as two small oil fields. During its conquest, ISIS kills up to 500 Yazidis, ethnic Kurds whom ISIS despises as "devil worshipers"⁴⁹² and heretics subject to death⁴⁹³ for practicing an ancient, pre-Abrahamic religion. Upon entering Sinjar, ISIS noted the occasion by exploding a Shiite shrine and demanding that Sinjar residents

⁴⁸⁶ Suadad Al-Salhu and Tim Arango, "Sunni Militants Drive Iraqi Army Out of Mosul," *New York Times*, June 10, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/11/world/middleeast/militants-in-mosul.html>.

⁴⁸⁷ Rod Nordland and Alissa J. Rubin, "Militants Claim Mass Execution of Iraqi Forces," *New York Times*, June 15, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/16/world/middleeast/iraq.html?hp>.

⁴⁸⁸ Jack Moore, "Mosul Seized: Jihadis Loot \$429m from City's Central Bank to Make Isis World's Richest Terror Force," *International Business Times*, June 11, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/mosul-seized-jihadis-loot-429m-citys-central-bank-make-isis-worlds-richest-terror-force-1452190>.

⁴⁸⁹ "The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline," Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

⁴⁹⁰ "Key Events on Sunni Militants Surge in Iraq," Associated Press, August 18, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/key-events-sunni-militants-surge-iraq>.

⁴⁹¹ Liz Sly, "Syria tribal revolt against Islamic State ignored, fueling resentment," *The Washington Post*, October 20, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/syria-tribal-revolt-against-islamic-state-ignored-fueling-resentment/2014/10/20/25401beb-8de8-49f2-8e64-c1cfbee45232_story.html.

⁴⁹² Loveday Morris, "Islamic State seizes town of Sinjar, pushing out Kurds and sending Yazidis fleeing," *Washington Post*, August 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/islamic-state-seize-town-of-sinjar-pushing-out-kurds-and-sending-yazidis-fleeing/2014/08/03/52ab53f1-48de-4ae1-9e1d-e241a15f580e_story.html.

⁴⁹³ Daa Hadid and Bassem Mroue, "Syrian Kurdish fighters rescue stranded Yazidis," Associated Press, August 12, 2014, <http://news.yahoo.com/syrian-kurdish-fighters-rescue-stranded-yazidis-172250184.html>.

convert to Islam or be killed.⁴⁹⁴ As many as 200,000 local residents fled, including other Yazidis.⁴⁹⁵ Many of the Yazidis (estimates range from 10,000 to 50,000) took refuge on Mount Sinjar. There, the Yazidis lacked sufficient food, water, and medicine, and were besieged by ISIS and threatened with death if they came down from the mountains. The UN warned of a “humanitarian tragedy.”⁴⁹⁶ As one besieged Yazidi noted, “We cannot get out of here; we cannot move. It's all [ISIS] fighters around us. If we move down they will kill us.”⁴⁹⁷

- **August 2-7, 2014:** Fighters from ISIS and the Nusra Front overrun the Lebanese town of Arsal by the Syrian border, killing several Lebanese soldiers, following repeated tensions with the Lebanese military.⁴⁹⁸ The fighters withdraw from Arsal on August 7 after Sunni clerics negotiate a truce, but they take a reported 19 captive Lebanese soldiers with them.⁴⁹⁹
- **August 7, 2014:** ISIS fighters took control of Qaraqosh, the largest Christian municipality in Iraq. Tens of thousands of its residents fled.⁵⁰⁰
- **August 7, 2014:** ISIS took the strategically vital Mosul dam, driving out peshmerga forces from several towns. Hundreds of thousands of Yazidis flee the area.⁵⁰¹
- **August 11, 2014:** ISIS militants defeated Kurdish peshmerga forces in the municipality of Jalawla.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁴ Loveday Morris, “Islamic State seizes town of Sinjar, pushing out Kurds and sending Yazidis fleeing,” *Washington Post*, August 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/islamic-state-seize-town-of-sinjar-pushing-out-kurds-and-sending-yazidis-fleeing/2014/08/03/52ab53f1-48de-4ae1-9e1d-e241a15f580e_story.html.

⁴⁹⁵ “UN warns of ‘humanitarian tragedy’ as militants seize town in northern Iraq,” UN News Centre, August 3, 2014, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48397#.VAmZFGRdVXa>.

⁴⁹⁶ UN warns of ‘humanitarian tragedy’ as militants seize town in northern Iraq,” UN News Centre, August 3, 2014, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48397#.VAmZFGRdVXa>.

⁴⁹⁷ Mohammed A Salih and Wladimir van Wilgenburg, “Surrounded by Islamic State fighters, members of the Yazidi religious minority fear an onslaught of violence,” Al Jazeera, last modified August 5, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/iraqi-yazidis-if-move-they-will-kill-us-20148513656188206.html>.

⁴⁹⁸ “Chaos as Syria rebels raid Lebanon border town of Arsal,” BBC News, August 3, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28624524>.

⁴⁹⁹ “Syrian Islamist rebels ‘withdraw from Lebanese town after truce,’” BBC News, August 7, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28693530>.

⁵⁰⁰ “The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline,” Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014, <http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

⁵⁰¹ “Key Events on Sunni Militants Surge in Iraq,” Associated Press, August 18, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/key-events-sunni-militants-surge-iraq>.

- **August 20, 2014:** ISIS released a video, entitled “A Message to America,” showing a masked ISIS militant beheading kidnapped American journalist James Foley and, speaking with a British accent, threatening to kill another such journalist, Steven Sotloff, if U.S. President Barack Obama did not stop U.S. military operations in Iraq.⁵⁰³
- **August 30, 2014:** ISIS posted a video of their fighters beheading one of the Lebanese soldiers they kidnapped when they and the Nusra Front captured and briefly held the Lebanese border town of Aarsal in early August. The soldier, Ali al-Sayyed, was a Sunni Muslim. ISIS also posted another video of nine other captive soldiers pleading for their lives and calling on their families to hold street protests to seek the release of Islamist prisoners by the Lebanese government. ISIS has sought the release of Imad Ahmad Jomaa, an ISIS commander (formerly in the Nusra Front) who was arrested in Aarsal in early August, as well as several other imprisoned Islamists.⁵⁰⁴
- **September 2, 2014:** Amnesty International reports that ISIS “has carried out ethnic cleansing on a historic scale in northern Iraq... systematically target[ing] non-Arab and non-Sunni Muslim communities, killing or abducting hundreds, possibly thousands, and forcing more than 830,000 others to flee the areas it has captured” since June 10, 2014.⁵⁰⁵
- **September 3, 2014:** ISIS released another video, entitled “A Second Message to America,” showing a masked ISIS militant beheading kidnapped American journalist Steven Sotloff, as previously threatened. Before being killed, Sotloff said that he was “paying the price” for U.S. military intervention in Iraq. After the beheading, the ISIS militant, speaking with a British accent, said to U.S. President Barack Obama, “Just as your missiles continue to strike our people, our knife will continue to strike the necks of your people.” The militant also “warn[ed] those governments who've entered this evil alliance of America against the Islamic State to back off and leave our people alone.”⁵⁰⁶ He also threatened another captive, David Cawthorne Haines, a British aid worker

⁵⁰² “The jihadist offensive in Iraq: a timeline,” Agence France-Presse, August 15, 2014,

<http://www.afp.com/en/node/2730918>.

⁵⁰³ Chelsea J. Carter, “Video shows ISIS beheading U.S. journalist James Foley,” CNN, August 20, 2014,

http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/19/world/meast/isis-james-foley/index.html?hpt=hp_t1.

⁵⁰⁴ “ISIS Militants Behead Lebanese Soldier and Hold 18 More,” Reuters, August 30, 2014,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/world/middleeast/isis-militants-behead-lebanese-soldier-and-hold-more.html>.

⁵⁰⁵ “Iraq: Ethnic cleansing on historic scale: the Islamic State’s systematic targeting of minorities in northern Iraq,” Amnesty International, September 2, 2014,

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE14/011/2014/en/1af20d2f-501a-4d5d-b7fc-b52719e8dfdf/mde140112014en.html>.

⁵⁰⁶ Chelsea J. Carter and Ashley Fantz, “ISIS video shows beheading of American journalist Steven Sotloff,” CNN, September 3, 2014, http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/02/world/meast/isis-american-journalist-sotloff/index.html?iid=article_sidebar.

kidnapped last year on the Turkish-Syrian border.⁵⁰⁷ The *Washington Post* reported that the U.S. government believes “as many as a dozen Americans may be fighting alongside [ISIS] and that the group holds at least two other American hostages, both aid workers.”⁵⁰⁸

- **September 6, 2014:** Images on Twitter depict ISIS executing a second Lebanese soldier kidnapped when the group and the Nusra Front overran the Lebanese town of Aarsal by the Syrian border last month. The soldier was identified as Abbas Medlij, a Shiite Muslim.⁵⁰⁹ ISIS and the Nusra Front reportedly continue to hold 17 Lebanese soldiers captive.
- **September 13, 2014:** ISIS releases another video in which British aid worker David Cawthorne Haines is executed. Some analysts see it as a warning to the British Government for supporting the US-led coalition against ISIS. The video is filmed in the same setting as the previous videos that ISIS has created: a nondescript area of what seems to be arid land beneath a blue sky. As in the other beheading videos disseminated by ISIS, “Jihadi John”, stands by a kneeling Haines. The still anonymous British terrorist says to the camera that “this British man has to pay the price for your promise, Cameron, to arm the pesh merga against the Islamic State. Ironically, he has spent a decade of his life serving under the same Royal Air Force that is responsible for delivering those arms.” At the end of the video, “Jihadi John” names the next victim as British citizen Alan Henning.⁵¹⁰
- **September 18, 2014:** Australian police foil a “beheading plot” by Australian militants connected to ISIS.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁷ Greg Miller, “U.S. confirms authenticity of second journalist beheading video,” *Washington Post*, September 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamic-state-claims-to-have-beheaded-american-journalist-steven-sotloff/2014/09/02/ae5e8ffa-32c3-11e4-9e92-0899b306bbea_story.html.

⁵⁰⁸ Greg Miller, “U.S. confirms authenticity of second journalist beheading video,” *Washington Post*, September 3, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamic-state-claims-to-have-beheaded-american-journalist-steven-sotloff/2014/09/02/ae5e8ffa-32c3-11e4-9e92-0899b306bbea_story.html.

⁵⁰⁹ “Islamic State says executes second Lebanese soldier,” Reuters, September 6, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/06/us-lebanon-security-iduskbn0h10ko20140906>.

⁵¹⁰ Rukmini Callimachi and Kimko de Freytas-Tamura, “ISIS Video Shows Execution of David Cawthorne Haines, British Aid Worker,” *The New York Times*, September 13, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/14/world/middleeast/islamic-state-says-it-has-executed-david-cawthorne-haines-british-aid-worker.html>.

⁵¹¹ Matt Siegel, “Australian PM says police raids follow IS linked beheading plot,” *Reuters*, September 18, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/18/us-australia-security-raids-idUSKBN0HC2FJ20140918>.

