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## **What happens after the Islamic State of Caliphate is destroyed? Current state and trends in global terrorism threats**

The name the Islamic State of Caliphate in the title of this article requires some explanation. Although it may seem inconsistent or even wrong from the semantic point of view, it is the most appropriate though. It is one of the names one can come across in personal, administrative or military documents of the Islamic State. On 29 June 2014 ad-Dawlah al-Islamiyah fi al-Iraq wa-sh-Sham – Daesh, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant/Sham – ISIL/ISIS proclaimed itself to be a caliphate. From that moment on the name ISIL or ISIS was not applicable any more. The name ad-Dawlah al-Islamiyah fi al-Iraq wa-sh-Sham (Islamic State – IS) was introduced instead without any geographic references. This way two structures appeared under the name of Islamic State, one was an organization, the second was a state. In spite of this, as if to minimize the event and its consequences, journalists and politicians have still been using acronyms of the organization from before June 29, 2014. After central and local administration had solidified in the provinces the Islamic State issued thousands of documents with Arabic or English inscription “Islamic State”, or “Caliphate”, or even “Caliphate of the Islamic State”, or “Islamic State of Caliphate”. The last inscription was located on passports of the self-proclaimed state, described in literature as “proto-state” as it is very hard to describe this new political and territorial structure as something more.<sup>1</sup>

In mid-October 2017 the Syrian Democratic Forces – SDF captured Raqqa in eastern Syria, the capital city of the caliphate. The bombardment lasting many weeks preceded the assault on the city which had weakened the IS fighters’ morale and their operation capabilities. Despite promises of terrorists liquidation in Syria by Western politicians and servicemen, several hundreds of IS fighters and their families escaped from Raqqa. They were evacuated on the basis of secret agreement with the SDF General Command which allowed to decrease the number of victims on both sides of the conflict and among civilians. A convoy of vehicles several kilometers long left the city. The Kurds, who constituted the core of the SDF, supplied it with some vehicles. There was weapon, including heavy weapon and huge amounts of ammunition and explosives on the heavy goods vehicles. There were no black flags over the convoy and that is the reason it was not attacked by drones or aircraft. It is hard to believe that the command of the American forces and their allies leading air operations and special operations in Syria did not have any knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> A. Wejksznar, *Państwo Islamskie. Narodziny nowego kalifatu?*, Warszawa 2016, pp. 41–49, opts for the name „proto-state” and not a state with its attributes. He lists factors in favour of such terminology as far as the Islamic State and other jihadist proto-states established since 1989 by different extremist Islamic organizations in the Muslim world are concerned.

of the event. The town of Deir az-Zaur, still under the IS, was the destination. Syrian forces took it over only at the beginning of November but IS fighters still controlled the western part of the Iraqi province Al-Anbar with cities of Rava and Al-Kaim. Reportedly, a few days after leaving Raqqa, the manhunt for runaways started. This delay was enough for fighters to spread out and attempt to cross the border with Turkey. The traffickers demanded 600 USD per person and at least 1,500 USD per family to get them over the border. Some of the fugitives got into the hands of Turkish security forces, which had turned a blind eye when the foreign fighters headed into the opposite direction. Now they wanted to take advantage of the turmoil and get to their home countries via Turkey. Probably we shall never know how many of them managed to do so. But the journeys of jihad volunteers to and from Syria and Iraq had taken place since 2012. Since then, according to the American analytical center, The Soufan Center (TSC), in the fights attended ca. 40,000 volunteers from outside of Syria and Iraq and neighboring countries. They represented more than 100 countries (other sources quote more than 80 countries). The greatest number of volunteers came from Tunisia – more than 6,000. When it comes to Europe, the greatest number of fighters who joined caliphate troops came from the Russian Federation – almost 3,500, then from France – more than 2,000, the UK and Germany – 1,000 each, Belgium – ca. 500, Sweden – more than 300. Several hundreds of fighters came also from Albania, Bosnia, Denmark, Spain and the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> According to different sources, from 100,000 to 120,000 jihadists could have taken part in the fighting in Syria and Iraq. In August 2014 it was already assessed that 80,000 fighters were affiliated with the IS, including 50,000 fighting in Syria and 30,000 in Iraq. According to general Valeriy Gerasimov, the commander of the Russian army, the IS had a well-organized and commanded army which was headed by former officers of the Iraqi army and many fighters and commanders had been trained by trainers from the Middle East countries. The Islamic State had ca. 59,000 people in arms, including ca. 2,800 from Russia, 1,500 tanks and 1,200 cannons. Their way of acting and tactics indicated that it was more like a regular army than a group of terrorists. Nowadays they return home, mostly to Libya, Afghanistan and South-Eastern Asia.<sup>3</sup> It is known the identity of ca. 20 Polish nationals, individuals of Polish origin living abroad or having a stay permit in Poland, who had stayed in the conflict zone for a longer or shorter period of time or supported the IS in any other way.

In March 2016 the *Sky News* television station possessed a memory card with data of more than 22,000 jihadists from the Islamic State. They got it from a certain Abu Hamid, who had belonged to the Free Syrian Army, then joined the IS. He had stolen the memory card from the chief of intelligence and security service

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<sup>2</sup> <http://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf> [access: 29 X 2017].

