COMBATING TERRORISM CENTER AT WEST POINT

CTC SENTINEL

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Contents

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Al-Qa`ida's Center of Gravity in a Post-Bin Ladin World

By Mitchell D. Silber

Colorado resident Najibullah Zazi, who plotted to bomb the New York City subway system, was recruited by al-Qa`ida in Pakistan.

A GROUP OF MEN spend their formative and early adult years in Western urban settings such as London, Hamburg, Copenhagen, New York or Sydney. They take the initiative to travel overseas and then return to the West to launch terrorist attacks in the name of al-Qa`ida. Can this be considered an al-Qa`ida plot? What criteria determine that designation? What is the nature of the relationship between radicalized men in the West and the core al-Qa`ida organization in the borderlands of Afghanistan and Pakistan? For it to be identified as an al-Qa`ida plot, does one of the plotters have to attend an al-Qa`ida training camp or meet with an al-Qa`ida trainer, or can they simply be inspired by al-Qa`ida's ideology?

These are critical questions. To truly understand the nature of the threat posed by the transnational jihad, led in the vanguard by al-Qa`ida, it is essential to have a greater and more nuanced understanding of the genesis and attempted execution of plots directed against the West.[1] Al-Qa`ida core's role should not be overestimated or underestimated, as important resource allocation questions for Western governments derive from the answers to these questions. It affects military, intelligence, and policing activities that are dedicated to preventing the next attack. In a sense, determining "where the action is for the conspiracy" before a plot is launched should drive Western counterterrorism efforts. In military terms, this would be akin to identifying what Prussian military theorist Carl

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1 In this case, "West" refers specifically to Europe, North America, and Australia.

von Clausewitz called the "center of gravity," or critical element of strength of al-Qa`ida plots, to provide insights on how to thwart them.

Dissecting 16 of the most important jihadist terrorist plots launched against the West since 1993 provides a deeper and more precise understanding of the role that al-Qa`ida core has had in jihadist plots over this time period— or, the "al-Qa`ida factor." A variety of criteria were assessed for the 16 plots examined in this article.[2] These plots include: 1993 World Trade Center attack, 1999 Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) millennium plot, 2001 9/11 attacks, 2001 shoe bombers' plot, 2002 Lackawanna cluster arrests, 2004 Madrid train system attack, Britain's 2004 Operation Rhyme and Operation Crevice plots, The Netherlands' 2004 Hofstad Group plots, Britain's 2005 July 7 and July 21 attacks, Britain's 2006 transatlantic liquid bomb plot, Australia's 2005 Operation Pendennis plot, Canada's 2006 Operation Osage plot, Denmark's 2007 Operation Dagger plot and the 2009 New York City subway plot.[3]

To determine where the center of gravity lies for the al-Qa`ida threat in a post-Bin Ladin world, this article will examine al-Qa`ida's role, or lack thereof, in the formation of the network in each of these 16 cases, as well as each network's inspiration, recruitment, training and mobilization to violence.[4] It finds that individuals in the West, rather than al-Qa`ida core, underpinned the majority of these plots, as these men sought out militant training overseas and then were redirected by al-Qa`ida core operatives to plot against targets in Western cities. The article concludes with an overall assessment of the al-Qa`ida threat in the wake of key leadership losses recently suffered by the group.

Creating the Local Network, Providing Inspiration

To determine if al-Qa`ida core had a role in the formation of the local networks or "scenes" from which a subgroup of men (cluster) emerged who subsequently became involved in a terrorist plot, it must be acknowledged that al-Qa`ida could have influenced the development of these local extremist social networks in the West in two ways: either actively through direct efforts like sending emissaries ("al-Qa`ida preachers") abroad, or more passively through the spread of its ideology via the internet and the creation of a heroic narrative that inspires individuals.

After examining the set of 16 plots, it is clear that what was replicated in many Western cities (New York, London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Montreal, Toronto, Sydney/Melbourne and Madrid) demonstrated a passive

> **"In most of the cases, individuals in the West sought to travel overseas to zones of conflict for the primary purpose of training or fighting in Afghanistan and ended up joining al-Qa`ida more by coincidence than design."**

role for al-Qa`ida and a much more organic effort by local self-anointed "al-Qa`ida preachers" in the West.[5] These "preachers"—such as `Umar `Abd al-Rahman in New York, Abu Hamza al-Masri in London, or Abu Dahdah in Madrid—distributed literature at the mosque about the activities of Muslim militants in Algeria, the Palestinian Territories, Egypt, and Afghanistan, including communiqués issued by Usama bin Ladin. Furthermore, they began to indoctrinate young Muslims who expressed interest in the literature.

The "al-Qa`ida preachers" in the West were often Islamist-oriented political asylum seekers from the Middle East, with weak links to al-Qa`ida core. They did, however, provide a local context in which young men from varied demographic and economic strata, seeking political and religious answers, began to adopt al-Qa`ida's ideology and radicalize. The narrative of a "war against Islam," the individual obligation to participate in militant jihad, and the rejection of Western democracy were doctrinal tenets of the worldview that was advocated.

These men created an environment that fostered gravitation to reactionary Islam as well as politicization of these new beliefs. They brought politics into the mosque and called on members of the congregation and Muslims in general to mobilize and come to the aid of their fellow Muslims around the world. As a result, over time these "al-Qa`ida preachers" promoted travel overseas to fight in a variety of places such as Bosnia, Chechnya, Afghanistan and Iraq as well as other "fields of jihad" which now include Yemen and Somalia.

Linking with Al-Qa`ida from the Bottom Up

Did a worldwide network of al-Qa`ida recruiters spot promising individuals in the West, induct them into al-Qa`ida, and direct them to al-Qa`ida camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan? Or did individuals take the initiative, mobilize, and seek out al-Qa`ida to carry out their jihadist ambitions? Were there al-Qa`ida facilitators in certain cities? What was their role and who were they? What role did travel to a "zone of conflict" play?

The case studies support a paradigm of al-Qa`ida plots against the West that is underpinned by a "bottom up" process, driven by individuals in the West who radicalize and then take the initiative to go overseas for training or to get into the fight. Although there may be local "fixers" in Western cities who have overseas links and can facilitate or enable an overseas connection, typically they are not recruiters in the traditional sense of the word—they are not soliciting individuals from the top down on behalf of an overseas terrorist organization. Instead, they are an important node in a facilitation network with links to terrorist groups overseas. In only one

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2 This article is based on studies presented in the author's forthcoming book, *The Al Qaeda Factor: Plots Against the West*. The source material, which is presented in the book, includes legal documents, trial transcripts and media reporting.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

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5 Although they are identified as "al-Qa`ida preachers," that does not mean that they were part of the al-Qa`ida organization. They did, however, pursue the same ideology as al-Qa`ida today. Additionally, they may have had connections to al-Qa`ida members.

case, the Lackawanna cluster, did an al-Qa`ida member, Kamal Derwish, arrive in town and as a result deliver recruits to the core organization in Afghanistan.

In most of the cases, individuals in the West sought to travel overseas to zones of conflict for the primary purpose of training or fighting in Afghanistan and ended up joining al-Qa`ida more by coincidence than design—al-Qa`ida core was not always their primary destination. This pattern has persisted with the operational leaders of a number of plots from 1998/1999 in Montreal (Ahmed Ressam) and Hamburg (Muhammad `Atta and the rest of the Hamburg cluster), during 2001-2006 in London (Omar Khyam, Mohammed Siddique Khan, Mukhtar Ibrahim, Ahmed Abdulla Ali), Copenhagen (Hammad Khurshid) and then New York City in 2008 as demonstrated by the fortuitous connections made to al-Qa`ida by Najibullah Zazi, Adis Medunjanin and Zarein Ahmedzay.

Recruitment on Al-Qa`ida's Doorstep
Rather than specifically recruiting operatives in the West, al-Qa`ida core and other groups have been opportunistic and relied on whatever batch of young Western volunteers was able to make it to South Asia and subsequently arrive at the doorstep of al-Qa`ida-linked training camps (whether enabled by a facilitation network or familial links). Rather than using these motivated men on the battlefield against coalition forces, these "would-be warriors" with Western passports were turned around and sent back to their country of origin or another Western country to carry out terrorist operations.

Abdul Hadi al-Iraqi, al-Qa`ida's military commander in Afghanistan, did precisely that for the Operation Crevice conspirators via his deputy. According to one of the conspirators, "[Omar] Khyam had been told that, when he was in Pakistan, there was no room for him to fight in Afghanistan and that what he should do is to carry out operations in the UK."[6] Ostensibly, it was Abdul Hadi al-Iraqi's deputy who provided this "suggestion" to Khyam on behalf of Abdul Hadi.[7]

This pattern of opportunistic al-Qa`ida recruiting of Westerners who had arrived in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and then convinced to target the West, is a model that repeated itself in the 1999 LAX millennium plot, 2001 9/11 attacks, 2001 shoe bombers' plot, Britain's 2005 July 7 and July 21 attacks and 2006 transatlantic liquid bomb plot, Denmark's 2007 Operation Dagger plot and the 2009 New York City subway plot. Interestingly, although not part of the data set, this pattern was seen in the operations of al-Qa`ida affiliates (al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula) and allies (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) in the 2009 Christmas Day bomb plot and the 2010 Times Square plot. In both of these cases, Western "would-be warriors" Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab and Faisal Shahzad took the initiative to travel overseas and then were similarly "recruited" and redirected once they arrived in Yemen and Pakistan, respectively.

Al-Qa`ida "Training"
In the 16 case studies examined, conspirators from the West can be stratified among four different training camp experiences, some directly linked to al-Qa`ida, others not. Conspirators from the 1993 World Trade Center attack, 1999 LAX millennium plot, the 9/11 attacks, the 2001 shoe bombers' plot, Britain's 2004 Operation Rhyme, Australia's 2005 Operation Pendennis, and the cluster from Lackawanna all attended one or more al-Qa`ida facilities in Afghanistan. Until late 2001, al-Qa`ida core funded or controlled most of the training camps in Afghanistan, such as Khalden, al-Faruq, and Darunta. Individuals who had traveled to Afghanistan for training before the fall of the Taliban in 2001 likely trained in an al-Qa`ida core camp. Those camps, however, were subsequently destroyed by coalition airstrikes. While they were in existence, the range of training the camps provided varied from basic infantry training to more advanced military training to improvised explosive device construction.

Following the destruction of these camps and al-Qa`ida's flight from Afghanistan to Pakistan, makeshift camps were created in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (formerly known as the North-West

Frontier Province). Although there was some small-arms training for Westerners, explosives training was a key element of the curriculum. Accounts from Westerners have described these camps as melting pots of Afghan Taliban, al-Qa`ida, Pakistani Taliban, and Kashmiri groups.[8] Ongoing intelligence gaps mean that these determinations are difficult to make with complete

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certainty, but there is a high degree of confidence that conspirators from the 2005 July 7 and 21 London metro attacks, the 2006 transatlantic liquid bombs plot, the 2007 Operation Dagger plot in Copenhagen, and the 2009 New York City subway plot all attended these types of al-Qa`ida-associated training camps, most likely in FATA or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in Pakistan.

For a few conspirators among the 16 major operations covered, there was an evolutionary process to their training. They initially attended training camps operated by Kashmiri groups that were allied with al-Qa`ida—such as Harkat-ul-Mujahidin (Mohammed Siddique Khan: July 7 London metro attack), Lashkar-i-Tayyiba (Dhiren Barot: Operation Rhyme), and Jaysh-i-Muhammad (Shane Kent: Operation Pendennis)—before they were properly vetted or able to make the links necessary to attend an actual al-Qa`ida camp.

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6 *Regina v. Omar Khyam et al.*, Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, London, 2006.
7 Ibid.

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8 Paul Cruickshank, "The 2008 Belgium Cell and FATA's Terrorist Pipeline," *CTC Sentinel* 2:4 (2009).

Finally, there were plotters who traveled to Pakistan and received training at militant camps run by al-Qa`ida allies, such as Lashkar-i-Tayyiba (Australia's Operation Pendennis and Canada's Operation Osage) and Jaysh-i-Muhammad (The Netherlands' Hofstad Group), but not al-Qa`ida camps. One group of conspirators (Britain's Operation Crevice) arranged with a local religious teacher to set up their own paramilitary training camp for light weapons. The men provided money, and the local teacher and his son were to provide guns, food, tents, ammunition, and other training equipment.[9]

Looking Forward
Today, in late 2011, with the recent deaths of al-Qa`ida chief Usama bin Ladin, top operational planner Atiyah Abdul al-Rahman, and a steady attrition by arrest or death of senior core leadership, how should the changing nature of the al-Qa`ida threat to the West be understood?

Due to the rise of other important nodes in al-Qa`ida's worldwide network of allies and affiliates, the threat from al-Qa`ida-type terrorism has not ended. Rather, it has devolved into an expanded, diffuse network of affiliates, allies and ideological adherents. Since 2001, the core networked laterally with other like-minded groups on the periphery who were aligned ideologically and formed a loose coalition of allies and affiliates to include al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-i-Tayyiba (LeT), al-Shabab, and al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), among others. Each group serves as a power center, node, or hub that has an informal and loose relationship to al-Qa`ida core. As the core may continue to fade, other nodes in the network will seek to raise their profile and may even surpass the core's ability to project a threat outward against the West. Since 2009, some of these affiliates and allies have already begun to attract "would-be warriors" radicalized in the West who otherwise might have attempted to join al-Qa`ida core, but chose alternatives and then were sent back to plot against the West (such as AQAP's 2009 Christmas Day

plot and the TTP's 2010 Times Square plot).

Although al-Shabab in Somalia has not launched attacks against the West to date, the attack in Uganda in 2010 served as a proof concept of the group to act outside of its primary theater of operations and may have been a preview of targeting selection to come.[10] It has already attracted to the cause diaspora Somalis, converts and other mobilized Westerners from Toronto, Minneapolis, Seattle, New Jersey, Chicago, London and Melbourne. Also, LeT, TTP and the alphabet soup of other Pakistan-based jihadist groups to include Harkat-ul-Mujahidin (HuM), Jaysh-i-Muhammad (JM) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islam (HuJI) operate in the same sanctuaries that al-Qa`ida survived in and have already attracted Westerners to train and plot with them. How long will it be before other groups from Pakistan follow the lead of LeT with David Headley and the TTP with Faisal Shahzad and target the West?

In conclusion, as long as individuals continue to radicalize in the West—whether it is New York, London, Hamburg or Toronto—and take the initiative, mobilize and seek out paramilitary training and the opportunity to fight overseas, al-Qa`ida will continue to have a center of gravity in the West. The pattern of al-Qa`ida-type plots utilizing redirected Westerners will continue, and thwarting them will require combined vigilance, commitment of resources and staying power of law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

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10 In July 2010, two suicide bombers from al-Shabab attacked crowds watching the FIFA World Cup in Kampala, Uganda. One of the sites attacked was a restaurant called Ethiopian Village.