- **September 23, 2014:** The Algerian group linked to ISIS, Jund al-Khalifah, decapitates French mountaineer Hervé Gourdel, who they had held hostage for three days. The group say that they chose to behead Gourdel after the French government ignored the group's call to end airstrikes on ISIS.⁵¹²
- **September 23, 2014:** Fighting between incoming ISIS militants and Kurdish forces intensifies in the Kurdish town of Kobani in northern Syria along the Turkish border. By September 24, at least 140,000 Syrian Kurdish refugees had crossed the border into Turkey.⁵¹³
- **September 23, 2014:** An 18-year old terror suspect in Australia is fatally shot by police after he attempts to stab two counter-terrorism officials. The suspect had displayed an ISIS flag and was shouting insults about Prime Minister Tony Abbott before his death.⁵¹⁴
- **September 24, 2014:** On this same day, ISIS militants blow up the "Green Church" in Tikrit, Iraq, an ancient and holy site for Christians.⁵¹⁵
- **September 26, 2014:** Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abbadi tells US officials that ISIS had planned to attack subways in Paris and the United States. Western officials were skeptical of the news, and al-Abbadi was unable to provide concrete evidence for his claim.⁵¹⁶
- **September 26, 2014:** ISIS militants persist in their conquest of the Syrian Kurdish town of Kobani, amidst airstrikes. Mass numbers of Kurdish Syrian refugees continue to pile into Turkey.
- **September 29, 2014:** Shelling from ISIS during its attack on Kobani falls into Turkey, prompting the Turkish military to send tanks to its border with Syria.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹² Al Jazeera Staff, "ISIS Linked Group Executes French Hostage," *Al Jazeera*, September 24, 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/24/algeria-isis-decapitated.html>.

⁵¹³ "Kurds flee as clashes rage in northern Syria," *Al Jazeera*, September 23, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/syria-kurds-kobane-201492410309256379.html>.

⁵¹⁴ Reuters, "Man shot in attack on counterterrorism officials in Australia," *The New York Times*, September 23, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/24/world/asia/man-shot-in-attack-on-counterterrorism-officers-in-australia.html>.

⁵¹⁵ David D. Kirkpatrick, "Iraq: militants destroy historic church," *The New York Times*, September 24, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/25/world/middleeast/iraq-militants-destroy-historic-church.html>.

⁵¹⁶ "Iraqi PM reveals 'ISIL plot to attack west'," *Al Jazeera*, September 26, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2014/09/iraqi-pm-reveals-isis-plot-attack-west-2014925212535183281.html>.

⁵¹⁷ Erin Banco, "US Airstrikes in Syria Cripple ISIS Funding by Hitting Oil Refineries," *International Business Times*, September 30, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.com/us-airstrikes-syria-cripple-isis-funding-hitting-oil-refineries-1696902>.

- **October 2, 2014:** The UN publishes a report stating that upwards of 5,500 people have been killed by ISIS in Iraq alone since June, 2014. This includes hundreds of the Yazidi minority who were “slaughtered en masse.”⁵¹⁸
- **October 3, 2014:** ISIS releases a video depicting the beheading of English taxi-driver Alan Henning. The video takes place in the same area that James Foley, Steven Sotloff, and David Haines were beheaded. In the video, Henning, wearing the usual orange jumpsuit, says: “Hi, I am Alan Henning. Because of our Parliament’s decision to attack the Islamic State, I — as a member of the British public — will now pay the price for that decision.” Right before the decapitation, ‘Jihadi John’, the executioner, says: “Obama, you have started your air bombardment in Sham [an area referring to Syria and Lebanon] which keeps on striking our people. It is only right that we continue to strike the necks of your people.” According to some analysts, ISIS seemed to have waited to behead Henning until after the start of Britain’s airstrikes on the group. The video ends with Jihadi John threatening the execution of American hostage Peter Kassig if the airstrikes on ISIS do not cease.⁵¹⁹
- **October 5, 2014:** A document found by Iraqi special forces, believed to be written by Abdullah Ahmed al-Meshedani, a member of ISIS’s six-man war cabinet, states that ISIS plans to steal Tehran’s ‘nuclear secrets’ and wage war on Iran’s Shiite government. Meshedani writes that ISIS will depend on Russia to “give up Iran and its nuclear.... secrets” by offering Russia access to Iraqi gas fields controlled by the group. First, Meshedani writes, Moscow must give up its support for Bashar al-Assad’s regime in Syria, and join in the Gulf States’ coalition against Iran. The document also lists 70 plans of ethnic cleansing to target Shiite Iraqi authorities- as well as Shiite Iran- in the interest of building the ‘new caliphate’. The manifesto also calls for the assassination of Iranian diplomats, teachers and businessmen, along with Iraqi military chiefs, Iranian-backed militias fighting for the Iraqi government, and Shiite officials.⁵²⁰
- **October 5, 2014:** The fighting in the Syrian Kurdish town of Kobani intensifies, with ISIS sending rockets into the town and neither side claiming victory. Kurdish pesh merga

⁵¹⁸ Nick Cumming-Bruce, “5,500 Iraqis Killed Since Islamic State Began Its Military Drive, U.N. Says,” *The New York Times*, October 2, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/03/world/middleeast/un-reports-at-least-26000-civilian-casualties-in-iraq-conflict-this-year.html?_r=0.

⁵¹⁹ Rukmini Callimachi and Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura, “ISIS releases video of execution of British aid worker,” *The New York Times*, October 3, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/04/world/middleeast/islamic-state-releases-video-of-execution-of-alan-henning-british-aid-worker.html>; “ISIL release beheading video of aid worker,” *Al Jazeera*, October 3, 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/10/3/video-islamic-stategroupbeheadsbritishhostage.html>.

⁵²⁰ “Rport: ISIS plots to seize Iran’s nuclear secrets,” *Al Arabiya News*, October 5, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/10/05/ISIS-plots-to-seize-Iran-s-nuclear-secrets-.html>.

forces state that Western-led airstrikes are not enough to stop ISIS militants from taking Kobani.⁵²¹

- **October 8, 2014:** ISIS militants shoot down an Iraqi military helicopter with a shoulder-fired missile- killing two onboard- for the second time in less than a week. The helicopter was believed to be a Bell 407 aircraft, generally used for surveillance.⁵²²
- **October 14, 2014:** An ISIS bomber kills 24 and wounds 40 at a crowded checkpoint into a majority Shiite neighborhood in Baghdad. Among the dead was Ahmed al-Khafaji, Shiite member of Parliament and member of the Badr Organization, a Shiite group that controls a Shiite insurgency fighting ISIS.⁵²³
- **October 19, 2014:** A Syrian rebel commander is reportedly shot and wounded in a kidnapping attempt by ISIS militants within Turkish borders. In the southern Turkish city of Urfa, ISIS has safe houses and is believed to “operate without impunity.” It was in Urfa that ISIS militants kidnapped Abu Issa, but ultimately failed to bring him into Turkey. There is increasing international condemnation on Turkey concerning Turkey’s apparent relaxed stance on ISIS militants in the South of the country, including ISIS’s smuggling operations from Turkey into Syria.⁵²⁴
- **October 20, 2014:** 40 people are killed in Iraq by ISIS in a quadruple car bombing and a suicide bombing inside a mosque. Local officials remarked that the attacks were specifically aimed against Shiites, as they took place near holy Shiite shrines and a Shiite mosque.⁵²⁵

Extreme Rhetoric:

⁵²¹ “ISIL shells besieged Kurdish town in Syria,” *Al Jazeera*, October 5, 2014,

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/10/isil-syria-kurdish-town-kobane-2014105113130688232.html>.

⁵²² Kirk Semple and Omar al-Jawshy, “ISIS Militants Shoot Down Iraqi Helicopter, Killing 2,” *The New York Times*, October 8, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/09/world/middleeast/isis-iraq-violence.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>.

⁵²³ Kirk Semple and Omar al-Jawshy, “ISIS Bomber Hits Baghdad, Killing 24,” *The New York Times*, October 14, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/15/world/middleeast/-isis-bomber-hits-baghdad-killing-24-.html>.

⁵²⁴ Ruth Sherlock, “Islamic State foiled in attempt to kidnap Syrian rebel leader in Turkey,” *The Guardian*, October 19, 2014,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/11173013/Islamic-State-foiled-in-attempt-to-kidnap-Syrian-rebel-leader-in-Turkey.html>.

⁵²⁵ Kirk Semple, “40 Are Killed in Attacks Targeting Shiites in Iraq,” *The New York Times*, October 20, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/21/world/middleeast/dozens-are-killed-in-attacks-on-shiite-targets-in-iraq.html>.

Anti-Western

Disguised ISIS fighter, September 13, 2014, in “A Message to the Allies of America” video showing beheading of British citizen David Haines⁵²⁶

"Your evil alliance with America which continues to strike the Muslims of Iraq and most recently bombed the Haditha Dam will only accelerate your destruction and playing the role of the obedient lapdog Cameron will only drag you and your people into another bloody and unwinnable war."

"If you Cameron, persist in fighting the Islamic state, then you, like your master Obama, will have the blood of your people on your hands."

Disguised ISIS fighter, October 3, 2014, in “Another Message to America and its Allies” video showing beheading of British citizen Alan Henning⁵²⁷

"The blood of David Haines was on your hands David Cameron. Alan Henning will also be slaughtered but his blood is on the hands of the British parliament."

"Obama you have started your aerial bombardment in Sham (Syria), which keeps on striking our people, so it is only right we keep on striking the necks of your people"

Al-Dabiq, ISIS Magazine, date unknown⁵²⁸

“[Obama’s] decisions also expose the hypocritical politics of America that only serve the interests of their Jewish ally, Israel, and their own capitalist gluttony. So while genocide is committed by the Maliki, Asadi, and Israeli forces against the Muslims via systematic massacres, chemical warfare, rape, and starvation by siege, Obama watches with euphoria.”

Anti-American

Al-Dabiq, ISIS Magazine, date unknown⁵²⁹

⁵²⁶ Steve Robson, "David Haines beheading: Full transcript of ISIS video holding David Cameron responsible for execution," Mirror UK, September 14, 2014, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/david-haines-beheading-full-transcript-4256996>.

⁵²⁷ Gavin Allen, "Full transcript of ISIS video claiming to show beheading of Alan Henning," Mirror UK, October 3, 2014, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/full-transcript-isis-video-claiming-4375219>.

⁵²⁸ http://www.militaryvideos.com/dbq03_en.pdf.

⁵²⁹ http://www.militaryvideos.com/dbq03_en.pdf.

The US had killed women, children, and the elderly, during its direct occupation of Iraq prior to its withdrawal. There are countless accounts of American soldiers executing families and raping women under the sanctity of the US military and Blackwater. Muslim families were killed under the broad definition of “collateral damage,” which the US grants itself alone the right to apply. Therefore, if a mujāhid kills a single man with a knife, it is the barbaric killing of the “innocent.” However, if Americans kill thousands of Muslim families all over the world by pressing missile fire buttons, it is merely “collateral damage”...

“And with Allah’s permission, Obama will continue to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, Bush, only to become the worst heir for the worst testator, and ultimately bring about the complete collapse of the modern American empire.”

Disguised ISIS fighter, August 2014, in “A Second Message to America” video showing beheading of U.S. citizen Steven Sotloff⁵³⁰

“I’m back, Obama, and I’m back because of your arrogant foreign policy towards the Islamic State, because of your insistence on continuing your bombings and [unclear] on Mosul Dam, despite our serious warnings. You, Obama, have but to gain from your actions but another American citizen. So just as your missiles continue to strike our people, our knife will continue to strike the necks of your people... We take this opportunity to warn those governments that enter this evil alliance of America against the Islamic State to back off and leave our people alone.”

Disguised ISIS fighter, August 2014, in “A Message to America” video showing beheading of U.S. citizen James Foley⁵³¹

“Obama authorized military operations against the Islamic State effectively placing America upon a slippery slope towards a new war front against Muslims... This is James Wright Foley, an American citizen of your country. As a government, you have been at the forefront of aggression towards the Islamic State. You have plotted against us and gone far out of your way to find reasons to interfere in our affairs. Today, your military airforce is attacking us daily in Iraq. Your strikes have caused casualties amongst Muslims. You’re no longer fighting

⁵³⁰ “IS Behead Steven Joel Sotloff, Threatens to Execute Briton David Cawthorne Haines | Jihadist News,” SITE Monitoring Group, last modified September 2, 2014,

<https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/is-behead-steven-joel-sotloff-threatens-to-execute-briton-david-cawthorne-haines.html>.