<sup>3</sup> <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/rosyjska-armia-jest-coraz-bardziej-niebezpieczna-to-juz-nie-sa-uprzejmiezielone-ludziki-6203212097816193a> [access: 28 XII 2017].

of the organization, Abu Luqman as-Suri. Then, with his haul, he defected further to Turkey. The memory card contained application forms with 23 questions. Apart from their names and surnames candidates put there their phone numbers, information on their families, their educational background, their combat experience and their knowledge of Sharia law. They also provided information on the people who had given them recommendation for the Islamic State. They could also declare readiness to take part in training for suicide bombers. According to the *Sky News*, some of the names were well known before but new documents could help in identification of extremists from countries whose authorities had been totally unaware of their existence. The forms were filled in by volunteers from 51 countries, including the UK, some countries of northern Europe, the USA, Canada and from North Africa and the Middle East countries. Also, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* daily magazine together with German regional public TV stations NDR and WDR informed about the leak of secret personal data of the IS fighters claiming that they managed to look into several dozens of forms with German jihadists data. The forms had been filling in for entry to Syrian territory possessed by the IS. Representatives of German services informed that the data regarded also Germany nationals known to them, who had not been charged because of the lack of evidence that they had joined the IS. The documents did not contain photos of foreign defenders of the caliphate, unlike the forms filled in by local fighters from Syria and Iraq, to which photos were attached.

According to the European Counter Terrorism Centre – ECTC data at the end of June 2017, there were ca. 5,000 EU citizens who had joined the IS in Iraq and Syria (other sources say more than 6,000), 1,650 returned, although the number of returnees is lower than expected. According to the ECTC, most of the returnees to Europe were detained or have been under surveillance in their home countries. It was pointed out that there is a need for closely monitor a flow of terrorists and observed in 2017 an increase of women and minors among those who were recruited by terrorist organizations. There has also been observed an increase of terrorists influx to destabilized countries like Libya, Somalia and Yemen.<sup>4</sup>

Current state of play resembles the situation at the end of the 1980s, the beginning of the 1990s, when the war in Afghanistan ended Mujahedeen returned to their home countries (in Afghanistan in the 1980s there were ca. 20,000 foreign fighters) joining radical organizations there or establishing new ones and taking the lead in them. The examples are: Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia, Lashkar-e-Taiba in Pakistan, Al-Jama'at at-Tawhid va al-Jihad in Jordan, Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya al-Mukatila bi Libia in Libia, Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya al-Mukatila fi Tunisiyya in Tunisia or Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya al-Musallaha in Algeria. A large number of Afghan veterans participated in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995 (there were between 2,000 and 5,000 foreigners fighting in Bosnia and

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<sup>4</sup> <https://businessinsider.com.pl/wiadomosci/dzihadysci-w-europie-ilu-wrocilo/ldczlxw> [access: 30 VI 2017].

Herzegovina), after which they got a citizenship of the country. They also took part in the bloody civil war in Algeria which started in 1992 and lasted almost to the end of the 1990s. One of its effects was establishing Al Qaeda branch in Maghreb. Nevertheless, while those who had been returning from Afghanistan to their home countries were greeted as heroes, at present those foreign fighters who are returning from Syria have to count with the possibility of being arrested and charged with taking part in terrorist organization of armed nature and mass murders. Times have changed, international situation as well but terrorist threat initiated years ago by Afghan veterans, has become disproportionately high nowadays in comparison to that in the past. It is *inter alia* the reason why there is a dispute over returnees in the EU. The idea of their elimination there on the spot in Syria has appeared utopia. In the past the CIA carried out a selective elimination of Al Qaeda members and its affiliates with the attacks from the air. In the case of the Islamic State it was not so easy though. The British Defense Minister made a decision to intensify airstrikes in order to eliminate British nationals fighting for terrorist organizations. Asked whether some of the British nationals should have the chance to come back home, he answered that he did not trust any terrorists. And it did not matter whether the person came from the UK or any other countries. In his opinion a dead terrorist could not do any harm to the country, so British jihadists had no right to come back home. Cooperation with them is tantamount to the death sentence. At that time it was claimed in the UK that those persons who confessed to cooperation with jihadists and hang their heads should be admitted to the country. Some British people think that those people should be judged. Instead of death sentence the country should try to re-integrate them.<sup>5</sup> Although according to others, such re-integration with societies in their home countries means only a waste of taxpayers' money because there is little hope they come back to a regular life. In the article *Restraints and problems in the field of combating terrorism and crimes committed by immigrants in Europe*, published in Internal Security Review No 17 (10), I wrote, *inter alia*, about a dubious effectiveness of de-radicalization programs in the UE.