Terrorist Threats to Commercial Aviation: A Contemporary Assessment

By Ben Brandt

TEN YEARS AGO, al-Qa`ida utilized four U.S. commercial airliners to destroy the World Trade Center's towers, damage the Pentagon, and kill close to 3,000 people. This attack spurred the United States to convert its counterterrorism efforts into a sustained war on terrorism, resulting in the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, the capture or killing of hundreds of al-Qa`ida members, and the eventual death of al-Qa`ida chief Usama bin Ladin. There has been extensive reflection in recent months regarding the implications of Bin Ladin's death and the Arab Spring to al-Qa`ida and its affiliated groups.

Two critical issues, however, have been partially sidelined as a result. How has the terrorist threat to commercial aviation evolved since the events of 9/11? How have actions by the U.S. and other governments worked to mitigate this threat?

This article offers a thorough review of recent aviation-related terrorist plots, subsequent mitigation strategies, and current terrorist intentions and capabilities dealing with commercial aviation. It concludes by offering three steps security experts can take to reduce the terrorist threat to commercial aviation.

Aviation-Related Plots Since 9/11 and the Regulatory Response
A number of al-Qa`ida-affiliated plots sought to target commercial aviation since 9/11. A sampling of these include the "shoe bomber" plot in December 2001, an attempt to shoot down an Israeli airliner in Kenya in 2002, the liquid explosives plot against transatlantic flights in 2006, the Christmas Day plot in 2009, and the cargo bomb plots in 2010. Other prominent operations attempted or executed by Islamist extremists during this period include a 2002 plot to hijack an airliner and crash it into Changi International Airport in Singapore, the 2002 El Al ticket counter shootings at Los Angeles International Airport, the 2004 bombings of two Russian airliners, the 2007 Glasgow

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9 *Regina v. Omar Khyam et al.*, Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, London, 2006.

airport attack, a 2007 plot against Frankfurt Airport by the Sauerland cell, a 2007 attempt by extremists to target fuel lines at JFK International Airport in New York, the 2011 suicide bombing at Moscow's Domodedovo International Airport, and the 2011 shootings of U.S. military personnel at Frankfurt International Airport.

In response to these incidents, the U.S. government and many other countries have dramatically increased aviation security measures to prevent or deter future attacks. Many of these measures are well known to the public, including: the hardening of cockpit doors; federalization of airport security screening staff and the creation of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA); deployment of federal air marshals (FAMs) and federal flight deck officers (FFDOs) aboard aircraft; implementation of new detection equipment and methods, such as advanced imaging technology (AIT), often referred to as "body scanners"; increased amounts of screening for cargo; explosive trace detection (ETD), full body "patdowns," and behavioral detection officers (BDOs); enhanced scrutiny for visa applicants wanting to travel to the United States; and the use of watch lists to screen for terrorists to prevent them from boarding flights or from gaining employment in airports or airlines.

Certain measures—such as invasive patdowns, AIT scanning, inducing passengers to remove jackets, belts, and shoes for inspection, and requiring them to travel with minimal amounts of liquid in their possession—have drawn widespread complaints regarding their inconvenience, as well as questions about their supposed efficacy. The reactive nature of many such measures has been widely noted as well, with some security practices designed to counter highly specific attack techniques utilized in past terrorist plots. Al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) sarcastically commented on this tendency in its online magazine *Inspire*, rhetorically asking the U.S. government whether it thought the group had no other way to conceal explosives after the TSA prohibited passengers from carrying printer cartridges.

Current Threats to Aviation

Despite the strenuous efforts by governments to harden commercial aviation in the post-9/11 era, the number of plots illustrates that al-Qa`ida core, its affiliates, and numerous other Islamist extremist groups and self-radicalized individuals maintain a high level of interest in attacking aviation. Despite the organizational disruptions caused by the deaths of numerous senior al-Qa`ida leaders in 2011, and the current preoccupation of several al-Qa`ida affiliates with local conflicts, this ongoing interest in attacking aviation is unlikely to dissipate in the long-term. Furthermore, the evolving tactics utilized in these various plots lend weight to AQAP's contention that government regulators suffer from a lack of imagination in anticipating and mitigating emergent and existing threats. As indicated by numerous accounts, including the description of the cargo plot contained in *Inspire*, terrorists constantly seek to analyze existing aviation security measures to probe for weaknesses and develop countermeasures. Terrorists' ongoing efforts to study and defeat security are further exemplified by the arrest of Rajib Karim, a former information technology employee at British Airways; prior to his arrest, Karim maintained an ongoing dialogue with AQAP operative Anwar al-`Awlaqi and attempted to provide al-`Awlaqi with information on aviation security procedures.[1]

Therefore, despite government efforts to improve aviation security, a number of critical tactical threats remain.

Insider Threats

Rajib Karim sought to stage a terrorist attack on behalf of AQAP, seeking to become a flight attendant for British Airways to stage a suicide attack. He also attempted to recruit fellow Muslims (including a baggage handler at Heathrow Airport and an employee of airport security) to stage an attack.[2] Coupled with the aforementioned 2007 JFK airport plot, which involved at least one airport employee, and a reported 2009 plot by Indonesian terrorist

Noordin Top to target commercial aviation at Jakarta's main airport, which included assistance from a former mechanic for Garuda Indonesia,[3] this illustrates the primacy of the so-called "insider threat" to aviation.

Although TSA and U.S. airports currently conduct criminal and terrorist database checks on potential airport, airline, and vendor employees who are to be granted access to secure areas, there are significant vulnerabilities in this approach,[4] which has proven notably

> "AIT can be defeated by concealing IEDs internally, either by the frequently discussed stratagem of surgically implanting devices in a would-be suicide bomber or by the simpler route of secreting the device within a body cavity."

unsuccessful at stopping members of street gangs from gaining employment and carrying out criminal activities such as narcotrafficking, baggage theft, and prostitution at airports nationwide. In 2010, an individual named Takuma Owuo-Hagood obtained employment as a baggage handler for Delta Airlines, then promptly traveled to Afghanistan where he made contact with the Taliban, reportedly providing advice on how to effectively engage U.S. troops.[5]

The magnitude of this vulnerability is compounded because most airport employees working in secure areas do not undergo security screening prior to entering their workspace due

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1 "BA Worker to Stand Trial on Terror Charges," CNN, March 26, 2010.

2 Vikram Dodd, "British Airways Worker Rajib Karim Convicted of Terrorist Plot," *Guardian*, February 28, 2011.

3 "Terror Suspect Top Said Planning Attack on Airline – Indonesian Police Chief," BBC, September 1, 2009.

4 For example, it is difficult to conduct effective background screening on immigrants who have migrated to the United States from countries with poor records systems.

5 Alissa Rubin, "Tangled Tale of American Found in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, October 11, 2010.

to practical constraints. Additional measures, such as random screening and security probes, are unable to effectively mitigate this threat. The insider threat becomes markedly worse at non-Western airports in regions such as West Africa or South Asia, where local authorities' ability to effectively screen prospective airport employees is frequently negligible due to incomplete or poorly structured terrorist and criminal intelligence databases.

Threats from Ranged Weapons

MANPADS, or man-portable air defense systems, have been described as a growing threat to commercial aviation following the outbreak of Libya's civil war in early 2011 and subsequent news reports claiming that al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has obtained surface-to-air missiles.[6] Some reports suggest that missiles stolen from Libyan arsenals have spread as far as Niger, the Gaza Strip, and the Sinai Peninsula. In addition to AQIM, al-Shabab has been known to possess advanced MANPADS, allegedly provided by Eritrea.[7] Given that AQAP maintains ties to al-Shabab and has reportedly taken over multiple military depots in Yemen following the outbreak of civil unrest there,[8] it is not implausible to assume that AQAP could acquire additional MANPADS. There are also reports that the Taliban acquired MANPADS from Iran,[9] making it conceivable that elements of the group sympathetic to al-Qa`ida's aims could provide al-Qa`ida with MANPADS for a future attack.

Although MANPADS are unable to target aircraft at cruising altitudes, commercial aircraft would become vulnerable for several miles while ascending and descending, particularly due to their lack of countermeasure systems.

In addition to the MANPAD threat, a significant variety of ranged weapons could be used to target commercial aircraft, particularly when taxiing prior to takeoff or after landing. Rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), for example, are inaccurate at extended ranges; however, they have been used to shoot down rotary wing aircraft in combat zones, and have been used in at least one plot against El Al aircraft.[10] The Irish Republican Army (IRA) used homemade mortars to attack Heathrow Airport in the 1990s, while heavy anti-material sniper rifles such as the Barrett M82 fire .50 caliber rounds to a range of more than one mile and have been previously used by non-state actors, such as the IRA and the Los Zetas drug cartel.[11]

Evolving Threats from Explosive Devices

Terrorist groups, particularly AQAP, have continuously refined their ability to conceal improvised explosive devices (IEDs) from security screening equipment, as shown by the 2009 Christmas Day plot, where a would-be suicide bomber concealed explosives in his underwear, and the 2010 cargo bomb plot, where bombmakers hid explosives in printer cartridges.

Following the 2009 plot in particular, TSA, foreign regulatory agencies, and some airlines sought to increase safeguards against passenger- or cargo-borne IEDs by the deployment of AIT and ETD equipment. IEDs, however, are likely to remain a significant threat to commercial aviation due to limitations in current screening technology. AIT can be defeated by concealing IEDs internally, either by the frequently discussed stratagem of surgically implanting devices in a would-be suicide bomber or by the simpler route of secreting the device within a body cavity. Alternately, IEDs concealed within complex electronic devices are likely to defeat all but the most thorough visual inspection, as illustrated by

explosives experts' initial failure to detect the devices used in the 2010 cargo plot.[12] AQAP has shown itself to be particularly adept at concealing IEDs within electronic devices such as printers and radios, which it will likely continue to use in the future.

ETDs and explosives detection dogs, meanwhile, can be defeated by numerous countermeasures. For example, many (though not all) ETD devices detect only two popular explosive compounds. ETD equipment is also not designed to detect the components of improvised incendiary devices (IIDs), making the use of these correspondingly attractive to terrorists. Lastly, IEDs can be sealed and cleaned to degrade the ability of ETD equipment to detect explosive vapors or particles.[13]

Nor is behavioral profiling likely to provide the solution to passenger-borne IEDs and IIDs. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab underwent two interviews by security staff prior to staging his attack on Northwest Airlines Flight 253 in 2009. Similarly, a GAO report examining the TSA's use of BDOs noted that the scientific community is divided as to whether behavioral detection of terrorists is viable.[14]

Threats Against Airline Facilities and Airports

One aspect of aviation security that is not frequently addressed is the potential for terrorists to strike other aspects of aviation infrastructure beyond aircraft. Commercial airlines are highly reliant upon information technology systems to handle critical functions such as reservations and crew check-in, a fact not lost upon Rajib Karim when he suggested in correspondence with Anwar al-`Awlaqi that he could erase data from British Airways' servers, thus disabling the airline's website.[15] Such an approach would mesh closely with al-Qa`ida core's and AQAP's stated aims of waging economic jihad

6 See, for example, "Qaeda Offshoot Acquires Libyan Missiles: EU," *Agence France-Presse*, September 6, 2011.

7 "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia," UN Monitoring Group on Somalia, July 18, 2007.

8 Fawaz al-Haidari, "Blast at Qaeda-Looted Yemen Ammo Plant Kills 75," *Agence France-Presse*, March 28, 2011.

9 Declan Walsh, "Afghanistan War Logs: US Covered Up Fatal Taliban Missile Strike on Chinook," *Guardian*, July 25, 2010; "Afghanistan War Logs: Anti-Aircraft Missiles Clandestinely Transported from Iran into Afghanistan – US Report," *Guardian*, July 25, 2010.

10 Richard Cummings, "Special Feature: The 1981 Bombing of RFE/RL," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, February 9, 1996. Some news reports claim that Islamic militants planned to target an El Al flight with rocket propelled grenades in Switzerland in 2005 as well.

11 Scott Kraft, "New IRA 'Spectaculars' Seen Stalling Peace," *Los Angeles Times*, March 19, 1994; Samuel Logan, "Los Zetas: Evolution of a Criminal Organization," ISN Security Watch, March 11, 2009.

12 "Failure to Find Airport Bomb 'a Weakness,' Expert Says," BBC, November 1, 2010.

13 For details, see Brian Jackson, Peter Chalk et al., *Breaching the Fortress Wall* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007).

14 "Aviation Security: Efforts to Validate TSA's Passenger Screening Behavior Detection Program Underway," U.S. Government Accountability Office, May 2010.

15 Alistair MacDonald, "U.K. Prosecutors Tie BA Employee to Awlaki," *Wall Street Journal*, February 2, 2011.

against the West. The operational control centers operated by air carriers are another significant point of vulnerability, which conduct the airlines' flight control, meteorology, and emergency management functions. Despite their criticality to flight operations, these control centers are

> **"Aviation security regulators should also work to improve the quality of threat information shared with airlines, which is frequently dated, irrelevant, or inaccurate."**

rarely heavily guarded, meaning that a team of attackers equipped with inside knowledge could temporarily shut down the global operations of a major air carrier, particularly if backup facilities were to be targeted as well.

Another threat to commercial aviation is the increasing number of plots and attacks targeting airports themselves rather than aircraft. There have been two significant attacks staged at international airports thus far in 2011 in Frankfurt and Moscow. Attacks against airports have been planned or executed using a variety of tactics, such as firearms, car bombs, suicide bombers, and hijacked aircraft. The targets have included airport facilities such as fuel lines, arrival halls, and curbside drop-off points. Terrorists could also breach perimeter fencing and assault aircraft on runways, taxiing areas, and at gates. This tactic was used during the 2001 Bandaranaike airport attack in Sri Lanka, when a team of Black Tigers[16] used rocket-propelled grenades and antitank weapons to destroy half of Sri Lankan Airlines' fleet of aircraft.[17] More recently, Afghan authorities announced the discovery of arms caches belonging

to the Haqqani network near Kabul Airport and claimed that the group had planned to use the caches to stage an assault on the airport.[18] The actions of activist groups—such as Plane Stupid, which has breached perimeter fencing at UK airports so that activists could handcuff themselves to aircraft in a protest against the airline industry's carbon emissions[19]—demonstrate the viability of such an attack in the West as well.[20]

The trend toward attacking airports rather than aircraft has likely been driven by a number of factors, particularly increased checkpoint screening measures and terrorists' growing emphasis on decentralized, small-scale attacks on targets of opportunity. Firearms will likely prove to be a key component of future attacks, given their relative ease of use compared to explosives, as well as their wide availability in the United States and many other countries. This trend was exemplified by the 2011 Frankfurt attack, which was conducted by Arid Uka, an employee at the airport's postal facility, who shot and killed two U.S. soldiers at a bus at the terminal. Although deployment of plainclothes security personnel and quick reaction teams can help ameliorate the impact of attacks on airports, their ease of execution and the impossibility of eliminating all airport queues (be they for drop-off, check-in, security screening, baggage claim, or car rentals) make this tactic a persistent threat.