⁵³¹ “IS Beheads Captured American James Wright Foley, Threatens to Execute Steven Joel Sotloff | Jihadist News,” SITE Monitoring Service, last modified September 3, 2014,

<https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/is-beheads-captured-american-james-foley-threatens-to-execute-another.html>.

an insurgency, we are an Islamic army and a State that has been accepted by a large number of Muslims worldwide, so effectively, any aggression towards the Islamic State is an aggression towards Muslims from all walks of life who have accepted the Islamic Caliphate as their leadership. So any attempt by you, Obama, to deny the Muslims their rights of living in safety under the Islamic Caliphate will result in the bloodshed of your people. [Beheads Foley] [Fighter holds Steven Joel Sotloff] The life of this American citizen, Obama, depends on your next decision.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵³²

“[L]isten, O ummah [community] of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers—the agents of the crusaders and the atheists, and the guards of the [J]ews. O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the [J]ews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the [J]ews.”

Abu Moussa, ISIS press officer, June 2014⁵³³

“I say to America that the Islamic State has been established. And we will not stop. Don’t be cowards and attack us with drones. Instead send your soldiers, the ones we humiliated in Iraq. We will humiliate them everywhere, God willing, and we will raise the flag of Allah in the White House.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵³⁴

⁵³² Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqan Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵³³ “The Islamic State (Part 1),” VICE News, August 13, 2014, <https://news.vice.com/video/the-islamic-state-part-1>.

⁵³⁴ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqan Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

“Yes, verily the plot of Shayṭān is weak. America came to Iraq leading a frenzied crusade, in its sleeve a new map of what they call the ‘Middle East.’ It came with all its forcefulness and all of its iron (weaponry), with all of its pride and all of its arrogance. It gathered all of its allies and mobilised all of its aircraft and its fleets, and it brought its horses and its soldiers. The Crusaders thought that no one would be able to overcome them; however Allah the Mighty and Majestic disgraced them and showed us the weakness of their plot. The flame of Jihad was stoked, the Crusade campaign was broken and the Islamic State was established in spite of the villains, and America was expelled (from Iraq) disgraced and driven away, dragging their tails between their legs, defeated and broken, leaving in its wake a map of the Islamic State, ready to redraw the world upon the Prophetic manhaj (way) methodology of the [caliphate]. So verily, the [Islamic] State, with the favour of Allah alone, becomes stronger day after day. Its authority has not ceased since it was founded, by the favour of Allah, and its conquests shall not cease, with the permission of Allah, until the cross is smashed, the swine is killed and the Jizyah (tax for people of the book) is imposed, and there will be no fitnah (tribulation) on Earth and the Rule shall be for Allah alone completely.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, January 2014⁵³⁵

“This is a message to America. Beware you protector of the ‘Cross’ that the war by delegation won’t help you in Sha[m], as it didn’t in Iraq, and soon you will be in full confrontation, forced by the Will of Allah, and that the sons of Islam have prepared themselves for that day.”

Anti-Christian

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵³⁶

“[L]isten, O ummah [community] of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers—the agents of the crusaders and the atheists, and the

⁵³⁵ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Baghdādī ‘God Knows and You Do Not Know,’” Jihadology, last modified January 25, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/01/19/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-baghdadi-god-knows-and-you-do-not-know>.

⁵³⁶ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’” Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

guards of the [J]ews. O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the [J]ews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the [J]ews.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵³⁷

“Here the flag of the Islamic State, the flag of tawhid [monotheism] rises and flutters. Its shade covers land from Aleppo to Diyala. Beneath it, the walls of the *tawaghit* [tyrants] have been demolished, their flags have fallen, and their borders have been destroyed. Their soldiers are either killed, imprisoned, or defeated. The Muslims are honored. The kuffar [unbelievers]... are disgraced. Ahl Al-Sunna [Sunnis] are masters and are esteemed. The people of *bid’ah* [forbidden religious innovation]... are humiliated. The hudud [Koranic punishment] are implemented... Crosses and graves[1] are demolished... Jizya [the poll tax levied on non-Muslims living in Muslim lands] has been enforced... Courts have been established to resolve disputes and complaints. Evil has been removed.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵³⁸

“Yes, verily the plot of Shayṭān is weak. America came to Iraq leading a frenzied crusade, in its sleeve a new map of what they call the ‘Middle East.’ It came with all its forcefulness and all of its iron (weaponry), with all of its pride and all of its arrogance. It gathered all of its allies and mobilised all of its aircraft and its fleets, and it brought its horses and its soldiers. The Crusaders thought that no one would be able to overcome them; however Allah the Mighty and Majestic disgraced them and showed us the weakness of their plot. The flame of Jihad was stoked, the Crusade campaign was broken and the Islamic State was established in spite of the villains, and America was expelled (from Iraq) disgraced and driven away, dragging their tails between their legs, defeated and broken, leaving in its wake a map of the Islamic State, ready to redraw the world upon the Prophetic manhaj (way) methodology of the [caliphate]. So verily, the [Islamic] State, with the favour of Allah alone, becomes stronger day after day. Its authority has not ceased since it was founded, by the favour of Allah, and its conquests shall not cease, with the permission of Allah, until the cross is smashed, the swine is killed and the Jizyah (tax for people

⁵³⁷ “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As 'Caliph', Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

⁵³⁸ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

of the book) is imposed, and there will be no fitnah (tribulation) on Earth and the Rule shall be for Allah alone completely.

“And so [Sunni Muslims] in Iraq, verily you should know the truth, and it is that there is no coexistence or peace with the Rawāfiḍ. You have seen the truth of this matter in the squares of Hawijah, in the mosques of Ba‘qūbah, in the market places of Mosul and Samarrā’, in the villages of Laṭīfiyyah, in the neighbourhoods of Buhriz, Ramādī and Fallūjah, and what follows is more disastrous and more bitter. It is time that you be aware that the polytheist Rāfiḍah are the most evil to tread upon this earth, more evil than the Jews and the Crusaders. It is time that you disbelieve in democracy which will not bring better than what it has brought upon you in the past lean years. It will bring nothing upon you but shame and disgrace. It is time for you to know that democracy is nothing but a tool and method by which the Ṭawāghīt (tyrants) are empowered and by which they wage war upon the Religion of Allah. It is time that you reject your treacherous politicians, who have only been working for their own personal and private benefits, the ones who through voting for them, you gained nothing but humiliation, degradation and oppression.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, January 2014⁵³⁹

“We say to whoever has been involved in fights against the [Islamic S]tate from the battalions, reconsider, and repent to your Lord... Here the [Islamic S]tate is extending an arm to you to stop fighting it and it would stop fighting you, let’s be free to fight the Nusairies and Rafedha... The Nusairies are shedding your blood, attacking your honour, destroying your homes under the claim of fighting terrorism to protect you from Jews and Crusaders, collaborating against Islam and fixing up traps for the Mujahedeen and fighting them, [pretending] to cry for you while trading in your blood and cause...

“This is a message to America. Beware you protector of the ‘Cross’ that the war by delegation won’t help you in Sha[m], as it didn’t in Iraq, and soon you will be in full confrontation, forced by the Will of Allah, and that the sons of Islam have prepared themselves for that day.”

Anti-Democracy

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Baghdādī ‘God Knows and You Do Not Know,’” Jihadology, last modified January 25, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/01/19/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-baghdadi-god-knows-and-you-do-not-know>.

⁵⁴⁰ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’” Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al->

“So let the world know that we are living today in a new era. Whoever was heedless must now be alert. Whoever was sleeping must now awaken. Whoever was shocked and amazed must comprehend. The Muslims today have a loud, thundering statement, and possess heavy boots. They have a statement that will cause the world to hear and understand the meaning of terrorism, and boots that will trample the idol of nationalism, destroy the idol of democracy and uncover its deviant nature.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁴¹

“Indeed the Muslims were defeated after the fall of their khilāfah (caliphate). Then their state ceased to exist, so the disbelievers were able to weaken and humiliate the Muslims, dominate them in every region, plunder their wealth and resources, and rob them of their rights. They accomplished this by attacking and occupying their lands, placing their treacherous agents in power to rule the Muslims with an iron fist, and spreading dazzling and deceptive slogans such as: civilization, peace, co-existence, freedom, democracy, secularism, [B]aathism, nationalism, and patriotism, among other false slogans.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵⁴²

“By Allah, if you disbelieve in democracy, secularism, nationalism, as well as all the other garbage and ideas from the west, and rush to your religion and creed, then by Allah, you will own the earth, and the east and west will submit to you. This is the promise of Allah to you.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁴³

[%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama.](#)

⁵⁴¹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁴² “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As ‘Caliph’, Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

⁵⁴³ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic->

“It is time that you disbelieve in democracy which will not bring better than what it has brought upon you in the past lean years. It will bring nothing upon you but shame and disgrace. It is time for you to know that democracy is nothing but a tool and method by which the Ṭawāghīt (tyrants) are empowered and by which they wage war upon the Religion of Allah. It is time that you reject your treacherous politicians, who have only been working for their own personal and private benefits, the ones who through voting for them, you gained nothing but humiliation, degradation and oppression.

“O groups of Sunnah in Iraq, it will not harm you to disbelieve in democracy and gather around the Mujāhidīn.”

Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, April 2013⁵⁴⁴

“As for you our people in beloved Al-Sham... since you have experienced dictatorship and injustice for long years so beware from replacing these years of injustice by the injustice of democracy and the people of Iraq have preceded to it and it [has] been implemented in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya so look at their condition and what [has] become of them and beware that you be stung from the hole which the Muslims in those countries have been stung...do not make democracy the cost for the thousands who were killed from you, do not make democracy the cost for the carnage that are under the ruins of the homes that were demolished over the women, children and elderly...beware O’ people of Al-Sham from corruption, and from corruption is to be ruled by man-made laws after all these sacrifices...”

Anti-Freedom

Al-Dabiq, ISIS magazine, July 2014⁵⁴⁵

[state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein.](#)

⁵⁴⁴ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq’s Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Announcement of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām,’” Jihadology, last modified October 28, 2013, <http://jihadology.net/2013/04/09/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraqs-shaykh-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-announcement-of-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-an>.

⁵⁴⁵ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Ḥayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State’s magazine: ‘Dabiq #2,’” Jihadology, July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/27/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-states-magazine-dabiq-2>.

“From amongst the polluted ideologies that have afflicted people the entire world over throughout the course of the tyranny carried out by the forces of kufr [unbelief], is the notion that the people can choose whether to follow the truth or embark upon falsehood. This ideology teaches that no one has the right, regardless of whom he may be, to impose any creed or set of morals on anyone else even if that creed or set of morals is the truth revealed by Allah.

“The proponents of this ideology have portrayed the prophets of Allah incorrectly, making them out to be more akin to preachers and guides who have no authority over the masses at all... These same people further portray the prophets as having only one tool at their disposal for changing the beliefs of their people and era. This tool is what is referred to today as a ‘peaceful means of change.’ It entails displaying their methodology to the people and leaving them to choose for themselves, without any sort of pressure or force used against them, even if the other methodologies in question stand in complete contradiction to the methodology of the prophets and also oppose those ‘diplomats’ who are pleased with giving the people a choice!”

“Every time choice is allowed it will result in misguidance, either in the present or in the future.”

“[T]he flood [in the Biblical time of Noah] was a clear sign of the falseness of giving choice between truth and falsehood in da’wah [preaching]. For the flood was the result and consequence of opposing the truth, and evidence that anyone who rejected the truth would be punished in the [world] before the Hereafter and would not have any choice in that regards... in every time and place, those who are saved from the punishment are a small group, whereas the majority are destroyed.”