There is also no shortage of votes against. According to a statistic analysis by Norwegian expert Thomas Hegghammer, historically ca. 11 percent of returnees from jihad pose a terrorist threat. But in the case of the war in Syria this ratio is much smaller – ca. 0,5 percent. As Charles Lister, Brookings think tank expert proves, if these calculations are correct, “soft attitude” makes greater sense than pressure to confine returnees to jails which can cause their re-radicalization and spreading radical ideas to other jail mates. Rehabilitation programs are conducted in some European countries, including Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark. Reportedly some of them have positive effects. For example in Denmark the so called “Aarhus method” is used based on the cooperation with local mosques and assistance in finding a job and education. As a result, none of the 16 jihadists from Aarhus who have gone to Syria

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<sup>5</sup> <http://wolnosc24.pl/2017/12/07/brytyjski-rzad-kazal-wyeliminowac-wlasnych-obywateli-podejrzanym-o-kontakty-z-isis-licencja-na-zabijanie-szokujace-wyznanie-ministra/> [access: 7 XII 2017].

and returned since 2013, have not committed any serious crime up to now and almost all of them work or study.<sup>6</sup> But it is only one example of this kind whereas statistics regarding such programs in other countries are not known. In the meantime, even if isolated cases from more than 1,600 returnees to the EU appear to be recidivists, the consequences may be major. We have to reckon with even more serious threat in case of jihadists who come back to non-EU countries. TSC, as mentioned above, based on reports from 33 countries, assessed that between March 2016 and August 2017 there were at least 5,600 such returnees, for example, 400 to Russia, 760 to Saudi Arabia, 800 to Tunisia and 800 to Turkey. On the battlefield there might have died from 60,000 to 70,000 caliphate fighters. That is the reason why most countries prefer hard methods while dealing with the problem, even if sometimes there is a lack of evidence to put returnees in prison. In the UK such a solution are the so called TPims (Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures) introduced by the Act of 2011, i.e. subjecting suspects to special supervision. According to the law, authorities are able to monitor such radicals' activities, for example, with electronic wristbands and the obligation to report to a police station. The problem is that such attitude is also not 100 percent effective bearing in mind the number of extremists known to services and constant lack of police forces to monitor them. For example, in Germany in 2017 the number of prosecutor proceedings connected to terrorism has increased several times. Many of them regard German nationals returning from Syria and Iraq. In a result investigative officers are overworked and prosecutor's offices suffer from a lack of manpower. That is why another approach is proposed, that is leaving alone at least a part of those who have returned. First and foremost, those who had left as naive teens, possibly brainwashed and now return with a feeling of total disappointment. Such a strategy is used by the British counterintelligence, MI5.<sup>7</sup> It remains to be seen whether it is right. French services announced that there are already children who were born in the territories under the IS and those who had left France with their mothers in the country. They are traumatized by war, some were used for propaganda purposes, some were trained how to use weapons or were indoctrinated, some watched executions or even carried them out by themselves. Footage with such scenes spread on the web.

Presence of jihadists from the Islamic State in Europe poses a terrorist threat to residents of our continent. Its scale will be growing together with the refugees and illegal migrants influx, not only from Asia, but also from African countries. Despite the collapse and destruction of the IS administration structures, their military forces and gaining control over territories formerly under the IS in Iraq and Syria, the future

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<sup>6</sup> <http://trybun.org.pl/2017/08/10/dania-w-miejscowosci-aarhus-rusza-program-przytul-terroryste/> [access: 10 VIII 2017].

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41734069> [access: 26 X 2017]; <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/dzihadysci-wracaja-do-europy-nie-wiadomo-co-z-nimi-zrobic-6180903806875777a> [access: 26 X 2017]; <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/czy-terrorysci-moga-byc-resocjalizowani-wielki-spor-opowracajacych-dzihadystow-6193366738753665a> [access: 30 XI 2017].

of the two countries is a big if. On 9 December 2017 the Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi announced victory over the IS. It was not the first time the PM had made such an announcement. They were also made after Mosul, Tel Afar and Al-Havijja were recaptured from jihadists, nevertheless the fighting went still on. The last operation by Iraqi forces in western part of Al-Anbar province means total failure of caliphate in Iraq. Its troops were cut off. Recapture of jihadists positions along the border between Syria and Iraq was the element of purging the province from the IS – the last territory under IS control in the country. Fighting in Iraq caused huge losses. Only during the operation of Mosul recapture, from October 2016 to July 2017, 23,000 Iraqi soldiers died and the number of wounded was three times bigger than the death toll. In addition, from 9,000 to 11,000 civilians lost their lives and material losses amounted to 3 billion USD. In addition to this there are tons of used ammunition, damaged weapon and thousands of vehicles.<sup>8</sup>

Military victory over the Islamic State in a battle does not mean defeating the terrorist organization, members of which will move on to conspiracy and will still carry out attacks. The caliphate certainly had its supporters among the inhabitants of recaptured cities, mostly among former officers of the Iraqi army and intelligence and security services from the times of Saddam Hussein. Owing to them IS fighters achieved spectacular victories. Many of them and also privates certainly survived the last 18 months of military operations, during of which almost all controlled territory was lost. They have also many sympathizers among Sunni minority in Iraq, they can count on their support and assistance in their conspiratorial activities. Terrorist attacks in cities and districts dominated by Shiites are a manifestation of their activity. And this particular Sunni and Shiite conflict, although on a minor scale, but carrying destruction and victims will mark the immediate future of this country.