Required Steps to Improve Aviation Security
Given the breadth and complexity of threats to commercial aviation, those who criticize the TSA and other aviation security regulatory agencies for reactive policies and overly narrow focus appear to have substantial grounding. Three particularly serious charges can be levied against the TSA: it overemphasizes defending against specific attack vectors (such as hijackings or passenger-borne IEDs) at the expense of others (such as insider threats or attacks on airports); it overemphasizes securing U.S.

airports while failing to acknowledge the significantly greater threat posed to flights arriving or departing from foreign airports; and it has failed to be transparent with the American people that certain threats are either extremely difficult or beyond the TSA's ability to control. Furthermore, the adoption of cumbersome aviation security measures in the wake of failed attacks entails a financial burden on both governments and the airline industry, which has not gone unnoticed by jihadist propagandists and strategists. While the U.S. government has spent some $56 billion on aviation security measures since 9/11, AQAP prominently noted that its 2010 cargo plot cost a total of $4,900.[21]

With this in mind, there are several measures that could be undertaken to improve U.S. aviation security. First, policymakers must recognize the timely collection and exploitation of intelligence will always be the most effective means of interdicting terrorist threats to aviation, whether by disrupting terrorist leadership in safe havens, breaking up nascent plots, or preventing would-be terrorists from boarding aircraft. The successful exploitation of intelligence gathered from the Bin Ladin raid in May 2011 has likely done far more to defend commercial aviation from al-Qa`ida than the use of advanced imaging equipment and patdowns.

Second, the TSA and other aviation security regulators must increase their liaison with the airline industry regarding the development of risk mitigation strategies, as airlines are far more aware of the vulnerabilities inherent to commercial aviation, as well as the practical constraints on proposed security measures.

Third, rather than increasing spending on screening equipment and employees deployed in the United States, the TSA and other regulators should instead provide financial support for airlines attempting to improve security for their overseas operations. This could include subsidizing background

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16 The Black Tigers were a specially selected and trained group of suicide operatives deployed by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam during their insurgent campaign in Sri Lanka.

17 Celia W. Dugger, "Rebel Attack on Airport Shocks Leaders of Sri Lanka," *New York Times*, July 25, 2001.

18 Matt Dupee, "NDS Smashes Haqqani Network Plots in Kabul," *The Long War Journal*, July 31, 2011.

19 See, for example, Helen Carter, "Plane Stupid Demo at Manchester Airport Increased Emissions, Court Hears," *Guardian*, February 21, 2011.

20 Ibid.

21 See, for example, Bruce Riedel, "AQAP's 'Great Expectations' for the Future," *CTC Sentinel* 4:8 (2011). For details on the $56 billion, see Ashley Halsey III, "GOP Report: TSA Hasn't Improved Aviation Security," *Washington Post*, November 16, 2011.

checks on airlines' international employees and vendors, paying for armed guards at ticket counters, helping upgrade security for airlines' computer networks and control centers, and paying for the deployment of ETD screening equipment. Aviation security regulators should also work to improve the quality of threat information shared with airlines, which is frequently dated, irrelevant, or inaccurate.

Most importantly, the TSA and policymakers must publicly acknowledge that it is impossible to successfully protect every aspect of commercial aviation at all times. Intelligence gaps will occur, watch lists will not always be updated, scanners will fail to detect concealed items, and employees will become corrupt or radicalized. As politically painful as such an admission may be, it is essential to scale back bloated security measures that add significant expense and inconvenience to commercial aviation without materially reducing risk. The TSA's leadership has begun to take small steps in this direction, such as a current pilot program designed to prescreen travelers to facilitate expedited screening, but more must be done to ensure that commercial aviation remains both secure and commercially viable.

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Militant Pathways: Local Radicalization and Regional Migration in Central Asia

By Christopher Swift

ON JULY 2, 2011, a bomb scare in the northern Tajik city of Isfara mobilized security officials across Tajikistan's Sogd Province.[1] The incident, coming less than a fortnight after the arrest of local BBC correspondent Urunboy Usmanov for alleged ties to Hizb al-Tahrir (HT),[2] encapsulates the growing apprehension toward radical and militant movements across Central Asia.

Such vigilance reflects Isfara's unique history. Long regarded as Central Asia's spiritual homeland, the Fergana Valley emerged as an incubator for militant movements in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse.[3] Isfara, by comparison, was known for Islamic fundamentalism even during the height of secular Soviet rule. This reputation still persists today. From residents flouting the Tajik government's recent ban on children attending mosques, to the alleged infiltration by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), this sleepy city on the Fergana Valley's southern edge is widely regarded as a regional hub for Islamist extremists.[4]

The role of these hubs of militancy is evolving. Until recently, communities like Isfara were net exporters of Islamic militancy. Driven by failure at home and the promise of glory abroad, the IMU and its allies have transited Tajikistan on their way to Afghanistan and Pakistan's tribal areas.[5] Recent developments, however, indicate a more complicated migration pattern. From

reports of Taliban fighters recuperating in Tajikistan's southern Khatlon Province to the discovery of Pakistani bombmakers north of Dushanbe, there is growing evidence that prior patters of emigration and exile have developed into more fluid migrations between Central Asia and the Afghanistan-Pakistan theater.[6] With insurgents expanding their operational reach and tempo across northern Afghanistan, these trends may herald the gradual merger of conflict systems throughout South and Central Asia.

This article examines the linkages between local radicalization and regional migration in three stages. First, it briefly describes the IMU's exile from Uzbekistan and subsequent evolution into a transnational syndicate. Second, it discusses how Tajikistan's religious revival fostered Salafist infiltration and government repression. Third, it examines how ethnic strife in Kyrgyzstan is alienating and radicalizing that country's Uzbek minority. The article concludes by evaluating how each of these profoundly local developments resonate with—and ultimately contribute to—broader notions of global jihad.

Uzbekistan: Exile and Evolution
First conceived as the Adolat Party in 1991, the IMU sought to depose Uzbekistan's secular regime and impose an Islamic state.[7] Yet unlike their contemporaries in the Arab world, the movement's leaders were "as much a product of Soviet culture as Islam."[8] Absent strong doctrinal and organizational foundations, Juma Namangani and Tahir Yuldashev were unable to mobilize—much less consolidate—significant popular support. By 1992, the Uzbek government had crushed the nascent Islamist insurrection and imposed strict state control over mosques, seminaries, and other religious institutions.[9]

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1 By the time the author arrived in Isfara on July 3, 2011, the city's bazaar was teeming with police, border guards, and other Tajik security officials.

2 "Vokunishi Bi Bi Ci ba bozdoshti khabarnigorash," Radio Ozodi, June 15, 2011.

3 Vitaly V. Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

4 Personal interview, Tajik professor of Islamic history, Khujand, Tajikistan, July 2011.

5 Ikbol Mirasaiov and Alisher Saipov, "Ex-Gunmen of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Claim that their Movement is No More," Fergana.ru, April 3, 2006.

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6 Personal interview, senior international counterterrorism official, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, June 2011.

7 Einar Wigen, *Islamic Jihad Union: Al-Qaeda's Key to the Turkic World?* (Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2009).

8 Adeeb Khalid, *Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).

9 Naumkin.

The IMU soon found new purpose in the Tajik Civil War. Forced into exile and shaped by their experiences in neighboring Uzbekistan, Namangani and Yuldashev saw the conflict between Tajikistan's former Communist regime and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) as a front in a global struggle between secular authoritarianism and resurgent Islam. By joining the UTO, Namangani and Yuldashev found a sanctuary for their forces while continuing their campaign against the unholy legacies of Soviet imperial rule.[10]

The IMU's perception of a regionalized, pan-Islamic struggle against apostate regimes helped transcend the ethnic, linguistic, and historical differences that distinguished these Uzbek exiles from their Tajik counterparts. It also "embedded" the movement within the UTO command structure, with Namangani serving as a deputy to UTO Chief of Staff Mirzo Aiyoev. The IMU's military contribution to the Tajik Civil War proved marginal, however. Operating in the remote Tavildara Valley, Namangani's forces never exceeded more than two or three platoons (80-120 men total) during the entire course of the war.[11]

Diverging interests gradually compounded these deficiencies, particularly as the perceived commonalities between the IMU and UTO began to collapse. Frustrated with the UTO's moderate Islamism and enraged by its 1997 power-sharing agreement with the Tajik government, Namangani's forces decamped for Afghanistan and aligned themselves with the ascendant Taliban regime.

This second migration proved transformative. Augmenting Taliban forces gave the IMU a sanctuary and support structure. Collaborating with al-Qa`ida's infamous 055 Brigade immersed it in transnational financial, ideological, and operational networks. Comprised of foreign fighters and integrated into the Taliban army, this elite formation helped regularize and professionalize Namangani's forces. It also provided a network of training camps eager to receive new waves of radicalized Uzbeks seeking refuge and revenge against the Islam Karimov regime. By February 1999, a newly emboldened IMU was bombing targets in the Uzbek capital of Tashkent. By June of that year, it launched the first of two armed incursions from northern Tajikistan into Kyrgyzstan's Batken and Kara Suu provinces.[12]

These operations served separate but related ends. By supporting the consolidation of Taliban rule in Afghanistan, the IMU laid the foundation for future campaigns into neighboring Uzbekistan. By infiltrating southern Kyrgyzstan, it sought to mobilize that country's indigenous Uzbek population and gain new footholds in the Fergana Valley.[13] With Uzbeks constituting 14% of the population in Kyrgyzstan's Batken Province and 28% in Osh Province, the object was to develop staging areas that would allow the IMU to continue low-level operations while simultaneously improving the movement's long-term prospects.

The IMU suffered heavy losses during the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan, including the death of Namangani during fighting in the northern city of Kunduz. Driven into a third exile in Pakistan, the movement splintered into three factions. The first demilitarized, returning to Central Asia and quietly reintegrating into Uzbek society. The second abandoned jihad and emigrated to Iran, Turkey, and other countries in the greater Middle East. The third element deepened its engagement in the al-Qa`ida-Taliban alliance, adopting Pakistan's tribal areas as a new front in their transnational struggle. Working and sheltering alongside their ethnic Pashtun counterparts, they launched a new campaign against the Western-backed Afghan government.[14]

The IMU's operations in the Afghanistan-Pakistan theater coincided with an increasingly decentralized and diffuse pattern of regional violence. In March 2004, for example, an IMU splinter group known as the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) organized a series of targeted bombings in the Uzbek cities of Bukhara and Tashkent. In 2005, the IMU bombed the Tajik Ministry of Emergency Situations in Dushanbe in two separate operations. A prison break in Kairakum, Tajikistan in January 2006 was also attributed to the IMU, as were the May 2006 skirmishes with customs officials along the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border.[15] The organization's activities spread south as well. In November 2006, Pakistani officials broke up an alleged IMU cell in Islamabad following a failed rocket attack on parliament, the presidential administration, and the headquarters of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).[16]

The IMU also widened its list of prospective targets, with Yuldashev issuing personal threats against the presidents of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.[17] He issued a similar threat to Pakistani authorities in January 2008, citing the July 2007 raid on Islamabad's *Lal Masjid* (Red Mosque) and renewed operations by Pakistan Army units in the tribal areas as grounds for jihad. By 2010, Yuldashev had further expanded his organization's target set by harmonizing his objectives with al-Qa`ida's. "Our goal is not only conquering Afghanistan and Uzbekistan," he declared in an online video message. "Our goal is to conquer the entire world."[18]

Tajikistan: Radicalization and Syndicalization

Similar patterns still drive radicalization and militant migration. Like their early counterparts from Uzbekistan, radicalized Uzbeks are abandoning ethnic enclaves in northern Tajikistan and southern Kyrgyzstan for the Afghanistan-Pakistan theater.[19] Tajikistan's porous borders and weak

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10 Personal interview, Akhbar Turanjonzoda, former deputy prime minister of Tajikistan and deputy UTO commander, Kofamikhon, Tajikistan, July 2011.

11 Ibid.

12 Jim Nichol, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2009).

13 Stéphan Lefebvre and Roger McDermott, "Russia and the Intelligence Services of Central Asia," *International Journal of Intelligence & Counterintelligence* 21:1 (2008).

14 Mirasaiov and Saipov.

15 "Review of the Listing of Seven Terrorist Organisations," Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, Parliament of Australia, August 2005.

16 Nichol; "Al Qaida Ally 'Behind Islamabad Rocket Plot,'" Reuters, November 5, 2006.

17 Roger McDermott, "IMU Issues New Threat to Central Asian Leaders," Centralasia-SouthCaucasus.com, September 18, 2006.

18 Florian Flade, "Deutsche Islamisten feiern ihre 'Märtyrer,'" *Die Welt,* January 12, 2010.

19 Personal interview, senior Sogd Province counterterrorism official, Khujand, Tajikistan, July 2011.

security apparatus facilitate these flows, rendering the Tajik Interior Ministry (MVD) and State Committee for National Security (SCNS) increasingly reliant on former UTO field commanders to locate and eliminate insurgents.[20] Official corruption and narcotics trafficking also play a role, often enabling the movement of money, militants, and munitions from Fergana to Afghanistan, and vice versa.[21]

These migratory flows are not limited to Uzbeks. Influenced by foreign Salafist ideologies, a small yet significant number of ethnic Tajiks are entering the fray.[22] Most of these militants are young, unmarried, and with few economic prospects.[23] Most have been harassed or persecuted for their outwardly Islamic dress or habits.[24] Notably, most possess little to no formal religious education.[25] In this sense, the population most vulnerable to radicalization in contemporary Tajikistan appears to share several key characteristics with their militant counterparts in the West.[26] Alienated from society and indoctrinated outside the public sphere, individuals recruited into radical syndicates such as HT or militant movements such as the IMU embrace Islam as an alternative to (rather than an element of) their ethnic or national identity.