“Until we return to the correct state of Islamic affairs, it’s upon us all to work together to eradicate the principle of ‘free choice,’ and to not deceive the people in an attempt to seek their pleasure... Rather, we must confront them with the fact that they’ve turned away from the religion [Islam], while we hold onto it... and that we’re completely ready to stand in the face of anyone who attempts to divert us from our commitment to making the religion of Allah triumphant over all other religions, and that we will continue to fight the people of deviation and misguidance until we die trying to make the religion triumphant.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁴⁶

“Indeed the Muslims were defeated after the fall of their khilāfah (caliphate). Then their state ceased to exist, so the disbelievers were able to weaken and humiliate the Muslims, dominate them in every region, plunder their wealth and resources, and rob them of their rights. They

⁵⁴⁶ Aaron Y. Zelin, "" al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State's Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī 'Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,' Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

accomplished this by attacking and occupying their lands, placing their treacherous agents in power to rule the Muslims with an iron fist, and spreading dazzling and deceptive slogans such as: civilization, peace, co-existence, freedom, democracy, secularism, [B]aathism, nationalism, and patriotism, among other false slogans.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵⁴⁷

“Here the flag of the Islamic State, the flag of tawhid [monotheism] rises and flutters. Its shade covers land from Aleppo to Diyala. Beneath it, the walls of the *tawaghit* [tyrants] have been demolished, their flags have fallen, and their borders have been destroyed. Their soldiers are either killed, imprisoned, or defeated. The Muslims are honored. The kuffar [unbelievers]... are disgraced. Ahl Al-Sunna [Sunnis] are masters and are esteemed. The people of *bid'ah* [forbidden religious innovation]... are humiliated. The hudud [Koranic punishment] are implemented... Crosses and graves[1] are demolished... Jizya [the poll tax levied on non-Muslims living in Muslim lands] has been enforced... Courts have been established to resolve disputes and complaints. Evil has been removed.

“By Allah, if you disbelieve in democracy, secularism, nationalism, as well as all the other garbage and ideas from the west, and rush to your religion and creed, then by Allah, you will own the earth, and the east and west will submit to you. This is the promise of Allah to you.”

"[K]now that one of the biggest factors that brought about this victory that Allah...has blessed you with is your support of each other, the absence of disagreement, your listening to and obedience of your leaders, and your patience with them. So keep this factor in mind and preserve it. Unite with each other and do not disagree with each other. Accept each other and do not argue with each other. Be very wary of breaking the ranks... And if anyone wants to break the ranks, split his head with bullets and empty its insides, whoever he may be..."

Abu Obida, ISIS Hisbah Patrol leader, June 2014

“We told him: ‘This is your wife. She shouldn’t be on display. Is she a product? Is she your wife, or are you sharing her with people? It doesn’t make sense to share her with people. Aren’t you a Muslim? God ordered women to wear a veil, we didn’t invent that. So, we advise in a nice way, but those who don’t obey will be forced.’”⁵⁴⁸

Anti-Israel

⁵⁴⁷ “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As 'Caliph', Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

⁵⁴⁸ “The Islamic State (Part 3),” VICE News, August 13, 2014, <https://news.vice.com/video/the-islamic-state-part-3>.

Al-Dabiq, ISIS magazine, July 2014⁵⁴⁹

“Many readers are probably asking about their obligations towards the [Caliphate] right now... The first priority is to perform *hijrah* [migration] from wherever you are to the Islamic State, from dārul-kufr [the abode of unbelief] to dārul-Islām [the abode of Islam]... Ruh to the shade of the Islamic State with your [family]... You can be a major contributor towards the liberation of [Mecca], [Medina], and al-Quds [Jerusalem].”

“As for the massacres taking place in Gaza against the Muslim men, women, and children, then the Islamic State will do everything within its means to continue striking down every apostate who stands as an obstacle on its path towards Palestine... [ISIS’s] actions speak louder than words and it is only a matter of time and patience before it reaches Palestine to fight the barbaric [J]ews and kill those of them hiding behind the gharqad trees—the trees of the [J]ews.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁵⁰

“So O lions in Anbār, Nineveh, Ṣalāhuddīn, Kirkūk, Diyālī, Baghdād and the south, continue to expand and to redefine the maps. For verily today you complete the hope of the oppressed in all lands, and verily the prisoners await you in Baghdād, in Rūmiyyah (Lebanon), in Aleppo, in Al-Ḥā’ir (Saudi Arabia) and in Abū Za’abal (Egypt). And verily you have an appointment in Baghdād, in Damascus, in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), in Makkah and in Madīnah. Verily you have an appointment in Dābiq, in Al-Ghūṭah, and in Ar-Rūm inshā’Allāh. So let the entire world know that the era of humiliation and subservience has gone, never to return. Verily the rule of the world will be for none but the Muslims, by the edge of the sword.”

Anti-Religious Minorities

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁵¹

⁵⁴⁹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Ḥayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State’s magazine: ‘Dābiq #2,’” Jihadology, July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/27/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-states-magazine-dabiq-2>.

⁵⁵⁰ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

⁵⁵¹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’” Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al->

“[L]isten, O ummah [community] of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers—the agents of the crusaders and the atheists, and the guards of the [J]ews. O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the [J]ews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the [J]ews.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵⁵²

“Here the flag of the Islamic State, the flag of tawhid [monotheism] rises and flutters. Its shade covers land from Aleppo to Diyala. Beneath it, the walls of the *tawaghit* [tyrants] have been demolished, their flags have fallen, and their borders have been destroyed. Their soldiers are either killed, imprisoned, or defeated. The Muslims are honored. The kuffar [unbelievers]... are disgraced. Ahl Al-Sunna [Sunnis] are masters and are esteemed. The people of *bid'ah* [forbidden religious innovation]... are humiliated. The hudud [Koranic punishment] are implemented... Crosses and graves[1] are demolished... Jizya [the poll tax levied on non-Muslims living in Muslim lands] has been enforced... Courts have been established to resolve disputes and complaints. Evil has been removed.

“As for you, O soldiers of the Islamic State, then congratulations to you. Congratulations on this clear victory, congratulations on this great triumph. Today the unbelievers are infuriated in such a manner after which there will be no similar infuriation. Many of them almost die from anger and sorrow... Today the hypocrites are degraded. Today the Rafidites [i.e. Shi'ites], Sahawat [awakening movement], and apostates are humiliated. Today the idols in the east and west are frightened. Today the nations of unbelief in the west are terrified.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁵³

[%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama.](#)

⁵⁵² “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As 'Caliph', Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

⁵⁵³ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqan Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

“And so [Sunni Muslims] in Iraq, verily you should know the truth, and it is that there is no coexistence or peace with the Rawāfid. You have seen the truth of this matter in the squares of Hawijah, in the mosques of Ba‘qūbah, in the market places of Mosul and Samarrā’, in the villages of Laṭīfiyyah, in the neighbourhoods of Buhriz, Ramādī and Fallūjah, and what follows is more disastrous and more bitter. It is time that you be aware that the polytheist Rāfiḍah are the most evil to tread upon this earth, more evil than the Jews and the Crusaders. It is time that you disbelieve in democracy which will not bring better than what it has brought upon you in the past lean years. It will bring nothing upon you but shame and disgrace. It is time for you to know that democracy is nothing but a tool and method by which the Ṭawāghīt (tyrants) are empowered and by which they wage war upon the Religion of Allah. It is time that you reject your treacherous politicians, who have only been working for their own personal and private benefits, the ones who through voting for them, you gained nothing but humiliation, degradation and oppression.

“So O lions in Anbār, Nineveh, Ṣalāhuddīn, Kirkūk, Diyālī, Baghdād and the south, continue to expand and to redefine the maps. For verily today you complete the hope of the oppressed in all lands, and verily the prisoners await you in Baghdād, in Rūmiyyah (Lebanon), in Aleppo, in Al-Ḥā’ir (Saudi Arabia) and in Abū Za‘abal (Egypt). And verily you have an appointment in Baghdād, in Damascus, in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), in Makkah and in Madīnah. Verily you have an appointment in Dābiq, in Al-Ghūṭah, and in Ar-Rūm inshā’Allāh. So let the entire world know that the era of humiliation and subservience has gone, never to return. Verily the rule of the world will be for none but the Muslims, by the edge of the sword.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, January 2014⁵⁵⁴

“We say to whoever has been involved in fights against the [Islamic S]tate from the battalions, reconsider, and repent to your Lord... Here the [Islamic S]tate is extending an arm to you to stop fighting it and it would stop fighting you, let’s be free to fight the Nusairies and Rafedha... The Nusairies are shedding your blood, attacking your honour, destroying your homes under the claim of fighting terrorism to protect you from Jews and Crusaders, collaborating against Islam and fixing up traps for the Mujahedeen and fighting them, [pretending] to cry for you while trading in your blood and cause...”

“And you sons of the state in Iraq... Be the spear head in fighting the Safawites, and be in the front rows, stand up against this Rafidi war, and advance towards Baghdad and the south, burn the Rafida in their backyard...”

Anti-Secular

al- Dabiq, ISIS magazine, Issue 3, date unknown⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵⁴ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Baghdādī ‘God Knows and You Do Not Know,’” Jihadology, last modified January 25, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/01/19/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-baghdadi-god-knows-and-you-do-not-know>.

“May Allah grant success to the lions of the Islamic State and continue to disgrace and humiliate the Ithy Radah and their allies.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁵⁶

“[L]isten, O ummah [community] of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers—the agents of the crusaders and the atheists, and the guards of the [J]ews. O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the [J]ews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the [J]ews.”

“Indeed the Muslims were defeated after the fall of their khilāfah (caliphate). Then their state ceased to exist, so the disbelievers were able to weaken and humiliate the Muslims, dominate them in every region, plunder their wealth and resources, and rob them of their rights. They accomplished this by attacking and occupying their lands, placing their treacherous agents in power to rule the Muslims with an iron fist, and spreading dazzling and deceptive slogans such as: civilization, peace, co-existence, freedom, democracy, secularism, [B]aathism, nationalism, and patriotism, among other false slogans.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵⁵⁷

“By Allah, if you disbelieve in democracy, secularism, nationalism, as well as all the other garbage and ideas from the west, and rush to your religion and creed, then by Allah, you will own the earth, and the east and west will submit to you. This is the promise of Allah to you.”

Anti-Semitic

⁵⁵⁵ al-Ḥayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s magazine: “Islamic State Report #3,” Jihadology, <http://jihadology.net/2014/06/13/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-magazine-islamic-state-report-3/>.

⁵⁵⁶ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁵⁷ “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As ‘Caliph’, Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

Al-Dabiq, ISIS magazine, July 2014⁵⁵⁸

“As for the massacres taking place in Gaza against the Muslim men, women, and children, then the Islamic State will do everything within its means to continue striking down every apostate who stands as an obstacle on its path towards Palestine... [ISIS’s] actions speak louder than words and it is only a matter of time and patience before it reaches Palestine to fight the barbaric [J]ews and kill those of them hiding behind the gharqad trees—the trees of the [J]ews.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁵⁹

“[L]isten, O ummah [community] of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers—the agents of the crusaders and the atheists, and the guards of the [J]ews. O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the [J]ews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the [J]ews.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁶⁰

“And to the secularists, the cowards of the tyrants, from the sons of our kin we say: We have promised to return to the areas that we withdrew from and more, and here we are returning to more, and today by the favour of Allah we are stronger than yesterday, and our enemy is by the grace of Allah in a state of weakness and collapse. Verily today you see the lions of the Islamic

⁵⁵⁸ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Ḥayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State’s magazine: ‘Dabiq #2,’” Jihadology, July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/27/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-states-magazine-dabiq-2>.