In Syria the situation is much more complicated. Apart from regime forces, SDF forces led by Kurds are extremely active. Their opponents are not only IS fighters but also Harakat Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiyya with its allies, and Hayat Tahrir ash-Sham, i.e. former Jabhat an-Nusrah li-ahli ash-Sham, subsequent Jabhat Fateh ash-Sham (a Syrian branch of Al Qaeda, which reportedly broke with it and after merging with other smaller groups on 28 January 2017 became OWL<sup>9</sup>). Those two organizations, fighting in the past together against regime forces and the IS, over the last year fought battles between each other interspersed with talks, truces, or common operations in case of threat from a common enemy. OWL has still control over the territory of Idlib and Hama provinces, which are targets of air attacks by the governmental forces. There are also other smaller groups fighting in Syria for the last couple of years creating more or less permanent alliances. However, under the guise of religious or national ideology ordinary criminal activities were often hidden. The number of all organizations and military groups active in Syria and Iraq since 2012 is estimated to be between 300

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<sup>8</sup> <http://gpcodziennie.pl/77109-ogromstratwwalceomosul.html> [access: 27 XII 2017].

<sup>9</sup> M. Weiss, *H. Hassan, ISIS. Wewnątrz armii terroru*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 281–326; <https://alshahidwitness.com/identifying-hts-syria-revolution/> [access: 6 VI 2017].

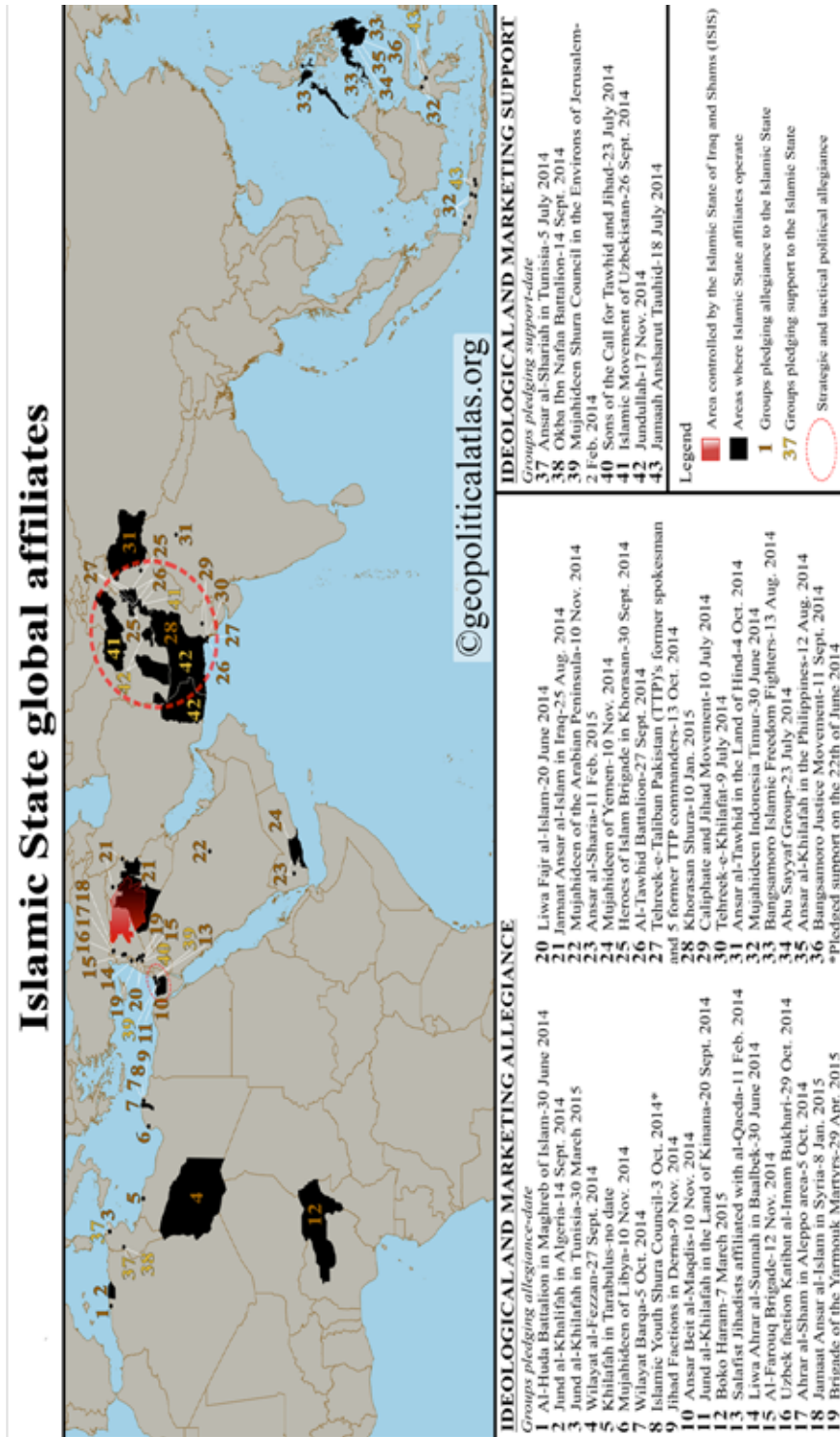
and 800. In February 2016 only almost 100 groups composing the Free Syrian Army and the so called armed opposition agreed for American and Russian ceasefire agreement, which was anyway broken soon.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, it is very hard to consider that the IS liquidation in Syria is going to bring peace in the country. Religious and ethnic divisions and contradictory interests of Russia, the US and Western countries will fuel domestic conflicts and facilitate destabilization in the country and its territorial dismantling.