Conflating the militant with the devout exacerbates this social and ideological dislocation. Wary of renewed civil war, the government of Tajik President Emomali Rahmon routinely associates traditional Islamic leaders with the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRPT), the UTO's successor and Tajikistan's main opposition group. Wary of Salafist infiltration, Rahmon's regime has imposed restrictions on religious training, limited the number of religious institutions, and even barred children

from worshipping in mosques.[27] As in other Central Asian countries, these approaches marginalize quietist Muslims while cloaking HT and the IMU with a measure of legitimacy that they might not otherwise possess.[28]

The September 3, 2010 car bombing of an MVD garrison in Khujand, Tajikistan is a case in point. Marking the first confirmed suicide attack in Tajikistan, the incident killed one police officer and injured another 25.[29] Local officials characterized the perpetrator, Akmal Karimov, as a violent criminal who initially embraced terrorism for financial reasons. From their perspective, Karimov's attack reflected the deepening nexus between criminal and terrorist syndicates across the broader region.[30]

International observers tell a different story, however. According to one account, Karimov was an overtly devout Muslim suspected of membership in HT.[31] Detained and allegedly tortured by an elite MVD counterterrorism unit in Khujand, Karimov and his brother reportedly fled to Afghanistan and sought refuge with the IMU.[32] Radicalized by their experiences, Karimov allegedly sought bomb-making training from the IMU to exact revenge on the same unit that once detained and humiliated him.[33] Against this backdrop, Karimov's victimizers may have inadvertently instigated a process of radicalization, migration, and

militarization that ultimately turned them into victims.

Kyrgyzstan: Ethnic Conflagration
Pathways to radicalization in Kyrgyzstan follow a different pattern. Like their neighbors across Central Asia, Kyrgyz citizens have experienced progressive Islamization during the last two decades. In 1996, for example, 55.3% of ethnic Kyrgyz and 87.1% of ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan openly identified themselves as Muslims.[34] By 2007, however, one poll showed that those figures rose to 97.5% and 99.1%, respectively.[35] Political uncertainty appears to havve shaped this revival. Faced with the persistent weakness of schools, courts, and other public institutions, religious institutions assumed greater influence in Kyrgyz society.

This nominal Islamization has not produced the same patterns of state repression and religious radicalization witnessed elsewhere in the Fergana Valley. Grounded in a more open and pluralistic society, Islam was generally viewed as an integral element of national identify, rather than an alternative or threat to it. Instead, the problem lies in the alienation and isolation of the country's indigenous Uzbek population—a population that constituted 14.3% of all Kyrgyz nationals in the 2009 census.[36] Framed by the July 2010 riots in Osh and mounting allegations of Uzbek separatism, ethnic rather than religious factors are driving militant migration.[37]

These tensions should not be understated. More than a year after the riots, Uzbeks in Osh reported harassment, theft, and even extrajudicial execution by the Kyrgyz security services.[38] Officials from Kyrgyzstan's National Committee for State Security (UKMK), in turn, allege a radical Islamist conspiracy aimed at

20 Personal interview, senior international counterterrorism adviser, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, June 2011.

21 Personal interview, independent Tajik journalist, Washington, D.C., May 2011.

22 Personal interview, independent Tajik journalist, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, June 2011.

23 Personal interview, senior Tajik imam, Khujand, Tajikistan, July 2011.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Personal interview, senior Tajik conflict specialist, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, June 2011.

27 Personal interview, Said Umar Husaini, IRPT deputy director, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, June 2011; "Tajikistan Bans Youth from Mosques and Churches," al-Arabiya, August 3, 2011.

28 Founded by Palestinian jurist Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani in 1953, Hizb al-Tahrir, also transliterated as Hizb-ut-Tahrir, is a pan-Islamic political party that advocates the political unification of Muslim countries and the restoration of the caliphate. Generally regarded as a non-violent Islamist movement in the West, the party is designated as a terrorist organization in the Russian Federation and throughout Central Asia.

29 Farangis Najibullah, "Suicide Car Bomber Hits Tajik Police Station," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, September 3, 2010.

30 Personal interview, senior Sogd Province counterterrorism official, Khujand, Tajikistan, July 2011.

31 Personal interview, United Nations official, Khujand, Tajikistan, July 2011.

32 Ibid.

33 Personal interview, United Nations official, Khujand, Tajikistan, July 2011.

34 Eric McGlinchey, *Islamic Revivalism and State Failure in Kyrgyzstan* (Seattle, WA: National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, February 2009).

35 Ibid.

36 "Natsionalnyi Sostav Naseleniya," National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2009.

37 Personal interview, former grand mufti of southern Kyrgyzstan, Osh, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011.

38 Personal interview, Uzbek human rights lawyer, Osh, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011.

separating Batken, Kara Suu, and Jalal-Abad provinces from the Kyrgyz state.[39] These fears resonate among Kyrgyz nationalists, who frame Uzbek violence as evidence of the IMU's attempts to create a Central Asian caliphate.[40]

The veracity of these allegations is difficult to determine, particularly when viewed through the lens of mutual suspicion and political recrimination. Far more clear, however, are the reported effects of ethnic strife within Uzbek enclaves. According to UKMK Chief Keneshbek Dushebyaev, as many as 400 young Uzbek men fled Kyrgyzstan for IMU training camps in Pakistan following the July 2010 riots.[41] Affiliation with banned Islamist groups is also on the rise, with HT leaders in Kara Suu advocating a revolution to depose the pro-Western apostate regime in Bishkek and replace Kyrgyz chauvinism with Shari`a law.[42]

Resonant Effects
Conditions in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan produce two distinct pathways to militancy. The former generates many of the same tensions between secular authoritarianism and radical Islamism that animated the IMU more than two decades ago. The latter isolates and marginalizes an ethnic minority, thus encouraging it to find new allies and avenues abroad. The net effect is similar, however. Although each pathway reflects its own unique indigenous drivers, militants from both countries continue to converge with the small yet steady flow of radicalized Muslims from Uzbekistan itself.[43] In this manner, fundamentally local resentments resonate with—and ultimately contribute to—regional patterns of terrorism and resistance.

These same pathways may also facilitate foreign infiltration. As the September 2010 suicide bombing in Khujand demonstrated, IMU-trained militants are now operating hundreds of kilometers away from the movement's sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal areas. The same was true in the short-lived Rasht Valley insurgency, which witnessed the return of former Tajik field commander Mollo Abdullo from exile in Afghanistan earlier that same year.[44] In both instances, militants transformed by wars abroad took direct action against their political and ideological adversaries at home. The result is something akin to the "wandering mujahidin" that shaped the evolution of Middle Eastern jihadist syndicates in the wake of the Soviet Afghan war.

Cognizant of these threats, Kyrgyz officials are rushing to secure their southwestern frontier, particularly in the Uzbek enclaves straddling Tajikistan's Isfara district and Kyrgyzstan's Batken Province.[45] Tajikistan's National Guard, in turn, is building a new training center at Qaratogh with a $3.1 million grant from U.S. Central Command.[46] These measures underscore the seriousness of the situation, as well as growing apprehension regarding the prospect of a U.S. withdrawal from neighboring Afghanistan.[47]

Checkpoints and border guards are only part of the solution, however. While both measures may be necessary from a practical perspective, neither confronts the repression that radicalizes believers in Tajikistan. Nor can they resolve the alienation and recrimination that perpetuate ethnic discord in Kyrgyzstan. Absent concerted efforts to address the domestic drivers of radicalization in each country, efforts to curb militant migration on a regional basis seem unlikely to succeed.

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39 Personal interview, senior UKMK intelligence officer, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011.

40 Personal interview, senior Ata-Zhurt Party parliamentarian, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011.

41 "The Head of Kyrgyzstan's Security Service Talks about the Creations of the Islamic Movement of Kyrgyzstan," Fergananews.ru, May 3, 2011.

42 Personal interview, senior HT spokesperson, Kara Suu, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011.

43 Personal interview, Uzbek security specialist, Washington, D.C., May 2011.

44 Personal interview, senior Tajik security analyst, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, June 2011.

45 Personal interview, former UKMK district commander, Osh, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011.

46 Haidar Shodiyev, "U.S. Embassy Renovates Tajikistan's National Training Center," *Asia Plus*, July 7, 2011.

47 Personal interview, senior UKMK intelligence officer, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011.

Partners or Proxies? U.S. and Host Nation Cooperation in Counterterrorism Operations

By Austin Long

SINCE 2001, THE United States has cooperated extensively with many state and non-state forces to conduct counterterrorism operations. The forms of cooperation have varied as have the mechanisms and components of the U.S. government used to train and support these forces.

These forces, and the means to support them, have been important but not widely understood. Yet gaining an accurate picture of U.S. involvement with partner and proxy forces is essential since these forces have trade-offs in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Some host nation forces are partners, who work for their own government and therefore may have interests that diverge from those of the United States. Others are proxies, paid directly by the United States and therefore working primarily for it. Yet proxies may lack the authority and legitimacy of host nation partner forces. Without a clear way to think about these trade-offs, policymakers will be unable to effectively compare and contrast forces to choose the best host nation force (or set of forces) for a particular counterterrorism challenge.

This article is intended to provide an overview of some of these efforts and a framework for comparing and contrasting the different forms that counterterrorism cooperation can take. It concludes with a specific focus on Afghanistan.

Framing Counterterrorism Cooperation
Counterterrorism cooperation can broadly be divided into three categories. The first is intelligence sharing and legal coordination between the United States and other countries, which includes such efforts as thwarting terrorist financing through improved sharing of financial intelligence. The second is assistance from the United States, which includes the provision of equipment and training to military and security services of a host-nation. The exemplar here is

the State Department's Office of Anti-Terrorism Assistance, which assesses a state's needs for law enforcement capabilities for counterterrorism and then provides appropriate training. The third is operational cooperation, where U.S. personnel work alongside forces from a host-nation in the actual conduct of counterterrorism operations.

This article focuses on the third category, where U.S. personnel are present in at least a direct support role—at a minimum, providing intelligence and planning assistance alongside those forces if not actually accompanying them on missions. It further focuses on the subset of that category where the United States is substantially paying for the host nation forces in question (in other words, a substantial assistance mission along with operational cooperation). This subset is still expansive, including crucial operations against al-Qa`ida and its affiliates in Yemen, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

There are two principal types of forces within this subset of host nation forces that U.S. personnel directly support and for which the U.S. Treasury pays. The first is a partner force, which can be defined as a regular component of the host nation's military or security services that conducts combined operations with U.S. personnel.[1] Partner forces for counterterrorism operations will likely be working with U.S. special operations forces (SOF), although non-SOF may be involved as well (such as intelligence specialists). While the operations of these units may be classified, their existence is generally acknowledged as they do represent a component of the host nation's military or security forces.

Partner forces are frequently paid directly out of Department of Defense (DoD) funds due to modifications to post-2001 defense appropriations bills. Most notable has been the so-called "1206 authority" named for Section 1206 of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 National Defense Authorization Act, which gave DoD the authority to train and equip foreign forces for counterterrorism

operations.[2] In Iraq, Afghanistan, and Yemen there have been additional specific authorizations to fund security forces, some or all of which have been used to support counterterrorism partner forces.[3]

The second type is a proxy force, which is defined as an irregular force that is not a component of the host nation's regular security force and works principally (though perhaps not exclusively) for the United States. Proxy forces will likely be working with either Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officers or U.S. SOF. Unlike partner forces, the existence of proxy forces will seldom be acknowledged openly.

Until recently, such proxy forces would principally have been paid for with CIA funds under the authority of a presidential finding for covert action. The first finding supporting covert action for counterterrorism was signed by President Ronald Reagan in 1986 and has no doubt been modified and updated extensively since 2001.[4] Since 2005, however, an additional source of funding has (at least potentially) been the Department of Defense under "1208 authority." 1208 authority, also named for the relevant section of an authorization act, allows use of funds to support "foreign forces, irregular forces, groups, or individuals" who work with SOF for counterterrorism purposes.[5] The limit of 1208 funding has risen from $25 million annually to $45 million annually in FY11.[6]

The change in how partner and proxy forces are paid since 2001 is significant as it represents a shift of authority from the State Department and CIA to DoD.

As Congressional Research Service analyst Nina Serafino notes, "...DOD generally has trained and equipped foreign military forces under State Department Title 22 authority and through State Department programs… Section 1206 is the first DOD global train-and-equip authority since the passage of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which placed oversight for military assistance with the Secretary of State."[7] In other words, DoD gained the ability to support partners directly rather than via a mechanism under State Department authority. Similarly, 1208 authority gives DoD an authority to support proxy forces that has previously been primarily under the CIA. Further, 1208 authority does not appear to acquire the high level oversight involved in CIA covert action program, such as a presidential finding.

There are positives and negatives to both partner and proxy forces. Partner forces have the advantage of being recognized elements of a host nation security apparatus, which gives them authorization to conduct approved operations in that host nation. Depending on the laws and policies of the host nation, this can provide them with broad powers of arrest, surveillance, and the use of lethal force. They can also call on other elements of the host nation government to support their operations (at least potentially).

Partner forces, however, have the drawback of being controlled by the host nation government. If there is substantial alignment in host nation and U.S. interests, this is not a major problem, but if the two diverge it can lead to serious difficulties. Moreover, the close association with U.S. personnel may make the host nation government suspicious of the partner force.

Iraq provides an unfortunate example of this drawback in the form of General Nomon Dakhil, the commander of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's elite Emergency Response Brigade. General Dakhil's unit was a major partner force for U.S. SOF conducting counterterrorism operations in Iraq. They had a high opinion of the general, who one SOF commander noted was "an outstanding

1 For general problems with partner forces, see Daniel Byman, "Friends Like These: Counterinsurgency and the War on Terrorism," *International Security* 31:2 (2006).

2 See the discussion in Nina Serafino, "Security Assistance Reform: 'Section 1206' Background and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, March 3, 2011.

3 These are the Iraqi Security Forces Fund, the Afghan Security Forces Fund, and Section 1205 of the FY11 National Defense Authorization Act, which authorizes support to Yemeni Ministry of Interior counterterrorism forces.

4 On the original finding, see Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: Penguin, 2004).

5 Serafino.

6 See Section 1201 of the FY11 National Defense Authorization Act.

7 Serafino.

partner."[8] The general, however, was arrested in 2011 on corruption charges, which some have deemed more political than actual, after his unit targeted Shi`a extremists in southern Iraq. After his arrest, targeting of Shi`a militias by his unit decreased while attacks on U.S. forces by those militias are reported to have increased.[9]

Proxy forces, conversely, owe loyalty not to the host nation government but to themselves and to the United States, in that order. This makes them potentially more responsive to U.S. direction if they are well managed, advised, and paid. The negative, however, is that they lack the clear authorization to use force or collect intelligence that host nation security forces have. This can cause friction with the host nation. Indeed, there is potential for conflict between host nation security forces and the proxy force if the United States is unable to effectively manage that relationship.

Iraq presents examples of this drawback as well. Beginning in 2005, U.S. personnel began to support tribesmen and former Sunni insurgents against al-Qa`ida in Iraq (AQI). These irregulars came to be called the *sahwa* (awakening), or Sons of Iraq. While they were effective in combating AQI in some instances, they were themselves targeted as terrorists by Iraqi security forces.[10]

An additional advantage to proxy forces is plausible deniability if they are used for politically sensitive missions. An example of this would be cross-border action into a third country where terrorists have sought haven. If the proxy force is discovered, it at least does not have the direct overt ties to the United States of either U.S. personnel or a U.S. partner force.