⁵⁵⁹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’” Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁶⁰ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

State from the Muhājirīn (emigrants) and Anṣār (supporters) and you see their sturdiness and strength. Yesterday these people were living in the desert seared by scorching heat. Its sands hurt them, they endured in it loneliness, alienation and suffering, and now here they are today wandering through the streets and squares of the cities happily socialising. They are being entertained in the rural fields and in their orchards shaded and pleased. So do not think that they shall leave this their day and they shall return to their previous day. So no place remains for you O secularists, it would be better for you to flee, for verily the Islamic State shall remain with the permission of Allah, steadfast by the Power of Allah, victorious inshā'Allāh.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, January 2014⁵⁶¹

“We say to whoever has been involved in fights against the [Islamic S]tate from the battalions, reconsider, and repent to your Lord... Here the [Islamic S]tate is extending an arm to you to stop fighting it and it would stop fighting you, let's be free to fight the Nusairies and Rafedha... The Nusairies are shedding your blood, attacking your honour, destroying your homes under the claim of fighting terrorism to protect you from Jews and Crusaders, collaborating against Islam and fixing up traps for the Mujahedeen and fighting them, [pretending] to cry for you while trading in your blood and cause...

Anti-Shiite

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵⁶²

“As for you, O soldiers of the Islamic State, then congratulations to you. Congratulations on this clear victory, congratulations on this great triumph. Today the unbelievers are infuriated in such a manner after which there will be no similar infuriation. Many of them almost die from anger and sorrow... Today the hypocrites are degraded. Today the Rafidites [i.e. Shi'ites], Sahawat [awakening movement], and apostates are humiliated. Today the idols in the east and west are frightened. Today the nations of unbelief in the west are terrified.”

ISIS statement, following the seizure of Mosul, June 11, 2014⁵⁶³

⁵⁶¹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Baghdādī ‘God Knows and You Do Not Know,’” Jihadology, last modified January 25, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/01/19/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-baghdadi-god-knows-and-you-do-not-know>.

⁵⁶² “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As 'Caliph', Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

⁵⁶³ “Following Capture of Mosul, ISIS Launches ‘March on Baghdad’ Campaign,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 12, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8021.htm>.

“Following the recent victories that Allah granted ISIS, and the arrival of additional manpower, funds, weapons and military vehicles of all kinds, your brothers in the Baghdad province—may Allah liberate it—in coordination with other [ISIS] provinces, announce the initiation of a new campaign that we have called ‘the March.’ The heroes of battle and raging lions already carried out the first surge of this campaign when two knights of Islam set out to demolish two strongholds of the Rafidi [i.e., Shi’ite] government and its lackeys from the [Shi’ite] militias... We say to the Safavid [i.e., Iranian-controlled] government and its parties, militias and security apparatuses: be aware that tragedies will befall you in the coming days, Allah willing...”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, June 11, 2014⁵⁶⁴

“Proceed with your jihad... Proceed to meet your Lord... Show no softness towards your enemies, although Allah has consigned them to you. Continue your forward march, since the true battle hasn't yet begun... It will rage in Baghdad and Karbala, so put on your [explosive] belts, and get ready, get ready. Do not relinquish [even] an inch [of the lands] you have liberated. The Rawafid [i.e., Shi'ites] shall not set foot in those areas again, unless it will be over your [dead] bodies... March towards the Baghdad [of Abbasid Caliph Haroun] Al-Rashid, the Baghdad of the Caliphate, since we still have a score to settle there. Wake [its people] in the morning by [storming] its walls, do not let them catch their breath, and be confident of victory from Allah. The Rawafid are a defeated nation, God forbid that He should grant them victory over you. They are polytheists, worshippers of animals and people.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁶⁵

“And so [Sunni Muslims] in Iraq, verily you should know the truth, and it is that there is no coexistence or peace with the Rawāfiḍ. You have seen the truth of this matter in the squares of Hawijah, in the mosques of Ba‘ qūbah, in the market places of Mosul and Samarrā‘, in the villages of Laṭfiyyah, in the neighbourhoods of Buhriz, Ramādī and Fallūjah, and what follows is more disastrous and more bitter. It is time that you be aware that the polytheist Rāfiḍah are the most evil to tread upon this earth, more evil than the Jews and the Crusaders.”

“O Ahlus-Sunnah in Iraq, if your politicians approve of the humiliation, belittling and submission to the Rāfiḍah, then we are not to approve of it and we are to keep steady in observation upon your enemies, whether you were to support us or forsake us. O Ahlus-Sunnah

⁵⁶⁴ “ISIS Spokesman: The Real Battle Will Be in Baghdad,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 12, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/8020.htm>.

⁵⁶⁵ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

in Iraq, you have seen our military might and our strength, be aware that this strength and this weapon and military might are but munitions for you. For we are from you and you from us; if you were to see good from us, then it is for you, and if you were to see other than that, then advise us. We cannot see your sons be slaves for the Rafidhah, servants for them and their followers, and yet keep quiet from them.

We cannot see them following the path of Jahannam (Hellfire) and let them be. We want nothing for you but pride and honour in this life, and salvation and happiness in the hereafter, and you will see nothing from us but mercy upon you and compassion towards you.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, January 2014⁵⁶⁶

“We say to whoever has been involved in fights against the [Islamic S]tate from the battalions, reconsider, and repent to your Lord... Here the [Islamic S]tate is extending an arm to you to stop fighting it and it would stop fighting you, let’s be free to fight the Nusairies and Rafedha... The Nusairies are shedding your blood, attacking your honour, destroying your homes under the claim of fighting terrorism to protect you from Jews and Crusaders, collaborating against Islam and fixing up traps for the Mujahedeen and fighting them, [pretending] to cry for you while trading in your blood and cause...”

“And you sons of the state in Iraq... Be the spear head in fighting the Safawites, and be in the front rows, stand up against this Rafidi war, and advance towards Baghdad and the south, burn the Rafida in their backyard...”

Anti-Women

Abu Obida, ISIS Hisbah Patrol leader, June 2014

“We told him: ‘This is your wife. She shouldn’t be on display. Is she a product? Is she your wife, or are you sharing her with people? It doesn’t make sense to share her with people. Aren’t you a Muslim? God ordered women to wear a veil, we didn’t invent that. So, we advise in a nice way, but those who don’t obey will be forced.’”⁵⁶⁷

Pro-Global Domination

⁵⁶⁶ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Baghdādī ‘God Knows and You Do Not Know,’” Jihadology, last modified January 25, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/01/19/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-baghdadi-god-knows-and-you-do-not-know>.

⁵⁶⁷ “The Islamic State (Part 3),” VICE News, August 13, 2014, <https://news.vice.com/video/the-islamic-state-part-3>.

Al-Dabiq, ISIS magazine, July 2014⁵⁶⁸

“Many readers are probably asking about their obligations towards the [Caliphate] right now... The first priority is to perform *hijrah* [migration] from wherever you are to the Islamic State, from dārul-kufr [the abode of unbelief] to dārul-Islām [the abode of Islam]... Ruh to the shade of the Islamic State with your [family]... You can be a major contributor towards the liberation of [Mecca], [Medina], and al-Quds [Jerusalem].”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁶⁹

“Soon, by Allah’s permission, a day will come when the Muslim will walk everywhere as a master, having honor, being revered, with his head raised high and his dignity preserved. Anyone who dares to offend him will be disciplined, and any hand that reaches out to harm him will be cut off. So let the world know that we are living today in a new era. Whoever was heedless must now be alert. Whoever was sleeping must now awaken. Whoever was shocked and amazed must comprehend. The Muslims today have a loud, thundering statement, and possess heavy boots. They have a statement that will cause the world to hear and understand the meaning of terrorism, and boots that will trample the idol of nationalism, destroy the idol of democracy and uncover its deviant nature.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁷⁰

“[L]isten, O ummah [community] of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers—the agents of the crusaders and the atheists, and the guards of the [J]ews. O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two

⁵⁶⁸ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Ḥayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State’s magazine: ‘Dabiq #2,’” Jihadology, July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/27/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-states-magazine-dabiq-2>.

⁵⁶⁹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’” Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁷⁰ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’” Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the [J]ews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the [J]ews.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁷¹

“So O lions in Anbār, Nineveh, Ṣalāhuddīn, Kirkūk, Diyālī, Baghdād and the south, continue to expand and to redefine the maps. For verily today you complete the hope of the oppressed in all lands, and verily the prisoners await you in Baghdād, in Rūmiyyah (Lebanon), in Aleppo, in Al-Ḥā’ir (Saudi Arabia) and in Abū Za’abal (Egypt). And verily you have an appointment in Baghdād, in Damascus, in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), in Makkah and in Madīnah. Verily you have an appointment in Dābiq, in Al-Ghūṭah, and in Ar-Rūm inshā’Allāh. So let the entire world know that the era of humiliation and subservience has gone, never to return. Verily the rule of the world will be for none but the Muslims, by the edge of the sword.”

Pro-Islamism

Al-Dabiq, ISIS magazine, July 2014⁵⁷²

“Many readers are probably asking about their obligations towards the [Caliphate] right now... The first priority is to perform *hijrah* [migration] from wherever you are to the Islamic State, from dārul-kufr [the abode of unbelief] to dārul-Islām [the abode of Islam]... Ruh to the shade of the Islamic State with your [family]... You can be a major contributor towards the liberation of [Mecca], [Medina], and al-Quds [Jerusalem].”

“If you cannot perform hijrah for whatever extraordinary reason, then try in your location to organize bay’āt [pledges of allegiance] to the [Caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi]. Publicize them as much as possible... It is necessary that bay’ah becomes so common to the average Muslim that he considers those holding back as grossly abnormal.”

“From amongst the polluted ideologies that have afflicted people the entire world over throughout the course of the tyranny carried out by the forces of kufr [unbelief], is the notion that the people can choose whether to follow the truth or embark upon falsehood. This ideology

⁵⁷¹ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

⁵⁷² Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Ḥayāt Media Center presents a new issue of the Islamic State’s magazine: ‘Dābiq #2,’” Jihadology, July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/27/al-%E1%B8%A5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-issue-of-the-islamic-states-magazine-dabiq-2>.

teaches that no one has the right, regardless of whom he may be, to impose any creed or set of morals on anyone else even if that creed or set of morals is the truth revealed by Allah.”

“Until we return to the correct state of Islamic affairs, it’s upon us all to work together to eradicate the principle of ‘free choice,’ and to not deceive the people in an attempt to seek their pleasure... Rather, we must confront them with the fact that they’ve turned away from the religion [Islam], while we hold onto it... and that we’re completely ready to stand in the face of anyone who attempts to divert us from our commitment to making the religion of Allah triumphant over all other religions, and that we will continue to fight the people of deviation and misguidance until we die trying to make the religion triumphant.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁷³

“And there is no deed in [Ramadan] or in any other month better than jihad in the path of Allah, so take advantage of this opportunity and walk the path of you[r] righteous predecessors. Support the religion of Allah through jihad in the path of Allah... Terrify the enemies of Allah and seek death in the places where you expect to find it, for the dunyā (worldly life) will come to an end, and the hereafter will last forever... So take up arms, take up arms, O soldiers of the Islamic State! And fight, fight!”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁷⁴

“Soon, by Allah’s permission, a day will come when the Muslim will walk everywhere as a master, having honor, being revered, with his head raised high and his dignity preserved. Anyone who dares to offend him will be disciplined, and any hand that reaches out to harm him will be cut off. So let the world know that we are living today in a new era. Whoever was heedless must now be alert. Whoever was sleeping must now awaken. Whoever was shocked and amazed must comprehend. The Muslims today have a loud, thundering statement, and possess heavy boots. They have a statement that will cause the world to hear and understand the meaning of terrorism,

⁵⁷³ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqan Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁷⁴ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqan Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

and boots that will trample the idol of nationalism, destroy the idol of democracy and uncover its deviant nature.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁷⁵

“[L]isten, O ummah [community] of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers—the agents of the crusaders and the atheists, and the guards of the [J]ews. O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy—the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the [J]ews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the [J]ews.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁷⁶

“Indeed the Muslims were defeated after the fall of their khilāfah (caliphate). Then their state ceased to exist, so the disbelievers were able to weaken and humiliate the Muslims, dominate them in every region, plunder their wealth and resources, and rob them of their rights. They accomplished this by attacking and occupying their lands, placing their treacherous agents in power to rule the Muslims with an iron fist, and spreading dazzling and deceptive slogans such as: civilization, peace, co-existence, freedom, democracy, secularism, [B]aathism, nationalism, and patriotism, among other false slogans.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁵ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁷⁶ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁷⁷ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

“Therefore, rush O Muslims to your state. Yes, it is your state. Rush, because Syria is not for the Syrians, and Iraq is not for the Iraqis. The earth is Allah’s... The State is a state for all Muslims. The land is for the Muslims, all the Muslims. O Muslims everywhere, whoever is capable of performing hijrah (emigration) to the Islamic State, then let him do so, because hijrah to the land of Islam is obligatory.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 5, 2014⁵⁷⁸

“[T]ake advantage of this noble month [Ramadan,] O worshipper of Allah! Fight therein! This is the month in which the Prophet commanded armies to fight against the enemies of Allah. The month in which he would wage jihad against the polytheists... And Allah likes us to kill his enemies, and make jihad in his sake.”