Organizations allied with the Islamic State and operating in foreign vilayahs (provinces) of the caliphate, i.e. on the Sinai Peninsula, Libya, Nigeria or Afghanistan, are still active. Other groups, leaders of which between 2014 and 2015 had sworn allegiance to caliph Ibrahim (Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi)<sup>11</sup> are also active. The groups used to be linked to Al Qaeda or its affiliates. There were more than 40 of such organizations. Some of them got divided following internal arguments concerning taking the side of either Al Qaeda or ISIS, feuding with each other since 2013. Initially this change of alliances was not clear. Only the analysis of information published by the groups in the cyberspace allowed to identify those who “had betrayed” Al Qaeda (Pic.1 and Pic. 2). Those organizations which had “Al Qaeda” in their names took its side, and the Somali Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen to name the most important ones. Further in the article those groups’ activities are briefly described in the face of growing competition from the ISIS/IS and its allies. It should be mentioned at this point that at the beginning of September 2014 Ayman al-Zawahiri announced establishing of the Jamaa’at Kaidat al-Jihad al-Karrah al-Hindiyyah. One month later the Al-Ansar-ut Tauhid fi Bilad al-Hind group issued an official statement with declaration of loyalty to the Islamic State. It also called for attacks on western nationals staying in India. The attacks were supposed to be a retaliation for activities of the international coalition against the Islamic State.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.polskieradio.pl/5/3/Artykul/1587568,Syria-100-ugrupowan-opozycji-przystapi-do-rozejmu> [access: 26 II 2016].

<sup>11</sup> More on caliph Ibrahim in: S. Laurent, *Kalifat terroru. Kulisy działania Państwa Islamskiego*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 109–125; J. Warrick, *Czarne flagi. Geneza Państwa Islamskiego*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 356–377.



Pic. 1. Muslim extremist organizations allied with the Islamic State. Together with the name of the organization the date of baja, oath of loyalty to caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi or its announcement.

Source: <https://intelcenter.com/maps/is-affiliates-map.html#gs.mm1jPv0> [access: 4 III 2016].