Partners and Proxies in Afghanistan

According to unclassified sources, the United States is making extensive use of both partners and proxies for counterterrorism in Afghanistan. In terms of partner forces, the first is known as the Afghan Partner Unit (APU) to U.S. Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). Little has been publicly revealed about this unit, but in Senate testimony former JSOC commander Admiral William McRaven described it as an Afghan special operations unit "…that went on target with the JSOC forces forward to ensure that we had an Afghan that was, if you will, going through the door first, that was making first contact with the locals, in order to make sure that we kind of protected the culturally sensitive issues or items that were on target."[11]

While the capabilities of the APU are not known, Admiral McRaven rated them as "top notch." This is reinforced by the fact that operators from the APU were apparently aboard the helicopter carrying JSOC personnel that was shot down in Wardak Province in August 2011. This was alleged to be an immediate reaction force (IRF) responding to other JSOC personnel in an intense ground engagement. It is unlikely that APU personnel would be brought along on such a mission if they were not well regarded by JSOC.[12]

In addition to the APU, U.S. SOF have partnered with Afghan National Army Commandos and Ministry of Interior Provincial Response Companies (PRCs) to conduct counterterrorism operations. These units are regionally or provincially focused and conduct operations other than just counterterrorism. Both are regarded as highly capable for counterterrorism operations.[13] Finally, the Afghan National Directorate of Security's Counterterrorism Department 90 (DET 90) is reported to partner with international special operations forces to conduct counterterrorism operations.[14]

In terms of proxy forces, the United States has not acknowledged the existence of any inside Afghanistan. The CIA, however, has been widely reported to operate proxy forces inside Afghanistan, allegedly known as Counterterrorism Pursuit Teams.[15] These teams have been described as "one of the best fighting forces in Afghanistan" and are alleged to be both well paid and well motivated.[16]

Yet the problems with both partner and proxy forces observed in Iraq and elsewhere appear to be present in Afghanistan. Partner forces face ongoing protests about their use in so-called "night raids," operations conducted at night to detain terrorist suspects. These raids are perceived by many Afghans as unjust or at least poorly informed, which results in needless civilian deaths and detentions. In the future, the Afghan government could reduce or suspend partner force cooperation with the United States as a result.[17] Conversely, the United Nations has severely criticized DET 90 treatment of detainees, which may make it politically difficult for U.S. leaders to continue cooperation with it in the future.[18]

Proxy force problems, such as friction with host nation security forces, have also apparently occurred. In 2009, a unit known as the Kandahar Strike Force—allegedly supported by the CIA—confronted the police in Kandahar city after one of the brothers of a strike force member was arrested. The confrontation turned violent and the Kandahar provincial chief of police was killed.[19]

8　Tim Durango, Duraid Adnan, and Yasir Ghazi, "U.S. Loses Ally as Iraqi General Waits for Trial," *New York Times*, July 27, 2011.

9　Ibid.

10 See, for example, Richard Oppel, "Mistrust as Iraqi Troops Encounter New U.S. Allies," *New York Times*, July 16, 2007.

11　William McRaven, transcript of U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee meeting, June 28, 2011.

12　Sean Naylor, "NSW Source: Crash 'Worst Day in our History," *Army Times*, August 6, 2011.

13　See, for example, "Commandos from the 'Sun' Graduate," press release, International Security Assistance Force, May 10, 2010; Debra Richardson, "COIN in Practice," *Infantry* 99:2 (2010).

14 "Treatment of Conflict Related Detainees in Afghan

Custody," United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan, October 2011.

15 Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010) was the first and most detailed account.

16 Luis Martinez, "US Official Confirms CIA's 3,000 Man Army in Afghanistan," ABC News, September 22, 2010.

17　Dion Nissenbaum, "Afghanistan War: US Night Raid Sparks Protest Over Civilian Deaths," McClatchy Newspapers, April 29, 2010.

18 "Treatment of Conflict Related Detainees in Afghan Custody."

19　Dexter Filkins, Mark Mazzetti, and James Risen, "Brother of Afghan Leader Said to Be Paid by C.I.A.," *New York Times*, October 27, 2009.

Conclusion

Both partners and proxies are likely to be necessary in the continuing campaign against al-Qa`ida, particularly in troubled regions like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Yemen. In Afghanistan particularly, the drawdown timeline laid out by President Barack Obama means that these forces will assume even greater importance. Policymakers must be cognizant of the strengths and weaknesses of these two different modes of operational cooperation. Overreliance on one at the expense of the other can mean that the U.S. government will lack options as situations rapidly evolve (such as the political landscape in a host nation). At the same time, coordination between these different forces (and their U.S. partners) must be vigorously maintained to prevent the emergence of friction and potentially fratricide between them.

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Government Hardliners Gain Favor in Bahrain

By Laurence Louër

BEGINNING IN TUNISIA in late 2010, civil unrest swept through the Arab world, leading to the fall of longstanding authoritarian governments in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. In Bahrain, a sustained campaign of civil disobedience began on February 14, 2011. By March 14, the joint military force of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) entered Bahrain to help the Al Khalifa Sunni ruling dynasty restore internal order. Since that operation, Bahrain appears to be on the verge of entering a vicious cycle of repression and protests as riots between civilians and the police are multiplying in Shi`a villages. The latest unrest is similar to the uprising of 1994-1999, when Bahrain was the theater of continuous violence that only ended with the arrival to power of the current king, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. To end the unrest, the new king promised a set of political and economic reforms in 2001 called the National Action Charter. Yet the crushing of demonstrations in 2011 could mean the end, or at least postponement, of many of these reforms.

Although the constitutional monarchy promised in the National Action Charter of 2001 never came to be, the socioeconomic component of the reform program went rather far, especially its labor market regulations. Far from being politically neutral, the socioeconomic reform caused a change in the power coalitions in the kingdom, with the main opposition party, the Shi`a al-Wifaq, siding with the reformist faction of the ruling dynasty against the old guard and its supporters in the private sector.

This article explains the recent shift in the balance of power in Bahrain. To be prepared for how the political environment may change in Bahrain in the months ahead, understanding this changing power dynamic is essential.

The Cooptation of Al-Wifaq

The change in the power equation in Bahrain began when the country's main opposition party, al-Wifaq, was coopted into the parliament. Having boycotted the 2002 parliamentary elections to protest the king's decision to modify the constitution, which curtailed the powers of parliament, al-Wifaq decided to participate in elections four years later in 2006. Its main goal was to insert itself into the halls of power in the hope of influencing at least part of the decision-making process. It also participated in the 2010 elections despite gerrymandering, government pressure and full-fledged fraud that, in 2006, prevented it and its allies from gaining the absolute majority of seats. From that point forward, it was clear that it had consciously decided to participate within the regime's rules.

This shift in al-Wifaq's strategy was the result of its analysis[1] that the geostrategic context was highly unfavorable to Bahrain's transformation into a genuine democracy. There are two key reasons for this. First, Bahrain's dependence on Saudi Arabia makes it highly unlikely that any genuine alteration of dynastic rule will occur. The course of events in 2011 confirmed this assessment, as the fate of the civil uprising was ultimately decided in Riyadh. Since the British withdrawal from the Gulf in 1971, Bahrain's ruling Al Khalifa family view the Al Sauds as the last resort guarantors of their survival in power. Additionally, Saudi Arabia plays a critical role in the archipelago's economic strength since the majority of the Bahraini state budget relies on revenues of the Abu Sa'fa oil well, of which Bahrain and Saudi Arabia share sovereignty. The oil well is entirely operated, and hence controlled, by the Saudi oil company ARAMCO.

Second, the Bahraini regime is supported by the United States, rendering any full-fledged regime change difficult. Al-Wifaq understands the priority of the U.S. administration, which is Bahrain's stability to both safeguard its Fifth Fleet headquarters as well as to avoid the possible spillover of Bahraini disturbances to the oil-rich GCC neighbors. As al-Wifaq views the situation, the United States would be ready to support concessions from the regime to the opposition, but Washington would disapprove of overt confrontation. This is the exact

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1 This assessment has been expressed to this author at various occasions during fieldwork in Bahrain since 2002.

sequence of events that played out in 2011. Moreover, in the eyes of some U.S. analysts, the experience of extensive Iranian interference in Iraq after the Shi`a opposition gained power makes al-Wifaq's identity as a Shi`a Islamic movement an impediment to complete trust.

To combat the perception that it is a sectarian party, al-Wifaq has tried to present itself as a national movement seeking unity among various segments of the population, while at the same time retaining its status as the primary representative of the Shi`a population in Bahrain, building on networks of mobilization previously established by the older Shi`a Islamic movements, most notably al-Da`wa.[2] In parliament, one of al-Wifaq's main agendas was the advancement of the socioeconomic reforms started in 2006 by Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, of which an important element was the so-called "labor market reform."

The aim of the reform was to tackle unemployment which, on the eve of the 2011 uprising, many observers deemed was as high as 20% despite the government's insistence that it averaged 4%. To encourage nationals to work in the private sector rather than the saturated public sector, it sought both to improve the professional training of Bahraini nationals and to render less attractive to employers the cheap and compliant expatriate laborers, who occupy the majority of the private sector's jobs. To increase the cost of expatriate labor, a tax on expatriate employees was imposed on companies, which was transferred to a fund for domestic professional training. It also created unemployment insurance, financed through taxation on employees and employers.

The labor market reform quickly gained the support of al-Wifaq, which saw it as a way to legitimize its participation in parliament and win over a significant part of the audience of the non-coopted opposition groups, most notably al-Haqq (the Right), of which many among its rank-and-file are unemployed young men and women. Besides the political

support it granted the reform, al-Wifaq mobilized its strong networks among the trade unions to fight the resistance of the private sector by establishing the trade unions as *de facto* monitoring organizations of the implementation of the new labor law. In some private companies, trade unions went as far as to enroll many of the expatriate workers.

Tension in the Dominant Coalition: The Private Sector, the Crown Prince and the Hardliners
This unprecedented level of cooperation between al-Wifaq and the government aroused the anger of the private sector. A pillar of the dominant coalition at least since the oil boom of the 1970s, it has developed in the shadow of the state, benefiting from state spending, the restrictive commercial law and the pro-employer labor law. Yet the socioeconomic reforms that are ongoing since the enthronement of King Hamad in 1999 are progressively cutting back its advantages. In 1999, a new commercial law allowing 100% foreign direct investment ended a key mechanism of protection against international competition. The labor market reform put a financial burden on companies, which many businessmen deemed unbearable. They are also adamantly against the still pending project of reforming health care financing which, if adopted, will oblige employers to pay health insurance to their expatriate workers.

In brief, the full implementation of socioeconomic reforms necessitates a complete change of culture for the national business community, which many businessmen are unwilling to accept. They saw the cooperation between the government and al-Wifaq in the framework of the labor market reform literally as treason, blaming the opposition for having fabricated the issue of unemployment from beginning to end and the government for having believed them. In the eyes of many businessmen, there is no unemployment in Bahrain in the sense that those who claim to be unemployed do not want, nor are they able, to work in the private sector.

Their resistance has intertwined with the dynamics of intra-dynastic factionalism that have been fostered after succession. Since his arrival

to power, King Hamad has struggled to gain independence from his uncle Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, who he had no choice but to maintain in the office of prime minister—a position he has held since independence in 1971. The strongman under his father's reign, Khalifa is a businessman who has many interests in real estate in Bahrain and abroad. He is said to be the unavoidable intermediary and bribe-taker in any big project developing in the country and, as such, is the main intermediary between the dynasty and the business community. He is hated by the opposition, who consider him as a partisan of the iron fist, which he implemented during the uprising of the 1990s.

The private sector has found the prime minister to be their best ally in fighting the labor market reform. Thanks to him, they obtained a significant reduction in the level of the tax on expatriate workers. They overtly praised Khalifa for his wise and moderated approach in the affair, with many going as far as saying that he should be the main person in charge of running Bahrain's affairs,[3] hardly an allusion to the shift of power to Crown Prince Salman that was sanctioned in 2008 when his father granted him and his Economic Development Board the control of 16 ministries.[4] This view, it should be noted, was held by both Sunni and Shi`a businessmen, being the reflection of the corporate ethos of the private sector beyond the different ethno-religious identities of its individual members.

Power Implications
In this context, the Saudi-led intervention in Bahrain on March 14, 2011 was not only to end the uprising, but it also threw support behind the prime minister's faction, reversing the ascendant move of the crown prince whose attempt at keeping the door of dialogue open was probably deliberately halted by Riyadh.[5] The uprising and the conditions of its repression also

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2 For more details on the history of Shi`a political Islam in Bahrain, see Laurence Louër, "The Limits of Iranian Influence Among Gulf Shi`a," *CTC Sentinel* 2:5 (2009).

3 These details are based on the author's interviews with Bahrain's business community in October 2010.

4 Steven Wright, *Fixing the Kingdom: Political Evolution and Socio-Economic Challenges in Bahrain* (Doha: Center for International and Regional Studies, 2008).

5 Caryle Murphy, "Bahrain Becomes Flashpoint in Relations Between US and Saudi Arabia," *Global Post*, April 13, 2011.

entailed a rapprochement between the prime minister and the two main hard line figures of the dynasty who have been on the rise since at least 2009: the army commander, Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, and his brother, the Royal Court Minister Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa.[6] The opposition considers the latter as having become the strongman of the regime in recent years. Before the uprising, they would only dare murmur his name. Considering him as particularly potent and harmful, they said he was the main supporter of the sectarian Sunni groups that have since gained visibility during the uprising as the vanguard of counterrevolution.

In recent months, there have been increasing signs that the hardliners altogether are doing everything in their power to counter many of the decisions made by the king to appease the opposition.[7] This results in an incoherent policy from the government. On the one hand, it causes the opposition to trust the government less. On the other hand, both the opposition and the reformist faction of government know that they need each other to keep the balance of power weighted in their favor. The way that these power coalitions evolve in the coming months will be critical to deciphering the situation in Bahrain.