“[Y]our brothers the mujahideen, indeed did Allah... give them victories and conquests... And they were firm against the enemies of Allah, and He made them powerful in the land until the declaration of the Caliphate and choice of an imam. And this is a matter obligatory upon all [M]uslims. It is [the highest level of obligation]! And it must be applied upon the earth entirely.”

“[I]f you are pleased with the promise of Allah, then make jihad in his sake! And call the believers to this, and have patience in the times of doubt. If you knew what was in the jihad, from the [air], [generous blessing], raising in rank, the honor in this life and the next, none of you would stray from the path of jihad!”

“O worshippers of Allah! Apply your religion and act upon it. And fear Allah... If you are given hardship, fear Allah! If you are bestowed with [pre-determined wealth], then fear Allah. And if you are given a life full of blessings fear Allah, and make jihad in his sake.”

“O Allah, give Islam victory over the disbelief and the disbelievers, and give victory to the mujahideen, in the East of this earth and [its] West.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵⁷⁹

[%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama.](#)

⁵⁷⁸ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new video message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī “Khuṭbah and Jum’ah Prayer in the Grand Mosque of Mūsul (Mosul),” Jihadology, last modified July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/05/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-khu%E1%B9%ADbah-and-jumah-prayer-in-the-grand-mosque-of-mu>.

⁵⁷⁹ “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As ‘Caliph’, Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

“The time has come for those generations that were drowning in oceans of disgrace, being nursed on the milk of humiliation, and being ruled by the vilest of all people, after their long slumber in the darkness of neglect—the time has come for them to rise. The time has come for the ummah [community] of Muhammad...to wake up from its sleep, remove the garments of dishonor, and shake off the dust of humiliation and disgrace, for the era of lamenting and moaning has gone, and the dawn of honor has emerged anew. The sun of jihad has risen. The glad tidings of good are shining. Triumph looms on the horizon. The signs of victory have appeared.”

“Here the flag of the Islamic State, the flag of tawhid [monotheism] rises and flutters. Its shade covers land from Aleppo to Diyala. Beneath it, the walls of the *tawaghit* [tyrants] have been demolished, their flags have fallen, and their borders have been destroyed. Their soldiers are either killed, imprisoned, or defeated. The Muslims are honored. The kuffar [unbelievers]... are disgraced. Ahl Al-Sunna [Sunnis] are masters and are esteemed. The people of *bid'ah* [forbidden religious innovation]... are humiliated. The hudud [Koranic punishment] are implemented... Crosses and graves[1] are demolished... Jizya [the poll tax levied on non-Muslims living in Muslim lands] has been enforced... Courts have been established to resolve disputes and complaints. Evil has been removed.

"We clarify to the Muslims that with this declaration of [the caliphate], it is incumbent upon all Muslims to pledge allegiance to the caliph Ibrahim and support him... The legality of all emirates, groups, states, and organizations, becomes null by the expansion of the caliphate's authority and arrival of its troops to their areas... The caliph... has fulfilled all the conditions for caliphate mentioned by the scholars... His authority has expanded over wide areas in Iraq and Al-Sham. The land now submits to his order and authority from Aleppo to Diyala. So fear Allah, O slaves of Allah. Listen to your caliph and obey him. Support your [Islamic S]tate, which grows everyday—by Allah's grace—with honor and loftiness, while its enemy increases in retreat and defeat. So rush O Muslims and gather around your caliph, so that you may return as you once were for ages, kings of the earth and knights of war.”

“By Allah, if you disbelieve in democracy, secularism, nationalism, as well as all the other garbage and ideas from the west, and rush to your religion and creed, then by Allah, you will own the earth, and the east and west will submit to you. This is the promise of Allah to you.”

“As for you, O soldiers of the Islamic State, then congratulations to you. Congratulations on this clear victory, congratulations on this great triumph. Today the unbelievers are infuriated in such a manner after which there will be no similar infuriation. Many of them almost die from anger and sorrow... Today the hypocrites are degraded. Today the Rafidites [i.e. Shi'ites], Sahawat [awakening movement], and apostates are humiliated. Today the idols in the east and west are frightened. Today the nations of unbelief in the west are terrified.”

"[K]now that one of the biggest factors that brought about this victory that Allah...has blessed you with is your support of each other, the absence of disagreement, your listening to and obedience of your leaders, and your patience with them. So keep this factor in mind and preserve it. Unite with each other and do not disagree with each other. Accept each other and do not argue

with each other. Be very wary of breaking the ranks... And if anyone wants to break the ranks, split his head with bullets and empty its insides, whoever he may be..."

"We spilled rivers of our blood to water the seeds of the caliphate, laid its foundation with our skulls, and built its tower over our corpses. We were patient for years in the face of being killed, imprisoned, having our bones broken and our limbs severed... we took it forcibly at the point of a blade. We brought it back conquered and compelled. We established it in defiance of many. And the people's necks were violently struck, with bombings, explosions, and destruction...Our caliphate has indeed returned with certainty."

Disguised ISIS city charter for Mosul, June 2014⁵⁸⁰

"To those of you who ask, who are you? The answer: We are the soldiers of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria . . . who took it upon ourselves to bring back the glory of the Islamic Caliphate and turn back injustice and indignity."

"Whoever hated us yesterday is safe, unless he rejects, fights or abandons Islam... [Those who oppose their new rulers, however, will be] "killed, crucified or have their hands and feet cut off."

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁸¹

"Yes, verily the plot of Shayṭān is weak. America came to Iraq leading a frenzied crusade, in its sleeve a new map of what they call the 'Middle East.' It came with all its forcefulness and all of its iron (weaponry), with all of its pride and all of its arrogance. It gathered all of its allies and mobilised all of its aircraft and its fleets, and it brought its horses and its soldiers. The Crusaders thought that no one would be able to overcome them; however Allah the Mighty and Majestic disgraced them and showed us the weakness of their plot. The flame of Jihad was stoked, the Crusade campaign was broken and the Islamic State was established in spite of the villains, and America was expelled (from Iraq) disgraced and driven away, dragging their tails between their legs, defeated and broken, leaving in its wake a map of the Islamic State, ready to redraw the world upon the Prophetic manhaj (way) methodology of the [caliphate]. So verily, the [Islamic] State, with the favour of Allah alone, becomes stronger day after day. Its authority has not ceased

⁵⁸⁰ Loveday Morris and Liz Sly, "Iraq disintegrating as insurgents advance toward capital; Kurds seize Kirkuk," *Washington Post*, June 13, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iraq-disintegrating-as-insurgents-advance-kurds-seize-kirkuk/2014/06/12/22e79e2b-f793-4120-8161-36f17c287e5f_story.html.

⁵⁸¹ Aaron Y. Zelin, "al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām's Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al 'Adnānī al-Shāmī 'He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,'" *Jihadology*, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

since it was founded, by the favour of Allah, and its conquests shall not cease, with the permission of Allah, until the cross is smashed, the swine is killed and the Jizyah (tax for people of the book) is imposed, and there will be no fitnah (tribulation) on Earth and the Rule shall be for Allah alone completely.

“And whoever is thinking of entering into a war with us then he should consider this 1,000 times. O [Sunni Muslims] in Mesopotamia (Iraq), verily the battle today has become evidently clear, it is a battle between Truth and falsehood, between disbelief and belief, between polytheism and monotheism, a battle between all of the Rawāfiḍ and all [Sunni Muslims], and it will not end except with the supremacy of one of the two groups. So select which of the ranks you shall be among—and may Allah forbid—the people of polytheism be victorious over the people of monotheism.

“It is time that you O Sunnah of Iraq to know the way of honour and authority, the way of prosperity, security and happiness. It is time that you know there are no rights without Jihad, no justice without Jihad, no honour without Jihad, no security without Jihad, no hope without Jihad, no life without Jihad.

“O groups of Sunnah in Iraq, it will not harm you to disbelieve in democracy and gather around the Mujāhidīn. It will not harm you to support and grant victory to the Religion of Allah. So form into a union this time headed by Sheikh Abū Bakr Al-Baghdādī, and by the Will of Allah you will never regret that, and if you are to gather around the Mujāhidīn, you will have control over the Arabs, and the Non-Arabs will be submissive to you, and you will rule the world. So gather around the Mujāhidīn! So I say to the elders and the honourable men of the tribes of Ahlus-Sunnah, history is being recorded and the Angels are writing, and you are all mortal and nothing of you shall remain except for what is remembered about you, and no one shall take with him anything but his deeds. So either it shall be that generations of Muslims shall be proud of you and shall pray for Mercy for you until the Day of Resurrection, or they shall curse you whenever you are mentioned. Either you shall come on the Day of Resurrection with your good deeds and the deeds of those who followed you and you shall be raised with the Prophets and the martyrs and the righteous, or you shall carry a burden of sin with you, and you shall precede your people and those who followed you and lead them into Hell Fire with Pharaoh and Hāmān.

“And to the secularists, the cowards of the tyrants, from the sons of our kin we say: We have promised to return to the areas that we withdrew from and more, and here we are returning to more, and today by the favour of Allah we are stronger than yesterday, and our enemy is by the grace of Allah in a state of weakness and collapse. Verily today you see the lions of the Islamic State from the Muhājirīn (emigrants) and Anṣār (supporters) and you see their sturdiness and strength. Yesterday these people were living in the desert seared by scorching heat. Its sands hurt them, they endured in it loneliness, alienation and suffering, and now here they are today wandering through the streets and squares of the cities happily socialising. They are being entertained in the rural fields and in their orchards shaded and pleased. So do not think that they shall leave this their day and they shall return to their previous day. So no place remains for you O secularists, it would be better for you to flee, for verily the Islamic State shall remain with the permission of Allah, steadfast by the Power of Allah, victorious inshā'Allāh.

“The caravan is moving, and the barking of the dogs does not harm it, and no fitnah shall harm its soldiers ever again after today inshā'Allāh... Victory is in this path and you are firmer than the mountains. It does not violently shake you nor violently move you. A glad tidings to you for you have been patient and have gained. Inshā'Allāh the conquests of 'Umar have begun, if one of you were to travel today for hundreds of miles he would see only the flag of Tawhīd, flying high and waving. No rule beneath it except that of Allah, and no Religion except Allah's. The hypocrites are humiliated, despised and retreating, the Monotheists are honoured, victorious and conquering. So all praise is to Allah who kept us alive to realise this victory and this blessing, and it matters not to us if after today we should be killed or wiped out. It is sufficient for us that we meet Allah, to whom belongs might and majesty, with the courts that we have established and by these limits that we have set, and by this Shari'ah that we have implemented, in spite of USA hating it and the Jews hating it, in spite the Ṭawāghīt hating it, at the head of whom there is Āl Sa'ūd.”