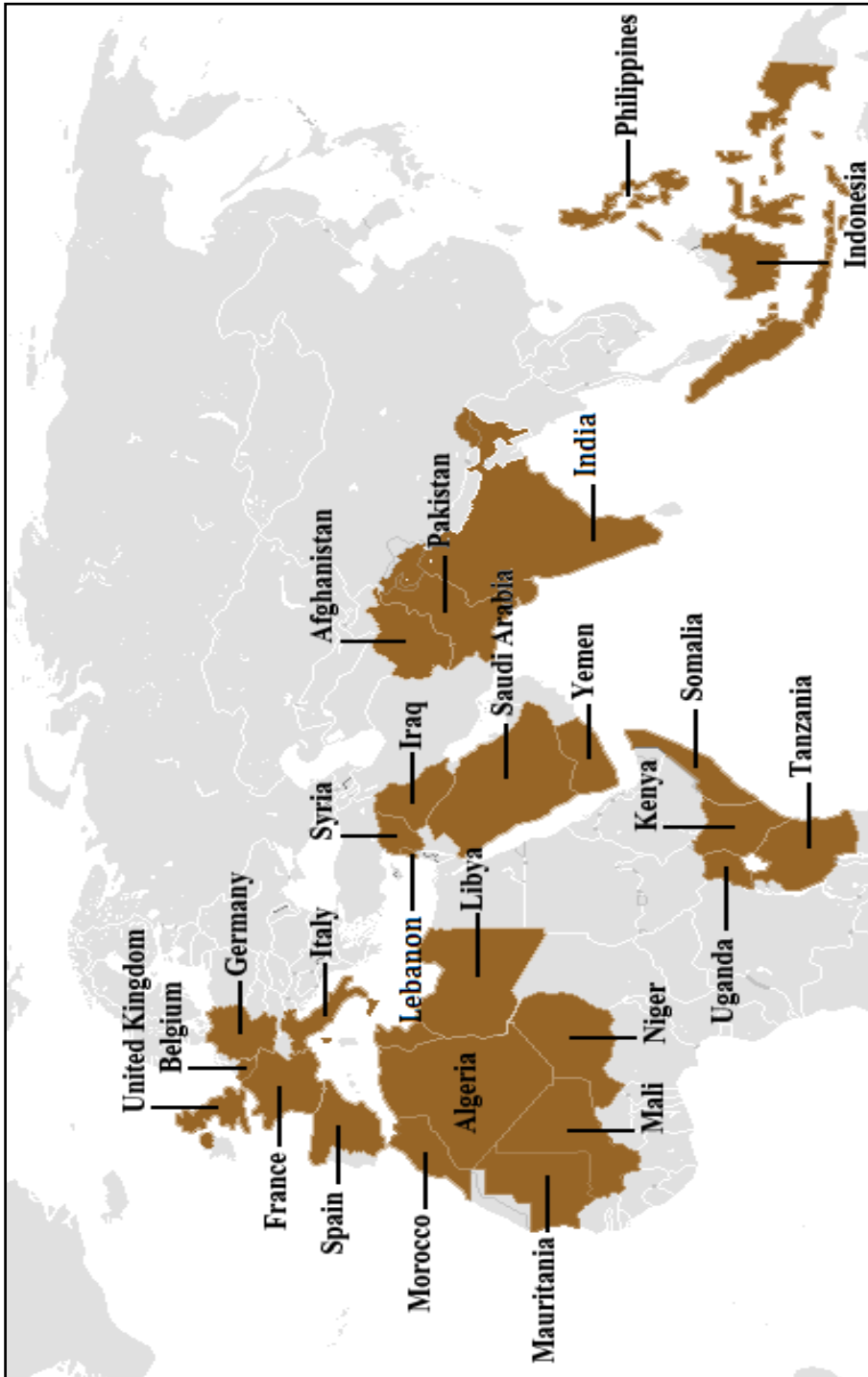


Ideological divisions between Al Qaeda and the IS are much more complicated and according to the author they will influence the security of many countries worldwide. Because of that they require much more attention. Marc Sageman in his book *Sieci terroru* defines and describes the idea of a close and distant enemy and the idea of local and global Salafi jihad by Al Qaeda.<sup>12</sup> This discrepancy between strategies had its supporters and opponents, which led to significant fractures between different radical groups linked to Osama bin Laden organization. Some of them were rather interested in local activities, for example in gaining and maintaining influences in their own region or country. Despite the fact that some Muslim theologians accepted the idea of a global jihad, which Osama bin Laden supported, the majority of radical religious scholars opted for the necessity of Muslim territories defense against foreign intervention. There were also significant discrepancies in the treatment of Shiites. Al Qaeda leaders were for example against a strategy of jihad supported by Abu Musab al-Zaraki which assumed primarily starting a civil war between Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq. They acknowledged that the priority is to concentrate on fights against Americans and their allies. For the ISIS/IS Shiites are natural enemy that should be destroyed. Al Qaeda's strategic goals were characterized by hostility to the US and Israel, which was announced in a fatwa issued on 23 August 1996 declaring war on "Americans occupying the Land of two Holy Places" and confirmed on 23 February 1998 by establishing the World Islamic Front for Combat Against the Jews and Crusaders.

After the death of Osama bin Laden on 2 May 2011, his successor Ayman al-Zawahiri decided to concentrate on close enemies, particularly pro-western regimes in North Africa and the Middle East. From the documents found in bin Laden's Pakistani haven one could recognize significant differences of opinion between himself and his successor as far as priority terrorist attacks goals were concerned. While bin Laden was ready to attack Americans on their territory, al-Zawahiri rejected the idea, claiming that the US territory was simply too well secured. The Islamic State defended and widened the control over Iraq and Syria and, at the same time, it did not hesitate to strike wherever possible because it had bigger financial and logistic and military means as well as operational, propaganda and recruitment possibilities. In the context of the Islamic State activities, Ayman al-Zawahiri strongly rejected any form of an usurped caliphate or any attempts to impose supervisory and creating caliphate with force. He proposed restitution of caliphate by evolution not revolution. At the same time, the present leader of Al Qaeda strongly condemned terror methods used by the IS fighters towards Muslims living on territories in Iraq and Syria under self-proclaimed caliphate supervision. Unlike the Islamic State, bin Laden and al-Zawahiri mentioned the idea of caliphate in the long term perspective and treated it as a kind of mobilization factor than the task to be accomplished in the near future. It is also worth noting the clear difference between the scale of planning by political

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<sup>12</sup> M. Sageman, *Sieci terroru*, Kraków 2008, pp. 21–74.



Pic. 2. Al Qaeda net.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al\\_Qaeda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Qaeda) [access: 4 III 2016].

and economic institutions of the West and the time horizon of Al Qaeda strategy. Based on its presumptions short term goals should be achieved during decades, while a long term plan of establishing the caliphate can take from 50 to 100 years.<sup>13</sup> Artur Wejkszner, one of the researchers in this problem area, also tries to answer the question when Al Qaeda's caliphate is established, giving different scenarios.<sup>14</sup> Since, there is nothing to prevent two caliphates from existing alongside. In the tenth and eleventh centuries there were even three caliphates alongside one another: the Abbasid Caliphate with its capital in Baghdad, the Fatimid Caliphate with its capital in Cairo, and the Umayyad Caliphate with its capital in Córdoba.