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Jamaatul Mujahidin Bangladesh: Weakened, But Not Destroyed

By Animesh Roul

JAMAATUL MUJAHIDIN BANGLADESH (JMB), an indigenous terrorist group founded in 1998[1] and committed to establishing an Islamic state in Bangladesh through violence, stormed onto South Asia's jihadist scene with a synchronized, country-wide bomb assault on August 17, 2005.[2] The group detonated approximately 460 bombs within a 30-minute period at 300 locations in 63 of the 64 districts in Bangladesh.[3] Later in 2005, JMB targeted the country's judiciary—court buildings, judges, and government officials—with suicide attacks in an effort to intimidate authorities into releasing around 400 JMB suspects arrested after the August countrywide blasts.[4]

Shortly after the incidents, authorities apprehended more than 700 suspected members of JMB and its affiliate party, Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB). In March 2007, the Bangladeshi government executed a number of JMB's leaders, including its chief, Shaikh Abdur Rahman. Today, six years after the audacious terrorist attacks of 2005, Bangladesh's elite counterterrorism agency, the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), claims to have neutralized JMB's core and substantially reduced the risk it poses.[5]

Yet the JMB threat to Bangladesh has not been eliminated. While the group has been dramatically weakened, there are new concerns that it is attempting to reconstitute itself, especially in Bangladesh's northeastern districts.[6] In January 2011, members of an alleged "JMB suicide squad" issued threats to assassinate Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and to blow up Chittagong Central Jail and the Chittagong court building unless authorities safely released detained JMB cadres.[7] As of October, Bangladeshi authorities have arrested at least 25 JMB cadres in 2011,[8] indicating that the group has been building support in various *madrasas* and urban ghettos in and around the capital Dhaka as well as Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Rajshahi, Jhalakati, and Naogaon districts.[9] There are also cases where individuals with ties to JMB became involved in more transnational terrorist plots, such as the case of British Airways employee Rajib Karim who was drawn into the orbit of al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula's (AQAP) Anwar al-`Awlaqi.

6 Patrick Cockburn, "Power Struggle Deepens Divisions among Bahraini Royal Family," *Independent*, September 27, 2011.
7 Ibid.

1 JMB has been operating since 1998 as a front for the lesser known al-Mujahidin. Some sources claim that it was founded in Palampur of Dhaka division by Sabir Qazi. According to other sources, JMB was formed by Abdur Rahman and Asadullah Ghalib in Jamalpur, Dhaka division. Its first documented act of violence was the assassination of Monir Hossain Sagar, the author of *Nari Tumi Manush Chhile Kobey*, in 2000 for the alleged indecent remarks about Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. JMB gained public prominence after accidental bomb blasts in Dinjapur in February 2003.
2 "459 Blasts in 63 Districts in 30 Minutes," *Daily Star* [Dhaka], August 18, 2005.
3 Surprisingly, only two people were killed, but nearly 100 people sustained minor to moderate injuries.
4 JMB perpetrated at least four suicide operations within a span of one month.
5 "JMB Neutralized," *Daily Star*, August 17, 2011.

6 There are reports of JMB operatives regrouping in different areas of Chittagong in the guise of rickshaw-pullers, masons and day laborers and involved in recruiting new members to reorganize the organization. See "JMB Regrouping in Chittagong: Hunt on to Nab Local JMB Commander Masum," *Daily Sun* [Dhaka], December 20, 2010.
7 "JMB Threatens to Kill Hasina," *Daily Sun*, January 6, 2011. The attack, however, failed to materialize. This was not the first time JMB threatened or schemed to attack political leaders. JMB had plotted attacks on both Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League and Khaleda Zia of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party in mid 2009, using militants from India. It also listed second rung leaders of both political parties as their targets. See "Islamist Militants Planned to Kill Hasina, Khaleda: Report," Press Trust of India/OutlookIndia.com, August 6, 2009. The detained acting chief of JMB, Anwar Alam, disclosed to investigators in July 2010 that JMB has a hit list of 12 top political figures, mostly from the ruling Awami League Party. See "JMB Planned to Kill 12 Politicians: Arrested Acting Chief Discloses 'Hit List' to Interrogators," *Daily Star*, July 15, 2010.
8 This statistic was compiled by the author from open sources, especially from *Daily Star* coverage of JMB starting from January 2011.
9 The September 23, 2011 arrest of five JMB cadres who had in their possession jihadist literature and other incriminating documents from Aramnagar Kamil Madrasa in Sarishabari of Jamalpur district reveals the grassroots existence of JMB.

This article assesses JMB's current strength, which is based on interrogations from recently arrested operatives. It also examines the group's transnational linkages to show how JMB remains a resilient terrorist group despite government efforts to destroy its top leadership and organizational efforts.

JMB's Current Strength

In May 2010, authorities arrested JMB's current leader, Maulana Saidur Rahman, himself a former member of Jamaat-i-Islami Bangladesh (JIB). Authorities found in his home a "huge cache of bomb-making materials, firearms and ammunition."[10] Police also raided the home of JMB's military chief, where they found an explosives belt usually worn by suicide bombers. Subsequent interrogations revealed that "hardliners had taken over the reins of JMB," suggesting that the group was plotting a series of explosions in Dhaka to attract new recruits to its cause.[11] Following leads from Maulana Saidur, police arrested a number of top leaders in July 2010 in Bogra, Joypurhat and Gaibandha districts. One of the arrested men and acting chief, commander Anwar Alam (also known as Bhagne Shahid), revealed that JMB is operating according to a new "10-year master plan" to achieve its goal of establishing an Islamic state in Bangladesh.[12]

JMB's chief, Maulana Saidur, told interrogators that the group had 400 full-time members across the country as of May 2010, as well as a military wing capable of launching large-scale attacks with an existing arsenal of explosives, homemade bombs and grenades.[13] Those numbers, however, conflict with comments from Zahidul Islam Sumon (also known as Boma Mizan), a JMB explosives expert who was arrested in 2009. According to Mizan, JMB has 100 Eshar (full-time members in charge of a particular area), 500 Gayeri Ehsar (part-time members) and around 1,000 general members and 2,000 supporters.[14]

JMB's actual cadre strength is unknown. After the 2005 serial blasts, Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies identified 8,096 JMB members, of which 2,000 were allegedly part of the group's "suicide squad."[15] As of January 2011, authorities had arrested more than 1,500 JMB members, along with a few top leaders.[16] Based on this assessment, there could still be thousands of JMB members operational.[17] One reason for the discrepancy could be that the police account appears to count active members, volunteers, sympathizers or accomplices.

Today, JMB continues to recruit new members. Before the 2005 crackdown, JMB appeared to mostly recruit from *madrasas* and mosques in the country. Yet this has become more difficult due to police monitoring. Therefore, JMB has been using the internet and social networking forums to recruit new members online, luring university students to its fold. In late March 2011, RAB personnel arrested JMB's propaganda chief, Abdul Ghani, the outfit's chief coordinator of recruitment and training, Abu Huraira (also known as Shams), and their coordinator of training, Ashrafuzzaman. All of the men were in their 20s. Laptops, jihadist literature and training guides were seized from the operatives.[18] According to investigators, Shams was working with information technology experts in Hizb al-Tahrir at many university campuses to recruit new members for their respective outfits by using different websites such as Yahoo and Facebook.[19] JMB also appears to be increasingly recruiting from elite schools and universities.[20]

There are also concerns that JMB has a female "hit squad" trained to execute grenade attacks. In early 2009, police arrested a number of alleged JMB female militants, accusing them of belonging to

a JMB female cell.[21] If accusations that the group has a female suicide squad prove true, it would not be a complete surprise; in 2004, JMB established a women branch with around 10-12 women in each cell, although they were mostly responsible for *da`wa* activities and religious teachings—not violence.[22]

Transnational Outreach

Although JMB is considered an indigenous group seeking to establish an Islamic state in Bangladesh, its operational capabilities are not limited to the country. Evidence shows that JMB operatives along with its leaders nurtured ambitions to have transnational ties, primarily for fundraising and logistics.

JMB's past contacts with the UK-based Bangladeshi diaspora community in general, and ties to the banned al-Muhajiroun group in particular, are well known.[23] To raise funds for jihadist activities in Bangladesh, direct communication between al-Muhajiroun's Omar Bakri and JMB chief Abdur Rahman was coordinated by two al-Muhajiroun members identified as Sajjad and Habibur Rahman, who were both UK-based Bangladeshis.[24] It is not clear whether these ties exist today, but JMB likely maintains some links to the Bangladeshi diaspora community in the United Kingdom.

Since its founding, JMB formed ties with transnational militant groups such as HuJI and Lashkar-i-Tayyiba (LeT) for training and funding purposes. LeT operative Mufti Obaidullah, who had close ties with JMB's senior operative Hasanuzzaman Hasan, once told interrogators that his task was to organize jihad in Bangladesh in cooperation with HuJI-Bangladesh

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10 "JMB Chief Saidur Held," *Daily Star*, May 26, 2010.

11 "Depleted JMB Targets Dhaka, Detained Militants Tell Detectives," *Daily Star*, May 27, 2010.

12 "JMB Planned Countrywide Pre-Poll Attacks," bd-news24.com, July 16, 2010.

13 "Hardliners Take Over JMB: Detained Chief Tells Interrogators," *Daily Star*, May 29, 2010.

14 "JMB Finds Friends in Outlawed Parties," *Daily Star*,

April 25, 2010.

15 "Anti-Terrorism Unit in Police Soon," *Daily Sun*, January 3, 2011.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 "RAB Arrests 4 Suspected JMB Operatives in City," *New Age Bangladesh*, April 1, 2011.

19 Ibid. One Facebook page allegedly run by HT sympathizers denied HT-JMB links.

20 "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh," International Crisis Group, March 2010.

21 In early 2009, reports emerged regarding JMB's female hit squad headed by fugitive Razia Sultana. For details, see "Trained Female JMB Militants Appear on Scene for First Time," *Daily Star*, February 21, 2009. Also see, "Seven More Hauled Up in Hunt for JMB Jihadis," Media Bangladesh/*Independent*, February 22, 2009.

22 "The Threat from Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh."

23 Ibid.

24 Sajjad and Habibur Rahman, both from al-Muhajiroun, reportedly provided £10,000 to JMB for establishing bases for arms production in Bangladesh. Some of the funds were used in the August 2005 serial bombings. For details, see ibid.

and JMB operatives.[25] It is also known that LeT helped and facilitated JMB's recruitment drive in India, especially in the northeastern and southern parts of the country. The interrogations with Maulana Saidur revealed that as of 2010 JMB has managed to establish a significant presence in neighboring West Bengal (India), especially in Malda, Nadia and Murshidabad districts with around 25 Indian and Bangladeshi members. The Indian wing provides logistical support as well as guns and bomb-making equipment.[26]

LeT was instrumental in sending Bangladeshi operatives for training in Pakistan, working through such groups as JMB and HuJI.[27] There are also cases of JMB members traveling to Pakistan to engage in fighting there. Confessional reports of JMB's explosives expert Boma Mizan shed some light on how one JMB operative, Shahed, traveled to the Swat Valley in Pakistan to "embrace martyrdom" through fighting against the military during the height of Operation Rah-e-Rast in April-May 2009.[28]

JMB operatives are active in Europe as well. In September 2010, Jhenaidah district police arrested a German expatriate identified as Faruk Ahmed Aruj for his alleged link with JMB. Faruk had been living in Germany for the past two decades working as a manager of a fast food chain, and he was a core member of a mosque in Germany.[29]

The Case of Rajib Karim
Yet the issue of most concern to Western counterterrorism agencies is JMB members who become involved in international terrorist plots, such

as those planned by al-Qa`ida. Rajib Karim in the United Kingdom serves as the best example of this threat. Rajib, an alleged member of JMB, lived in the United Kingdom and was employed as an information technology expert with British Airways. Rajib's activities involved raising money and making propaganda videos for JMB. Yet Rajib eventually came under the influence of AQAP operative Anwar al-`Awlaqi, the charismatic Yemeni-American preacher based in Yemen and involved in a number of terrorist plots against the United States.

Rajib's brother, Tehezib Karim, and two other unidentified Bangladeshis, possibly JMB members, reportedly met al-`Awlaqi in Yemen in December 2009 and shared information about Rajib as well as his position at British Airways.[30] One can assume that they used the JMB name to help establish credibility and commitment to the jihadist cause. In subsequent e-mails between al-`Awlaqi and Rajib, al-`Awlaqi expressed excitement that Rajib worked for one of the world's biggest airlines. Rajib wrote al-`Awlaqi that he "worked very hard in painting myself as a liberal Muslim."

Although Rajib hated non-Muslims in the United Kingdom, al-`Awlaqi expressed to Rajib that an attack against the United States was al-Qa`ida's "highest priority." To redirect Rajib, al-`Awlaqi wrote, "Our highest priority is the US. Anything there, even on a smaller scale compared to what we may do in the UK, would be our choice."[31]

Rajib then attempted to switch jobs within British Airways, seeking a position as a cabin crew member. He was rejected, however, because he had not worked for the airline long enough. Al-`Awlaqi asked Rajib, "With the people you have [other employees at

British Airways] is it possible to get a package or a person with a package on board a flight heading to the US?" Rajib reassured, "I can work with the bros to find out the possibilities of shipping a package to a US-bound plane."[32] Ten days later, however, UK authorities arrested Rajib, who eventually received a 30-year prison sentence.

Conclusion
At first glance, JMB's strength and activities inside Bangladesh appear depleted, especially following the arrests of senior leaders. It would be incorrect, however, to assume that the group has been neutralized. The Rapid Action Battalion has yet to tackle JMB's jihadist ideology and grassroots support, which has helped the organization survive against the ongoing security offensives and investigations. The biggest concern is that JMB will spearhead a conglomerate of different jihadist groups and actors in Bangladesh in the years ahead.

As the case of Rajib Karim demonstrates, there is also the risk of radicalized members of JMB joining more transnational terrorist groups such as al-Qa`ida. JMB's ties to the Bangladeshi diaspora community in the United Kingdom warrant concern. In the case of Rajib Karim, however, it does not appear that the JMB governing body had knowledge of the Karim brothers' plan. Yet regardless of whether JMB's governing body approves of such transnational attacks, the ideology they instill in their members makes it inevitable that some cadre will seek to join other terrorist groups or cells that are committed to attacking Western interests.

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25 "Hasan Had Links with Obaidullah," *Daily Star*, July 20, 2009; *Jai Jai Din* [Dhaka], November 26, 2010.

26 "Bangladeshi Terror Outfit Running Camps in India," CNN-IBN, June 21, 2010.

27 Known Lashkar-i-Tayyiba operatives such as Abdul Karim Tunda and Mufti Obaidullah facilitated JMB's recruitment and training in India and Pakistan in the past. For details, see "Their Sinister Presence," *The Star* 9:40 (2010). For India's Intelligence Bureau's observation, see "Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, Lashkar's New Cat's Paw Against India?" Rediff.com, December 29, 2010.

28 "JMB Planned to Kill, Foil Polls, Hasina, Khaleda were Prime Targets; About Dozen Operatives from India Hired to Execute Bloodshed Plot," *Daily Star*, August 6, 2009.

29 "Expat Arrested on Charge of Link with JMB," *Daily Star*, September 17, 2010.