“So O soldiers of the State, know that today you have entered into a new phase of the phases of struggle, for you have returned to the cities, and controlled the grounds, and let one of you be killed a thousand times before they think of going back. The cities and provinces that are under your control, on top of them Fallūjah, will not be ruled today, by the Will of Allah, except by the Law of Allah, and there will be no place in it for the secularists. Verily Fallūjah is Fallūjah of the Mujāhidīn, and Anbār is Anbār of the Mujāhidīn, and Nineveh, Kirkūk and Ṣalāḥuddīn are of the Muwaḥḥidīn (Monotheists), and Diyālah and Baghdād and its North and its South are of Ahlus-Sunnah. And verily, Baṣrah is our Baṣrah, for there is no place in it for the filthy Rafīdah.”

“O Soldiers of the State, remember always that you are fighting a forsaken people, if they seek help it is by 'Alī, and if they ask for aid it is by Al-Ḥusayn, and if they were to seek refuge it is by Al-'Abbās, and if they were to seek support it is by Fāṭimah, may Allah be pleased with them and her. They depend on humans and worship idols. Perfect is Allah, for he will never grant them victory over you, so let your weapons/tools be your 'Aqīdah, and your strength be your piety, and be certain of the victory of Allah, for verily you are the soldiers of Allah, fighting in the Path of Allah, and the Rāfīdah are the soldiers of Shayṭān and they fight in the path of the Ṭāghūt. So fight the allies of Shayṭān, for indeed, the plot of Shayṭān has ever been weak, and so that Allah may grant you their shoulders, and so that by the Will of Allah you may break their strength, and so that you, by the will of Allah, eradicate their roots, and so that Allah will fill their hearts with fear and their feet with defeat, and make their weapons and equipment booty for you. So wait for them at every place of ambush and enter upon them from every gate, and slaughter them like how you slaughter sheep, and kill them like how you kill flies. For if they are supported by USA and reinforced by Iran, then know that your protector is The King The One Who Recompenses; Excellent is He the Protector, and Excellent is He the Helper.”

Abu Jihad Shishani, senior ISIS military commander in Syria, February 2014⁵⁸²

⁵⁸² Joanna Paraszczuk, “Syria: Umar Shishani’s Second-in-Command Slams Saudi Cleric Al-Mohaisany & ‘Peace Initiative,’” EA Worldview, last modified February 9, 2014, <http://eaworldview.com/2014/02/syria-umar-shishanis-second-command-slams-saudi-jihadi-preacher-al-mohaisany>.

“Therefore, brothers, let each of you remember Judgement Day, on which each of you will be asked about your actions, what you did and whether his brothers were killed before your eyes. What did he do to establish the Caliphate?... Brothers, we have never been so close to our goal of establishing the Caliphate, as we are now. The infidels understood that even faster than some Muslims, so everyone attacked us together. We need to stand. And if you do not support us in this battle, you will be judged for that on the Day of Judgement!”

Pro-Violence

ISIS fighter, August 2014, in “A Second Message to America” video showing beheading of U.S. citizen Steven Sotloff⁵⁸³

“I’m back, Obama, and I’m back because of your arrogant foreign policy towards the Islamic State, because of your insistence on continuing your bombings and [unclear] on Mosul Dam, despite our serious warnings. You, Obama, have but to gain from your actions but another American citizen. So just as your missiles continue to strike our people, our knife will continue to strike the necks of your people... We take this opportunity to warn those governments that enter this evil alliance of America against the Islamic State to back off and leave our people alone.”

Disguised ISIS fighter, August 2014, in “A Message to America” video showing beheading of U.S. citizen James Foley⁵⁸⁴

“Obama authorized military operations against the Islamic State effectively placing America upon a slippery slope towards a new war front against Muslims... This is James Wright Foley, an American citizen of your country. As a government, you have been at the forefront of aggression towards the Islamic State. You have plotted against us and gone far out of your way to find reasons to interfere in our affairs. Today, your military airforce is attacking us daily in Iraq. Your strikes have caused casualties amongst Muslims. You’re no longer fighting an insurgency, we are an Islamic army and a State that has been accepted by a large number of Muslims worldwide, so effectively, any aggression towards the Islamic State is an aggression towards Muslims from all walks of life who have accepted the Islamic Caliphate as their leadership. So any attempt by you, Obama, to deny the Muslims their rights of living in safety under the Islamic Caliphate will result in the bloodshed of your people. [Beheads Foley] [Fighter

⁵⁸³ “IS Behead Steven Joel Sotloff, Threatens to Execute Briton David Cawthorne Haines | Jihadist News,” SITE Monitoring Group, last modified September 2, 2014, <https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/is-behead-steven-joel-sotloff-threatens-to-execute-briton-david-cawthorne-haines.html>.

⁵⁸⁴ “IS Beheads Captured American James Wright Foley, Threatens to Execute Steven Joel Sotloff | Jihadist News,” SITE Monitoring Service, last modified September 3, 2014, <https://news.siteintelgroup.com/Jihadist-News/is-beheads-captured-american-james-foley-threatens-to-execute-another.html>.

holds Steven Joel Sotloff] The life of this American citizen, Obama, depends on your next decision.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 5, 2014⁵⁸⁵

“[T]ake advantage of this noble month [Ramadan,] O worshipper of Allah! Fight therein! This is the month in which the Prophet commanded armies to fight against the enemies of Allah. The month in which he would wage jihad against the polytheists... And Allah likes us to kill his enemies, and make jihad in his sake.”

“[Y]our brothers the mujahideen, indeed did Allah... give them victories and conquests... And they were firm against the enemies of Allah, and He made them powerful in the land until the declaration of the Caliphate and choice of an imam. And this is a matter obligatory upon all [M]uslims. It is [the highest level of obligation]! And it must be applied upon the earth entirely.”

“[I]f you are pleased with the promise of Allah, then make jihad in his sake! And call the believers to this, and have patience in the times of doubt. If you knew what was in the jihad, from the [air], [generous blessing], raising in rank, the honor in this life and the next, none of you would stray from the path of jihad!”

“O worshippers of Allah! Apply your religion and act upon it. And fear Allah... If you are given hardship, fear Allah! If you are bestowed with [pre-determined wealth], then fear Allah. And if you are given a life full of blessings fear Allah, and make jihad in his sake.”

“O Allah, give Islam victory over the disbelief and the disbelievers, and give victory to the mujahideen, in the East of this earth and [its] West.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁸⁶

“And there is no deed in [Ramadan] or in any other month better than jihad in the path of Allah, so take advantage of this opportunity and walk the path of you[r] righteous predecessors. Support

⁵⁸⁵ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new video message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī “Khuṭbah and Jum’ah Prayer in the Grand Mosque of Mūsul (Mosul),” Jihadology, last modified July 27, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/05/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-khu%E1%B9%ADbah-and-jumah-prayer-in-the-grand-mosque-of-mu>.

⁵⁸⁶ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

the religion of Allah through jihad in the path of Allah... Terrify the enemies of Allah and seek death in the places where you expect to find it, for the dunyā (worldly life) will come to an end, and the hereafter will last forever... So take up arms, take up arms, O soldiers of the Islamic State! And fight, fight!”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, July 2014⁵⁸⁷

“Soon, by Allah’s permission, a day will come when the Muslim will walk everywhere as a master, having honor, being revered, with his head raised high and his dignity preserved. Anyone who dares to offend him will be disciplined, and any hand that reaches out to harm him will be cut off. So let the world know that we are living today in a new era. Whoever was heedless must now be alert. Whoever was sleeping must now awaken. Whoever was shocked and amazed must comprehend. The Muslims today have a loud, thundering statement, and possess heavy boots. They have a statement that will cause the world to hear and understand the meaning of terrorism, and boots that will trample the idol of nationalism, destroy the idol of democracy and uncover its deviant nature.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, declaring an Islamic caliphate, June 29, 2014⁵⁸⁸

“The sun of jihad has risen... Here the flag of the Islamic State, the flag of tawhid [monotheism] rises and flutters. Its shade covers land from Aleppo to Diyala. Beneath it, the walls of the *tawaghit* [tyrants] have been demolished, their flags have fallen, and their borders have been destroyed. Their soldiers are either killed, imprisoned, or defeated. The Muslims are honored. The kuffar [unbelievers]... are disgraced. Ahl Al-Sunna [Sunnis] are masters and are esteemed. The people of *bid’ah* [forbidden religious innovation]... are humiliated. The hudud [Koranic punishment] are implemented... Crosses and graves[1] are demolished... Jizya [the poll tax levied on non-Muslims living in Muslim lands] has been enforced... Courts have been established to resolve disputes and complaints. Evil has been removed.

"[K]now that one of the biggest factors that brought about this victory that Allah...has blessed you with is your support of each other, the absence of disagreement, your listening to and obedience of your leaders, and your patience with them. So keep this factor in mind and preserve it. Unite with each other and do not disagree with each other. Accept each other and do not argue

⁵⁸⁷ Aaron Y. Zelin, ""al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥussaynī al-Qurayshī al-Baghdādī ‘Message To the Mujāhidīn and the Islamic Ummah In the Month Of Ramaḍān,’ Jihadology, last modified July 1, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/07/01/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-states-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-qurayshi-al-baghdadi-message-to-the-mujahidin-and-the-islamic-ummah-in-the-month-of-rama>.

⁵⁸⁸ “ISIS Declares Islamic Caliphate, Appoints Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi As ‘Caliph’, Declares All Muslims Must Pledge Allegiance To Him,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 30, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8049.htm>.

with each other. Be very wary of breaking the ranks... And if anyone wants to break the ranks, split his head with bullets and empty its insides, whoever he may be..."

"We spilled rivers of our blood to water the seeds of the caliphate, laid its foundation with our skulls, and built its tower over our corpses. We were patient for years in the face of being killed, imprisoned, having our bones broken and our limbs severed... we took it forcibly at the point of a blade. We brought it back conquered and compelled. We established it in defiance of many. And the people's necks were violently struck, with bombings, explosions, and destruction... Our caliphate has indeed returned with certainty."

ISIS statement, following the seizure of Mosul, June 11, 2014⁵⁸⁹

"Following the recent victories that Allah granted ISIS, and the arrival of additional manpower, funds, weapons and military vehicles of all kinds, your brothers in the Baghdad province—may Allah liberate it—in coordination with other [ISIS] provinces, announce the initiation of a new campaign that we have called 'the March.' The heroes of battle and raging lions already carried out the first surge of this campaign when two knights of Islam set out to demolish two strongholds of the Rafidi [i.e., Shi'ite] government and its lackeys from the [Shi'ite] militias... We say to the Safavid [i.e., Iranian-controlled] government and its parties, militias and security apparatuses: be aware that tragedies will befall you in the coming days, Allah willing..."

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, June 11, 2014⁵⁹⁰

"Proceed with your jihad... Proceed to meet your Lord... Show no softness towards your enemies, although Allah has consigned them to you. Continue your forward march, since the true battle hasn't yet begun... It will rage in Baghdad and Karbala, so put on your [explosive] belts, and get ready, get ready. Do not relinquish [even] an inch [of the lands] you have liberated. The Rawafid [i.e., Shi'ites] shall not set foot in those areas again, unless it will be over your [dead] bodies... March towards the Baghdad [of Abbasid Caliph Haroun] Al-Rashid, the Baghdad of the Caliphate, since we still have a score to settle there. Wake [its people] in the morning by [storming] its walls, do not let them catch their breath, and be confident of victory from Allah. The Rawafid are a defeated nation, God forbid that He should grant them victory over you. They are polytheists, worshippers of animals and people."