### **Terrorist competition between the Islamic State and Al Qaeda<sup>15</sup>**

Announcement of the Islamic State in June 2014 as a territorial entity and organization of global Salafi jihad meant a significant change on the map of Islamic terrorism, against which the US and allies have been waging a war for 15 years. The IS deprived Al Qaeda of the role of the key terrorist organization in the world. It filled the ideological and logistical void after the significance of Al Qaeda decreased. The IS also took over most of its sponsors, members and influence. Furthermore, it demonstrated more dynamics, brutality and operational abilities. The proclamation of the caliphate led to confrontation between the IS and al Qaeda, and competition for money, fighters, prestige and popularity. The competition came mainly from personal animosities between leaders of the two structures and took different forms, for example, fights in Syria between the IS and Jabhat an-Nusra li Ahl ash-Sham and its further incarnations and allies, contradictory information on the mastermind behind attacks, competition for influence, killing leaders of the opposite side, or mutual discrediting in the media.<sup>16</sup>

In this confrontation Al Qaeda lost its monopoly and its influence rapidly declined. Apart from Al Qaeda and the IS there are also other active Islamic extremists groups. Their activities cause sometimes deep differences between state authorities' positions. The Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ichwan al-Muslimin) movement is a good example. Like the Islamic State and Al Qaeda, it is a transnational organization, active in many Muslim countries and in Europe (organizations linked to the Muslim Brotherhood are often independent structures). At present the organization is considered a terrorist organization by some Islamic countries: Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (other countries allow its activity or just tolerate it). The UAE has put on the list of terrorist organizations also most institutions and groups linked to the Muslim Brotherhood acting in Europe autonomously and recognized by some governments

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<sup>13</sup> S. Wojciechowski, P. Osiewicz, *Zrozumieć współczesny terroryzm*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 174–175.

<sup>14</sup> A. Wejkszner, *Globalna sieć Al-Kaidy. Nowe państwo islamskie?*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 332–342.

<sup>15</sup> Information on the events in Africa and Asia in this part of the article come from the electronic media. Only the most important for this article have been mentioned.

<sup>16</sup> S. Wojciechowski, P. Osiewicz, *Zrozumieć współczesny terroryzm...*, p. 206.

of the EU countries as a representation of Muslim society. Saudi Arabia officially fights the IS but unofficially it supported them financially and military. Most terrorist organizations are inspired by Salafist doctrine.<sup>17</sup> As a rule Salafis reject democracy and election process as inconsistent with sharia. They also reject secular law as inconsistent with the Koran and strive for implementation of Koranic law as the only source of the law. Salafi groups do not create a homogenous block in the Muslim world, they have different international links (mostly with competing with each other Qatar and Saudi Arabia), and sometimes despite their opinions on democracy and elections take part in elections (for example, in Egypt). Wahhabism as one of the Salafism branches forms the ideological and religious foundation of Saudi Arabia. Owing to the money from the Kingdom this formerly vestigial Islamic group managed to expand in the last decades of the twentieth century and at the beginning of this century forming a foundation for both Al Qaeda and the Islamic State.

Apart from the Middle East, the main arena for activity and competition between jihadist groups is North Africa embracing Sahara and Sahel countries where, since the second half of 2014, the Islamic State has expanded its influences. Provided the Islamic State was defeated in Syria and Iraq, its position in Africa has also been weakened and the organization lost control over formerly supervised territories, for example, in Libya where, since July 2017, the IS has not controlled the middle part of the coast (the IS Sirte wilayyat) and the borderland of Tunisia. Though, it is still capable to carry out terrorist attacks. In North Africa one of the most important terrorist structures is Tanzim Qaedat bi-Bilad al-Maghrab al-Islami (The Organization of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb – AQIM), linked to Al Qaeda. Following the disintegration of the Republic of Mali in 2012, The Organization of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb took over almost all the northern territory of the country, including the cities of Timbuktu and Gao. This way Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb was able to create an Islamic state structure in Africa. The new administration with the radical version of the Koran was introduced, ancient buildings were destroyed, including mausoleums, old documents and tribal art artefacts.<sup>18</sup> The leader of the organization

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<sup>17</sup> *Salafiyya* – religious and political stream in Islam referring to the first generation of Muslims (*as-Salafas-Salih* – pious predecessors). It comes from the belief that only strict following the established tenets presented as the rules established by the Prophet Muhammad once and for all following the Revelation can restore Islam the position of the first power in the world lost after walking away from the Koran. The ideology was developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida. It calls for rigorous law, praises strict orthopraxy (getting dressed like the Prophet Muhammad, wearing long beards, sleeping on the right side on the mat and so on). *Fatwas* are formulated according to *salafiyya* rules in a strict way. They refer only to the sacred text of the Koran and *sunnah*. At the same time they disregard European social context (often demonized) when compared to norms of the Islam world. *Salafiyya* is divided into three categories: quietist, political, and jihadist.