30 One independent investigation in Bangladesh found that JMB could establish links with al-Qa`ida in Yemen through a religious research organization called the Research Centre for Unity Development (RCUD), where Tehezib Karim's father-in-law is the chairman. At least another three Bangladeshi youth were detained in Yemen along with Tehezib for their links with al-Qa`ida. For details, see Tipu Sultan, "RUCD Terrorist Group's Sponsor, Coordinator," *Prothom Alo* [Dhaka], March 2, 2011.

31 Andrew Carey, "British Airways Worker Guilty of al-Qaeda-Linked Terror Plot," CNN, February 28, 2011.

32 Bill Chappell, "British Jury Convicts Airline Worker in Bomb Plot," National Public Radio, February 28, 2011.

After Action Report: Combating Group Violence Abroad with Community-Based Approaches

By Captain Karl P. Kadon, USMCR

ONE OF THE fundamental tenets of counterinsurgency is recognizing that specific problems within specific areas require unique solutions. Despite this, there are several concepts at the core of a community collaborative approach to reducing group-related violence that transcend borders, mainly because criminals, terrorists, and law-abiding citizens alike are all goal-oriented.[1] They have a vision in their minds of "how life is supposed to be for me." Options made available to them by society typically dictate the means by which people achieve their goals in life. According to Ronald Clarke, the best means by which a society can prevent crime from occurring is to selectively remove those illicit options from the locale, so that the only rational choice for the would-be criminal is one less harmful to themselves and to the community at large.[2] It is up to the community to remove such constraints or "forced options" that create inherently negative situations. It is precisely this focused deterrence approach that theaters like Iraq and Afghanistan require. The United States must find and target the specific category of crime that it seeks to remove as an available means to an end.[3]

This article draws on personal experiences from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan while serving in a partnered role, and argues that a community-based approach similar to a program that has seen success in Cincinnati, Ohio, may work in any theater of operations, despite economic, social and political differences.

Making Rational Choices

"Bounded rationality" is the topic of Reinhard Selten's sociological study of criminal networks and the invocation of rational choice as a crime reduction tool. The bulk of Selten's argument is based on the premise that violent offenders usually have no clear, stable objectives, and that their socioeconomic circumstances often cause them to make compulsive, ends-based decisions selected from seemingly fixed sets of alternatives.[4] For a violent crime deterrence program to be successful, it must control this set of alternatives, and present them in a logical, focused manner to a target audience of those most susceptible to violent criminal activity. Focused deterrence initiatives that operate based upon these principles have fostered trust in communities where historically there was tremendous mutual mistrust between security providers and the community. Social scientists have demonstrated that the vast majority of violent crime is perpetrated by a small group of individuals whose actions negatively impact their community-at-large. Strategies that combine community leader buy-in with a more robust social networking capability that both identifies and accurately targets individuals within this small group of active offenders have been empirically demonstrated to successfully reduce violent criminal activity in a variety of U.S. cities.[5]

Gaining the support of community leaders has yielded the greatest domestic success in Cincinnati, a city torn by years of racial tension and group related homicides. The Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) is a multiagency community collaborative program initiated in 2007 by Lieutenant Colonel James Whalen of the Cincinnati Police Department, Professor David Kennedy of John Jay University's Center for Crime Prevention and Control, and Dr. Robin Engel of the University of Cincinnati, in response to a 300% increase in Cincinnati homicides during an eight year period from 1998-2006. CIRV precisely targets the city's most active violent offenders by putting them on notice that "the rules have changed," and promises swift and sure consequences for not only them but the entire group with whom they are affiliated should they continue to violate the law, especially laws concerning illegal drug and firearms possession and use. CIRV complements this promise by offering identified violent offenders a chance at reform through pre-packaged employment or education programs. In the five years since its inception, the CIRV strategy reduced group and gang related homicide more than 30% and group and gang related shooting offenses by more than 10%.[6]

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1 The inspiration for this concept came from Captain Daniel Gerard of the Cincinnati Police Department, who proposed the application of the CIRV concept in the Iraqi theater of operations prior to the author's deployment to Anbar Province, Iraq in 2009. The domestic application of CIRV was the brainchild of Professor David Kennedy at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Gretchen Peters contributed to the development of this article by providing extensive advice and more than a decade of subject matter expertise on the Afghan theater of operations.

2 Ronald V. Clarke, "Situational Crime Prevention," in *Building a Safer Society: Strategic Approaches to Crime Prevention* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

3 David Kennedy, "Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right," *National Institute of Justice Journal* 236 (1998).

4 Reinhard Selten, *Bounded Rationality: The Adaptive Toolbox* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001).

5 Anthony A. Braga, "Serious Youth Gun Offenders and the Epidemic of Youth Violence in Boston," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 19:1 (2003); Anthony A. Braga, Glenn L. Pierce, Jack McDevitt et al., "The Strategic Prevention of Gun Violence Among Gang-Involved Offenders," *Justice Quarterly* 25:1 (2008); Anthony A. Braga, David M. Kennedy, Elin J. Waring et al., "Problem-Oriented Policing, Deterrence, and Youth Violence: An Evaluation of Boston's Operation Ceasefire," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 38:3 (2001); Anthony A. Braga, David L. Weisburd, Elin J. Waring et al., "Problem-

Oriented Policing in Violent Crime Places: A Randomized Controlled Experiment," *Criminology* 37:3 (1999); David M. Kennedy, *Deterrence and Crime Prevention: Reconsidering the Prospect of Sanction* (New York: Routledge, 2008); David M. Kennedy, "Pulling Levers: Chronic Offenders, High-Crime Settings, and a Theory of Prevention," *Valparaiso University Law Review* 31:2 (1997); Andrew W. Papachristos, Tracey L. Meares, Jeffrey Fagan, "Attention Felons: Evaluating Project Safe Neighborhoods in Chicago," *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 4:2 (2007); Lawrence W. Sherman, Patrick R. Gartin, and Michael E. Buerger, "Hot Spots of Predatory Crime: Routine Activities and the Criminology of Place," *Criminology* 27:1 (1989); David Weisburd, Nancy A. Morris, and Elizabeth R. Groff, "Hot Spots of Juvenile Crime: A Longitudinal Study of Arrest Incidents at Street Segments in Seattle, Washington," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 25:4 (2009); David Weisburd and Lorraine Green Mazerolle, "Crime and Disorder in Drug Hot Spots: Implications for Theory and Practice in Policing," *Police Quarterly* 3:3 (2000).

6 Robin S. Engel, Marie Skubak Tillyer and Nicholas Corsaro, "Reducing Gang Violence Using Focused Deterrence: Evaluating the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)," University of Cincinnati Policing Institute, 2011.

Despite the success of CIRV, this author was initially skeptical that the concepts in this domestic program could reduce enemy influence in an active combat zone. Yet in the subsequent months of deployment, it became clear that the enemy thrived off its ability to "create and maintain" sectarian violence within a population, and to use those divisions to achieve its own objectives.

Common Problems

Immediately upon deploying in the late summer of 2010 to Sangin district, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, as the Civil Affairs Team leader for 3d Battalion, 5th Marines (3/5), I was paired closely with Afghan forces. I met with and mentored the district governor on a daily basis and began to recognize patterns similar to those from my deployment to al-Qa'im, Iraq in 2009. In al-Qa'im, the relative strength of the tribal system had given rise to a fractured law enforcement community and a judiciary unwilling to act in the face of pressure from corrupt shaykhs. Apart from self-interested community leaders, al-Qa'im lacked the economic infrastructure to create enough viable, legal alternatives to smuggling weapons.[7] The primary problems were:

1. The lack of a forceful, legitimate, unified message from the local security forces to the citizens;
2. The lack of a consistent, unified, empathetic, positive message that capitalized on the values and virtues with which Sunni Muslims were able to identify;
3. High unemployment and illicit activity stemming from the lack of licit employment alternatives with comparable salaries.

These were the same societal problems that existed prior to the implementation of Cincinnati's initiative. They also existed in Sangin, and in each venue they desperately needed to be addressed.

Sitting Down With the Enemy in Sangin

The situation in Sangin was bleak. The district center was in a much earlier stage of development than was al-Qa'im; the only prosecutor had fled in August, and no one had ever been brave enough to take a position as judge. There were no means by which to enforce the law locally through the judicial process, and enemy influence seemed omnipresent. Over the past few years, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) had poured millions of dollars into Sangin in the form of equipment, supplies and munitions, and had sacrificed dozens of British and U.S. Marines and soldiers in the district, without much to show for it. Extreme instability and volatility was still the rule rather than the exception.

In November 2010, the political situation came to a head when a group of village elders who had been nominated by the Taliban Civil Commission and the senior Taliban command element of an 80 square kilometer area commonly referred to as the Upper Sangin Valley (USV) traveled to the district center, seeking an audience with the district governor. The USV had recently been the subject of a heavy-handed interdiction campaign by First Recon Battalion, First Marine Division (Forward) the month prior, and the elders knew that certain areas of Sangin that were cooperating more readily with the Afghan government and its Marine counterparts were receiving infrastructural development projects, as well as protection from foreign Taliban forces who had been in the area planting bombs for years. They knew that it was time for them to come to the table.

If we expected to make any progress with this Taliban-nominated delegation, three rules would apply. First, we would have to provide meaningful and predictable consequences for individuals and their associates who continued to perpetrate violence.[8] To accomplish this objective, Sangin would need both a functioning justice system and a unified message from the law enforcement community. The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in Sangin would need to come together into a common forum and talk to the senior village leadership with a single voice, as both the leaders of the local Afghan police force and the Afghan Army battalion had shown their corrupt sides that November, when each man publicly demanded to know the identities of the locally-based contractors whom the Marine Civil Affairs team had hired to rebuild the war-torn district, and more importantly how much they were being paid. Both organizational leaders would have to overcome their personal desires for cash before the Alikozai[9] elders would hear them.

Second, whatever the course of action, communicating these consequences to the target audience in a consistent, accurate and direct manner was paramount to success. What the community leaders wanted was to reconcile their differences with a government that would reciprocate by recognizing the legitimate influence they commanded as elders. Working together with the Afghan district governor, the Afghan Army battalion commander and the Sangin district chief of police, we developed a common picture of how to approach the Alikozai delegation and set clear expectations as to what each could anticipate. It is important to note that this common picture was developed mainly from Afghan minds, rather than from American or British doctrine.

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7 Although the previous Iraqi government had built and maintained several state-owned entities in the al-Qa'im region, the current government of Iraq lacked the economic resources to allocate funding to these major sources of legitimate employment in the rural Western Euphrates River Valley. Phosphate plants, textile plants, and mineral mines had all been major sources of employment, but when presented with a lack of licit alternatives, the primary source of area illicit income became an international weapons smuggling ring.

8 Robin Engel, S. Gregory Baker, Marie Tillyer et al., "Implementation of the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV): Year 1 Report," University of Cincinnati Policing Institute, April 14, 2008.

9 The Alikozai tribe is one of three major tribes in Sangin district, the other two being the Ishaqzai and Noorzai, and one of several more in northern Helmand Province. While Ishaqzai outnumbered the other two tribes in Sangin, the Alikozai had held the majority of political power in the region for several years, as they held close ties with the former district governor, Helmand provincial governor, and the provincial chief of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), Afghanistan's federal law enforcement and intelligence collection agency. Since the unseating of the former Alikozai district governor of Sangin, the tribe had turned to illicit narcotics trafficking and production, following in the footsteps of the other two subordinate tribes. The Ishaqzai and Noorzai had closer ties to the Quetta *shura* Taliban, due to their lack of political leverage in the district, and so the Alikozai were the best positioned for reconciliation with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in late 2010.

The delegation would meet with the "power brokers" (the Afghan government and security forces leadership in Sangin district) and with Marine leadership considered senior enough to represent Helmand Province. At this meeting, which was similar in its approach to the engagement technique used by Cincinnati's program, the Afghan and ISAF representatives would take a balanced approach to reconciliation. Each side would recognize the other's perspective: the Alikozai wanted to defend themselves against the Taliban, and they wanted their communities to be left alone by ANSF and ISAF; they also wanted help refurbishing their extensively damaged but vital canal network, which supplied the lifeblood of their agrarian economy.[10] Conversely, ANSF and ISAF wanted to extend Afghan government influence over the entire USV. The latter was going to happen one way or another, whether through discussion or violence. The Marines had already demonstrated their willingness to methodically clear enemy forces from every square inch of any village in Sangin, and this was a harrowing fact in the eyes of the Alikozai, who knew ISAF and ANSF were coming to their backyard next.

When the delegation of elders finally arrived in the district center in December, they were ready to talk. The Marine and Afghan leadership knew they had the upper hand in terms of hard power, but the Alikozai knew they had the soft power choice of alliance with either the Quetta *shura* Taliban or the Afghan district government. Sporadic meetings

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10 For years, the uniquely fertile Sangin Valley, which is fed by a dense network of canals, has been prime ground for drug cartels to grow poppy and marijuana. With the highest density of poppy production in Helmand, Mullah Omar's Quetta *shura* Taliban likely finances a substantial portion of its criminal activity with money earned from the heroin that originated from the poppy that abounds in Helmand Province, particularly in the fertile fields of Sangin. U.S. General Stanley McChrystal highlighted the influence of the Quetta *shura* Taliban in 2009, focusing on their active subversion of the government of Afghanistan through the financing and direction of several shadow governments in the country. One of the reasons for the extensive level of violence witnessed by the British military from 2006-2010, and by the U.S. Marines since July 2010, is likely the Quetta *shura* Taliban's interest in maintaining control over this critical component of its illicit income.

between the two sides occurred for about three weeks from late December into early January, and eventually our Afghan partners achieved one of the largest security agreements seen in Afghanistan to date. What made the agreement so influential were the concessions made by both sides. There was a period of two weeks in December during which 3d Battalion, 5th Marines took an "operational pause," halted its patrolling efforts, and put additional constraints on its rules of engagement, all in a gesture of goodwill and faith toward the elders who were risking their lives each time they traveled to the district center to meet with the Afghan government leadership. In exchange, the elders promulgated messages of peace throughout their villages and promised to have local men dig up the previously emplaced IEDs. Further, the two former Taliban commanders who were natives of the USV began meeting with the district governor and the Marines in an effort to register their fighters as local defenders on the side of the Afghan government. Eventually, the Alikozai leadership would send delegates to the district center to represent the USV in the newly formed Interim District Community Council, which was the representative body that would bring them funding for projects like those needed to refurbish their canal networks.