ISIS city charter for Mosul, June 2014⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁹ "Following Capture of Mosul, ISIS Launches 'March on Baghdad' Campaign," The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 12, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8021.htm>.

⁵⁹⁰ "ISIS Spokesman: The Real Battle Will Be in Baghdad," The Middle East Media Research Institute, June 12, 2014, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/8020.htm>.

⁵⁹¹ Loveday Morris and Liz Sly, "Iraq disintegrating as insurgents advance toward capital; Kurds seize Kirkuk," *Washington Post*, June 13, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iraq-disintegrating-as-insurgents-advance-kurds-seize-kirkuk/2014/06/12/22e79e2b-f793-4120-8161-36f17c287e5f_story.html.

“To those of you who ask, who are you? The answer: We are the soldiers of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria . . . who took it upon ourselves to bring back the glory of the Islamic Caliphate and turn back injustice and indignity.”

“Whoever hated us yesterday is safe, unless he rejects, fights or abandons Islam. . . [Those who oppose their new rulers, however, will be] “killed, crucified or have their hands and feet cut off.”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, April 2014⁵⁹²

“Yes, verily the plot of Shayṭān is weak. America came to Iraq leading a frenzied crusade, in its sleeve a new map of what they call the ‘Middle East.’ It came with all its forcefulness and all of its iron (weaponry), with all of its pride and all of its arrogance. It gathered all of its allies and mobilised all of its aircraft and its fleets, and it brought its horses and its soldiers. The Crusaders thought that no one would be able to overcome them; however Allah the Mighty and Majestic disgraced them and showed us the weakness of their plot. The flame of Jihad was stoked, the Crusade campaign was broken and the Islamic State was established in spite of the villains, and America was expelled (from Iraq) disgraced and driven away, dragging their tails between their legs, defeated and broken, leaving in its wake a map of the Islamic State, ready to redraw the world upon the Prophetic manhaj (way) methodology of the [caliphate]. So verily, the [Islamic] State, with the favour of Allah alone, becomes stronger day after day. Its authority has not ceased since it was founded, by the favour of Allah, and its conquests shall not cease, with the permission of Allah, until the cross is smashed, the swine is killed and the Jizyah (tax for people of the book) is imposed, and there will be no fitnah (tribulation) on Earth and the Rule shall be for Allah alone completely.

“And whoever is thinking of entering into a war with us then he should consider this 1,000 times. O [Sunni Muslims] in Mesopotamia (Iraq), verily the battle today has become evidently clear, it is a battle between Truth and falsehood, between disbelief and belief, between polytheism and monotheism, a battle between all of the Rawāfiḍ and all [Sunni Muslims], and it will not end except with the supremacy of one of the two groups. So select which of the ranks you shall be among—and may Allah forbid—the people of polytheism be victorious over the people of monotheism.

“It is time that you O Sunnah of Iraq to know the way of honour and authority, the way of prosperity, security and happiness. It is time that you know there are no rights without Jihad, no

⁵⁹² Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al ‘Adnānī al-Shāmī ‘He Will Surely Establish For Them [Therein] Their Religion Which He Has Preferred For Them,’” Jihadology, last modified April 19, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/04/03/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-shaykh-abu-mu%E1%B8%A5ammad-al-adnani-al-shami-he-will-surely-establish-for-them-therein>.

justice without Jihad, no honour without Jihad, no security without Jihad, no hope without Jihad, no life without Jihad.

“The time has come O Ahlus-Sunnah to gather around the Mujāhidīn, look and reflect, contemplate and think, the Mujāhidīn never fought one day to seek positions, or thrones or debris of this world that is perishable. The Mujāhidīn have sacrificed everything in the path of Allah to give victory to the Religion of Allah and to assist the oppressed. The Mujāhidīn gained nothing from this world but fighting, imprisonment, fractures and injuries. They bequeath their families and parents nothing but prisons, displacement and deprivation. But in spite of all this distress and hurt, you see them throbbing with honour, exuding pride. If one of you today was to be unbiased for the sake of Allah, and was to reflect in his own mind on the state of the Ummah of Islam today, they would find that it is void of any stances of pride and honour except in the actions of the Mujāhidīn, among their lines and under their banner. This is a fact, and whoever denies it outwardly, will not be to deny it within themselves. You will find that nothing enrages the disbelievers and the Munāfiqīn (hypocrites) on earth but the actions of the Mujāhidīn. You will find that nothing saddens them but the victory of the Mujāhidīn. You will find that nothing frightens the Ṭawāghīt, wears out their sleep and disturbs their lives but the presence of the Mujāhidīn. You will find no hope for the weak and oppressed except through the Mujāhidīn.

O Ahlus-Sunnah in Iraq, if your politicians approve of the humiliation, belittling and

submission to the Rāfiḍah, then we are not to approve of it and we are to keep steady in observation upon your enemies, whether you were to support us or forsake us. O Ahlus-Sunnah in Iraq, you have seen our military might and our strength, be aware that this strength and this weapon and military might are but munitions for you. For we are from you and you from us; if you were to see good from us, then it is for you, and if you were to see other than that, then advise us. We cannot see your sons be slaves for the Rafidhah, servants for them and their followers, and yet keep quiet from them.

We cannot see them following the path of Jahannam (Hellfire) and let them be. We want nothing for you but pride and honour in this life, and salvation and happiness in the hereafter, and you will see nothing from us but mercy upon you and compassion towards you.

“O groups of Sunnah in Iraq, it will not harm you to disbelieve in democracy and gather around the Mujāhidīn. It will not harm you to support and grant victory to the Religion of Allah. So form into a union this time headed by Sheikh Abū Bakr Al-Baghdādī, and by the Will of Allah you will never regret that, and if you are to gather around the Mujāhidīn, you will have control over the Arabs, and the Non-Arabs will be submissive to you, and you will rule the world. So gather around the Mujāhidīn! So I say to the elders and the honourable men of the tribes of Ahlus-Sunnah, history is being recorded and the Angels are writing, and you are all mortal and nothing of you shall remain except for what is remembered about you, and no one shall take with him anything but his deeds. So either it shall be that generations of Muslims shall be proud of you and shall pray for Mercy for you until the Day of Resurrection, or they shall curse you whenever you are mentioned. Either you shall come on the Day of Resurrection with your good deeds and the deeds of those who followed you and you shall be raised with the Prophets and the martyrs and the righteous, or you shall carry a burden of sin with you, and you shall precede your people and those who followed you and lead them into Hell Fire with Pharaoh and Hāmān.

“O Soldiers of the State, remember always that you are fighting a forsaken people, if they seek help it is by ‘Alī, and if they ask for aid it is by Al-Ḥusayn, and if they were to seek refuge it is by Al-‘Abbās, and if they were to seek support it is by Fāṭimah, may Allah be pleased with them and her. They depend on humans and worship idols. Perfect is Allah, for he will never grant them victory over you, so let your weapons/tools be your ‘Aqīdah, and your strength be your piety, and be certain of the victory of Allah, for verily you are the soldiers of Allah, fighting in the Path of Allah, and the Rāfiḍah are the soldiers of Shayṭān and they fight in the path of the Ṭaghūt. So fight the allies of Shayṭān, for indeed, the plot of Shayṭān has ever been weak, and so that Allah may grant you their shoulders, and so that by the Will of Allah you may break their strength, and so that you, by the will of Allah, eradicate their roots, and so that Allah will fill their hearts with fear and their feet with defeat, and make their weapons and equipment booty for you. So wait for them at every place of ambush and enter upon them from every gate, and slaughter them like how you slaughter sheep, and kill them like how you kill flies. For if they are supported by USA and reinforced by Iran, then know that your protector is The King The One Who Recompenses; Excellent is He the Protector, and Excellent is He the Helper.”

“So O lions in Anbār, Nineveh, Ṣalāhuddīn, Kirkūk, Diyālī, Baghdād and the south, continue to expand and to redefine the maps. For verily today you complete the hope of the oppressed in all lands, and verily the prisoners await you in Baghdād, in Rūmiyyah (Lebanon), in Aleppo, in Al-Ḥā’ir (Saudi Arabia) and in Abū Za‘abal (Egypt). And verily you have an appointment in Baghdād, in Damascus, in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), in Makkah and in Madīnah. Verily you have an appointment in Dābiq, in Al-Ghūṭah, and in Ar-Rūm inshā‘Allāh. So let the entire world know that the era of humiliation and subservience has gone, never to return. Verily the rule of the world will be for none but the Muslims, by the edge of the sword.”

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS leader, January 2014⁵⁹³

“So may Allah be with you O people of Sham, and congratulations to you if you have patience, the Lord has taken it upon Himself to care for you, but as for us we can only say to you: Blood O blood, and destruction O destruction.”

“And you sons of the state in Iraq... Be the spear head in fighting the Safawites, and be in the front rows, stand up against this Rafidi war, and advance towards Baghdad and the south, burn the Rafida in their backyard...”

Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, ISIS spokesman, August 15, 2011⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹³ Aaron Y. Zelin, “al-Furqān Media presents a new audio message from the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Shām’s Abū Bakr al-Ḥusaynī al-Baghdādī ‘God Knows and You Do Not Know,’” Jihadology, last modified January 25, 2014, <http://jihadology.net/2014/01/19/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-audio-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-shams-abu-bakr-al-%E1%B8%A5ussayni-al-baghdadi-god-knows-and-you-do-not-know>.

“Do not worry, the days of Zarqawi are going to return soon... We have men who have divorced themselves from life and love death more than you love life, and killing is one of their wishes.”

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, September 11, 2004⁵⁹⁵

“My nation, the nation of the sword and the pen, why is it that your sword is now broken and your pen has been laid down? You used to be prouder than the stars, and you have now become downtrodden under the feet of the invaders and under the hooves of the usurpers' horses. My dear nation - my words to you today are laden with sorrow. Don't you hear the serpents' hissing as they wind their way in the darkness of your apathy in order to assassinate your dawn? ... Let me tell you about our state of affairs, for we are at a turning point, so that you may understand the right course and combine forces, lest we regret, and this is no time for regrets. Both those who are far away and those who are near acknowledge the truth of the tri-partite Satanic coalition of heresy and deceit in the land of the two rivers. The first are the Americans who carry the banner of the cross; the second are the Kurds through their *pashmerga* forces... which are reinforced by Jewish military cadres; the third are the Shi'ites, the Sunnis' enemies...”

“[The mujahideen] are the ones who made the international coalition drink the draught of humiliation, and they have struck them blows that will not quickly be forgotten, and they have taught them lessons which are still seared on their skin, and they are still convulsing from the pains of these lessons - lessons which lowered their flags to half-mast and shook their feet and confused their thoughts until fright wormed its way into their joints, and the worm of despair bored into their bones. It could not be otherwise, for our heroes massacred them, to the point where they saw the cowardice of the American soldier.”

“O young Islamic man in Iraq and in all Muslim countries, you who are perplexed and seeking life, you who yearn to come to the aid of the religion of Allah, you who offer your life to your Lord, here is guidance to the right path, here is wisdom and probity, here is the ecstasy of self-sacrifice and the pleasure of *Jihad*...”

“As for you, fighters who came from afar, by Allah, missions of *da'wa* [the propagation of Islam] have never been a road lined with roses and sweet basil; the price of *da'wa* missions is heavy, and the price of bringing principles to the land of reality is a lot of torn limbs and blood. The light of dawn shall not be lit in this darkness save by *Jihad* fighters and *shahids* (martyrs).”

⁵⁹⁴ Michael S. Schmidt, “Threat Resurges in Deadliest Day of Year for Iraq,” *New York Times*, August 15, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/16/world/middleeast/16iraq.html>.

⁵⁹⁵ “Al-Zarqawi’s Message to the Fighters of Jihad in Iraq on September 11, 2004,” The Middle East Media Research Institute, September 15, 2004, http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/1219.htm#_edn2.