Not About Winning Hearts And Minds

The process of achieving relative social stability in the USV succeeded not because ISAF was pouring money into small-scale "hearts and minds" projects to dig wells and build schools. Rather, it was the facilitation of sustained, genuine relationship-building between the fledgling government and its citizens, and the constant struggle to achieve the consent of the governed that took place over several months and several deployments. The same societal problems exist in Sangin as they do in al-Qa'im and Cincinnati. ISAF and ANSF eventually understood that only a small segment of the population was actually bankrolling and directing most of the violent acts in Sangin, and that it would take time and sustained commitment to achieve true partnership with those most at risk for group violence within the community. Development of this level of trust required an unprecedented recognition

by the Marines of the real power held by the elders and major landholders within the affected community, and an understanding that the native powerbrokers on both sides were driven by economic interests, especially in this economically depressed country, which meant whatever rational solution we proposed would have to be more advantageous than its illicit alternative.

The cultural and political differences of Afghanistan do not rule out community-based approaches to group violence reduction. As long as self-interest remains the predominant cultural and social bond, the use of honor, shame, employment and education incentives, combined with the allure of gaining political capital, will continue to drive the success of the focused deterrence approach anywhere it is applied.

Captain Karl Kadon served as the Civil Affairs Team leader in charge of the governance and economic development missions in Sangin district, Helmand Province, Afghanistan with 3d Battalion, 5th Marines and 3d Battalion, 7th Marines from September 2010 to March 2011. He worked with the Sangin district governor, village elders, ANSF and ISAF partners to produce the first series of peace talks ever held with the Alikozai tribe, resulting in arguably the largest peace agreement between the Taliban and the Afghan government since the start of Operation Enduring Freedom. His previous deployment was as an intelligence adviser to the Iraqi Army in al-Qa'im district, Anbar Province, Iraq in 2009, after graduating from the University of Notre Dame. He is currently a captain in the Marine Corps Reserves, and a senior consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton.

Recent Highlights in Terrorist Activity

October 1, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): NATO officials announced that international forces in Afghanistan captured Haji Mali Khan in Paktia Province on September 27. Khan has been identified as a senior commander for the Haqqani network in Afghanistan. He is also the uncle of Haqqani network leader Sirajuddin Haqqani. – *BBC, October 1*

October 1, 2011 (KENYA): Six Somali gunmen stormed a home on the island of Manda on Kenya's northern coast, kidnapping 66-year-old, wheelchair-bound Frenchwoman Marie Dedieu. The recovering cancer patient and quadriplegic, who had lived on Manda for years, was taken by boat to Somalia. – *Reuters, October 13*

October 2, 2011 (INDONESIA): Authorities in Indonesia announced that they arrested one of the country's most wanted Islamist militants, identified as Beni Asri, during the previous week in the town of Solok in West Sumatra Province. Asri is accused of helping to plot a suicide bombing in a church in the central Java city of Solo on September 25, 2011. He is also wanted for his role in a suicide attack at a mosque in a police compound in Cirebon, West Java, in April 2011. – *Voice of America, October 2*

October 3, 2011 (UNITED STATES): U.S. President Barack Obama said that a terrorist attack on the scale of 9/11 would be "very difficult" for al-Qa`ida to achieve in the next two years. – *AFP, October 3*

October 3, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber killed at least one civilian in Kandahar city. – *AFP, October 3*

October 3, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber wearing an army uniform detonated his explosives at an Afghan Army garrison in Kandahar city, killing one guard. – *AFP, October 3*

October 3, 2011 (IRAQ): Between four and six militants disguised as police officers attacked a police compound in al-Baghdadi, Anbar Province. According to the Associated Press, "Four insurgents wearing explosives vests underneath police uniforms and armed with grenades and pistols with silencers walked into the police station in al-Baghdadi around 9 a.m….Because the gunmen were wearing police uniforms, they were not searched." The attack killed approximately four people, including a local police chief. – *AP, October 3; BBC, October 3*

October 4, 2011 (SOMALIA): An al-Shabab suicide bomber driving a truck packed with explosives killed more than 100 people in a massive blast in Mogadishu. The bomber detonated his explosives at a checkpoint outside a Mogadishu compound housing a number of government ministries, including the Education Ministry. According to the Associated Press, the bomber "was a [school] dropout who had declared that young people should forget about secular education and instead wage jihad." – *Los Angeles Times, October 4; AP, October 6*

October 5, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A NATO airstrike killed a senior commander in the Haqqani network, identified as "Dilawar." The commander was a "principal subordinate" to Haji Mali Khan, the top Haqqani network commander in Afghanistan who was captured by coalition forces on September 27. According to Reuters, "NATO also said that Dilawar helped foreign militants move into Afghanistan and had links with both al Qaeda and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan." – *Reuters, October 5*

October 5, 2011 (YEMEN): A U.S. drone strike killed five al-Qa`ida-linked militants in southern Yemen's Abyan Province. – *AP, October 5*

October 7, 2011 (IRAQ): The U.S. State Department offered a $10 million reward for information on the whereabouts of Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali Badri, the leader of al-Qa`ida in Iraq. – *Los Angeles Times, October 7*

October 9, 2011 (GLOBAL): Al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) confirmed the deaths of Yemeni-American cleric Anwar al-`Awlaqi as well as Samir Khan, who were both killed in a U.S. airstrike on September 30. AQAP's statement said that while the United States killed al-`Awlaqi, it "cannot kill his ideas." The terrorist group also threatened to "retaliate soon." – *CNN, October 10; Washington Post, October 10*

October 9, 2011 (SOMALIA): Thousands of Mogadishu residents packed into a stadium to protest al-Shabab for its October 4 suicide bombing that killed more than 100 people. According to the *New York Times*, "It was one of the largest rallies in years in Mogadishu." – *New York Times, October 9*

October 11, 2011 (GLOBAL): Al-Qa`ida chief Ayman al-Zawahiri appeared in a new video message, praising Libyan rebels for seizing Tripoli. He urged Libyans to adopt Shari`a (Islamic law), and warned, "The first thing that this NATO will ask of you is to relinquish your Islam…Be careful of the plots of the West and its henchmen while you are building your new state. Don't allow them to deceive you and steal your sacrifices and suffering." – *AFP, October 12; Telegraph, October 12*

October 11, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A roadside bomb killed Abdul Wali, the deputy head of Kandahar Province's Zhari district, along with six of his bodyguards. – *AFP, October 11*

October 11, 2011 (PAKISTAN): Militants fired two rockets at a rally led by the governor of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, killing one person. Governor Masood Kasur was not injured in the attack, which occurred in Orakzai Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. – *Reuters, October 11*

October 11, 2011 (KYRGYZSTAN): Security forces in Kyrgyzstan said that they foiled a plot by al-Qa`ida-linked militants to disrupt the country's upcoming presidential elections scheduled for October 30. The plot, reportedly organized by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Jihad Group, included ethnic Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Uighur, Tajiks and a Kazakh who had trained in camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan. – *Reuters, October 11*

October 12, 2011 (UNITED STATES): Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who attempted to detonate a bomb on a U.S. airliner on Christmas Day 2009, pleaded guilty in a Detroit courtroom. "I

intentionally carried an explosive device on Flight 253 for the US tyranny and oppression of Muslims," Abdulmutallab told the courtroom. He described the explosives packed into his underpants as "a blessed weapon to save the lives of innocent Muslims." – *Guardian, October 12*

October 12, 2011 (IRAQ): A suicide bomber in a vehicle attacked a police station in Baghdad's Karrada neighborhood, killing 13 people. – *AP, October 12*

October 12, 2011 (IRAQ): A suicide bomber in a vehicle attacked a police station in Baghdad's mainly Shi`a neighborhood of Hurriya, killing nine people. – *AP, October 12*

October 13, 2011 (PAKISTAN): U.S. drone strikes killed 10 militants, including a commander in the Haqqani network, in both North and South Waziristan agencies in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. – *AFP, October 13*

October 13, 2011 (KENYA): Suspected al-Shabab gunmen abducted two Spanish female aid workers at Kenya's Dadaab refugee camp. According to Reuters, the incident marked "the third abduction of Westerners in Kenya by attackers linked to Somalia in a month." – *Reuters, October 13*

October 14, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber in a vehicle killed three police officers at a border checkpoint in Spin Boldak, Kandahar Province. – *AP, October 14*

October 14, 2011 (PAKISTAN): Two separate U.S. drone strikes killed Abu Miqdad al-Masri and Abd al-Rahman al-Yemeni, two al-Qa`ida veterans, in Pakistan's tribal region. – *Washington Post, October 27*

October 14, 2011 (YEMEN): A U.S. drone strike reportedly killed Egyptian-born Ibrahim Banna, identified as the media chief for al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The same strike also killed Abdul-Rahman al-`Awlaqi, the son of deceased Yemeni-American cleric Anwar al-`Awlaqi. AQAP later denied al-Banna's death. – *Los Angeles Times, October 16; ABC News, October 19; AFP, October 30*

October 15, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): Taliban fighters launched a surprising attack in the Panjshir Valley, assaulting a U.S. base. All four militants were killed, as well as two civilians. According to Reuters, it was the first time in the 10-year U.S.-led invasion that a suicide bomber struck in Panjshir. – *al-Jazira, October 15; Reuters, October 15*

October 15, 2011 (KENYA): Kenya's top security officials said that Kenyan forces would pursue militants into Somalia in the future. The statement follows the kidnappings of two Spanish aid workers on October 13 and the abductions of British and French women in recent weeks. According to the Associated Press, "The plan to pursue fighters inside Somalia signals a huge change in Kenya's approach to the security threat posed by the lawless state of Somalia. While the African countries Uganda and Burundi each have thousands of troops fighting al-Shabab militants in Mogadishu, Kenya has not actively engaged in the fight." – *AP, October 15*

October 16, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): Three suicide bombers attacked the convoy of Paktia Province Governor Juma Khan Hamdard in Gardez. One police officer and a civil servant were killed in the attack, but the governor escaped injury. – *Washington Post, October 16*

October 16, 2011 (SOMALIA): Hundreds of Kenyan soldiers entered Somalia, bombing and strafing al-Shabab positions along the border. According to a Kenyan official, "They're going all the way to Kismayo. We're going to clear the Shabab out." – *New York Times, October 16*

October 17, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber targeted a provincial chief of Afghanistan's intelligence agency, the National Directorate of Security (NDS), in Faryab Province. The explosion killed a child and injured the NDS official. – *AFP, October 17*

October 17, 2011 (SOMALIA): In response to the Kenyan military's move into Somalia, al-Shabab threatened Kenya with suicide bombings similar to the terrorist attack in Kampala, Uganda in July 2010. As stated by an al-Shabab spokesman, "We say to Kenya: Did you consider the consequences of the invasion?...Your attack to us means your skyscrapers will be destroyed, your tourism will disappear. We shall inflict on you the same damage you inflicted on us. You have to see what happened to the other aggressors, like (Uganda President Yoweri) Museveni and his country when they invaded us. We hit them in their country." – *AP, October 17*

October 18, 2011 (SOMALIA): A suicide bomber in a vehicle detonated explosives near two government ministries in Mogadishu, killing at least three people. – *Reuters, October 18; New York Times, October 18*

October 19, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A roadside bomb killed five Afghan soldiers in Herat Province. – *AFP, October 19*

October 19, 2011 (SOMALIA): The French government announced that Marie Dedieu, who was kidnapped from Kenya by Somali militants on October 1, has died in captivity. The exact date and circumstances of her death are not known. – *New York Times, October 19; BBC, October 19*

October 20, 2011 (UNITED STATES): A U.S. court convicted two Minnesota women of conspiring to funnel money to the al-Shabab terrorist group in Somalia. The women were both U.S. citizens of Somali descent. – *AP, October 20*

October 20, 2011 (LIBYA): Mu`ammar Qadhafi, Libya's dictator for 42 years, was killed by revolutionary fighters in his hometown of Sirte. – *ABC News, October 20*

October 23, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): Security guards shot to death a suicide bomber who was trying to assassinate Afghan Interior Minister Bismullah Khan. The incident occurred in Parwan Province. – *AFP, October 23*

October 23, 2011 (ALGERIA): Suspected al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb militants kidnapped three European aid workers—two Spanish and an Italian—at a refugee camp in western Algeria. – *Telegraph, October 23*

October 24, 2011 (IRAQ): Gunmen in a speeding car shot at a police checkpoint in Baghdad, killing two policemen and two civilians. – *AP, October 24*

October 25, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A bomb killed the leader of an anti-Taliban militia in Lower Dir District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. – *CNN, October 25*

October 26, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suspected U.S. drone killed 13 Pakistani Taliban militants in South Waziristan Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. – *Reuters, October 28*

October 26, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suspected U.S. drone killed approximately 22 Pakistani Taliban militants in North Waziristan Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. – *Reuters, October 28*

October 27, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): Taliban fighters attacked the U.S.-run Camp Nathan Smith base in Kandahar city, killing at least one Afghan civilian. Two of the assailants were killed. – *Voice of America, October 27; Washington Post, October 27*

October 27, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber in a vehicle attacked Combat Outpost Pul, a U.S. military base, in Kandahar city, killing one Afghan civilian. – *Washington Post, October 27*

October 27, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suspected U.S. drone killed five Pakistani Taliban militants in South Waziristan Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. – *Reuters, October 28; Voice of America, October 28*

October 28, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suicide bomber killed a senior police official, Ajmer Shah, as well as his aide in Nowshera District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. – *CNN, October 28*

October 29, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber in an explosives-laden vehicle attacked a NATO armored shuttle bus in Kabul. The blast killed at least four U.S. soldiers, eight American civilian contractors, a Canadian soldier and four Afghans. According to Reuters, "The assault on the ISAF convoy took place late in the morning in the Darulaman area in the west of the city, near the national museum." – *New York Times, October 29; Reuters, October 30*

October 29, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A militant wearing an Afghan Army uniform killed three Australian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter in southern Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province. – *USA Today, October 29*

October 29, 2011 (TURKEY): A female suicide bomber killed two people in Bingol Province in southeastern Turkey. – *BBC, October 29*

October 29, 2011 (SOMALIA): A team of suicide bombers and gunmen disguised as soldiers attacked an African Union base in Mogadishu. The number of casualties was not clear. According to press reports, "the two suicide bombers blew themselves up near the entrance to the compound, then more armed attackers jumped over the walls." Al-Shabab militants claimed that one of the suicide bombers was a Somali-American. – *AP, October 29*

October 30, 2011 (SOMALIA): Kenyan fighter jets bombed al-Shabab targets in the Somali town of Jilib, killing at least 10 people. – *Voice of America, October 30*

October 31, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber in a vehicle attacked a checkpoint in Kandahar city, killing four people and damaging a United Nations building. After the explosion, gunmen stormed into the area and seized control of a building; Afghan and NATO forces eventually secured the area. – *CBS News, October 31*

October 31, 2011 (KAZAKHSTAN): A suspected suicide bomber detonated explosives near the offices of the Atyrau city's prosecutors, police and national security committee. There were no casualties other than the death of the bomber. – *RFE/RL, December 1*