<sup>18</sup> In August 2016 Ahmed al-Faqi al-Mahdi, leader of Ansar Dine militia pleaded guilty in the International Criminal Court for the war crime of attacking religious and historical buildings in the city of Timbuktu which were World Heritage Sites. Al-Mahdi pleaded guilty to the charges of destroying the monuments. He had ordered to destroy nine mausoleums from the XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup>

Abdel Malek Droukdel alias Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud ordered a slowdown in the pace of changes and expansion in order not to discourage local people and not to provoke any foreign intervention. However, one of the weaknesses of the new Islamist state was the internal competition between the leaders. Apart from AQIM, there were also other groups active like Ansar Dine, based on radicalized Tuaregs in Kidal, and Jamaa'at at-Tawhid va al-Jihad fi Gharbi Ifrikiyya, Mouvement pour l'Unité et le Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest – MUJAO, based in Gao embracing Sahrawi people (indigenous people of the Western Sahara, whose political interests have been represented by the Polisario Front for many years), local Arabs and Songhai people (one of the biggest ethnic groups in northern Mali). Mokhtar Belmokhtar, one of the AQIM leaders, antagonized with Droukdel, at the end of 2012 established his own group called Al-Mulathameen Brigade (Brigade of the Masked Ones), also known as the al-Mua'qi'oon Biddam (Those who Sign with Blood Brigade). Following the French intervention in Mali, on 16 January 2013, the organization attacked Amenas gas facility taking more than 800 people hostage, including 132 foreigners. According to terrorists, it was a revenge for French attacks on jihadists positions in Mali. After a 4-day siege the facility was recaptured by the Algerian special forces and the hostages were released, although 39 of them were killed. After the attack on Amenas Mokhtar Belmokhtar became one of the most wanted terrorists. On 22 August 2013 the leader of MUJAO, Ahmed al-Tilemsi together with Mokhtar Belmokhtar joined their groups to form Al Mourabitoun group (The Sentinels). The leader of Al Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri backed strongly the fusion. An Egyptian, Abu Bakr al-Nasri led The Sentinels group. After his death in April 2014 Ahmad al-Tilemsi took the leadership of the group, with Belmokhtar's consent. In December 2014 al-Tilemsi also died. While Belmokhtar was away, one of the former deputies of al-Tilemsi, Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahraoui declared himself the leader. Belmokhtar did not accept him. In May 2015 al-Sahraoui declared alliance with the Islamic State, however, a few days later Belmokhtar rejected it, and accused the IS of killing innocent Muslims, and pledged allegiance to Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al Qaeda. On 14 June 2015 Libyan authorities informed that Belmokhtar was killed during American airstrikes inside Libya. Nevertheless, no concrete evidence was presented. In January 2016 the US State Department removed Belmokhtar from the list of terrorists.

Despite activities of French troops and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), AQIM still poses a serious threat. On 20 November 2015, the terrorists attacked Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali. Twenty one people were killed. Thirty people were dead and 56 were wounded in another terrorist attack on Splendid Hotel in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, on 15-16 January 2016, by AQIM. On 13 March 2016, terrorists opened fire on guests at Grand-Bassam resort, near Abidjan, the capital of Ivory

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centuries and Sidi Yahya Mosque from the XVth century. In September 2016 he was sentenced to nine years in prison and 2,7 million Euro financial penalty. <http://www.tvp.info/27101180/dzihadysta-skazany-na-zniszczenie-zabytkow-w-timbuktu-kierowaly-mna-zle-duchy> [access: 27 IX 2017].

Coast. Nineteen people were killed. On 18 June 2017, a group of gunmen attacked Le Campament hotel in Dougourakoro, east of Bamako, Mali, and took 36 people hostage. They were released by special forces. Three attackers were killed. Two months later, on 13 August, AQIM militants attacked visitors to a restaurant and a hotel in Ouagadougou. Eighteen persons were killed and 22 were wounded. Apart from that terrorists tend to attack governmental military forces of Mali and MINUSMA. Jihadists take advantage of the fact that border lines between Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso are poorly controlled by the military forces of those countries. On 2 March 2017, Jamel Okaha, Iyad Ag Ghaly, Ansar ad-Din leader, Amadou Kouffa, founder of the Macina Liberation Front<sup>19</sup> declared the creation of the Jamaa'at Nusrat al-Islam. Saharan structures of Al Qaeda were loyal to al-Zawahiri, nevertheless in July 2014, there was a fracture in AQIM near Kabyla, northern Algeria. A group under the powerful leader of the organization, Abdelmalek Gouri took an oath of allegiance to caliph Ibrahim adopting the name Jund al-Khilafah fi Ard al-Jazair (Soldiers of the Caliphate in Algeria or Caliphate Soldiers of Algeria). The organization was responsible for kidnapping and killing a French mountaineering guide, Hervé Gourdel, which caused tracking down and killing Gouri by Algerian military. In February 2016 the group killed three Algerian soldiers. At the same time the Tuareg rebellion in the Republic of Mali in 2012 was welcomed by the part of their countrymen from Ahaggar in eastern Algeria and from the Libyan town of Ghat, who established Mouvement des Fils du Sahara pour la Justice Islamique – MFSJI. The militants of the group planned to attack the cities of Hassi Messaoud and Djanet, southeast Algeria. Attacks in northern Algeria target security forces of the state. In February 2017 three policemen were wounded in Constantine and three others were killed in Tijarat in August of the same year. In view of the possible serious attack in the beginning of September 2017 the Algerian authorities raised the level of threat to the highest possible in strategic civilian and military regions, including borderline.<sup>20</sup>

The Islamic State is much more successful in Libya, which is still very far from a stabilized country. An eight hundred-member Islamist unit faithful to the IS was already established in April 2014 in the seaside town of Dernie, and then reinforced with 300 Libyans from Battar Brigade fighting up to that moment in Syria for the IS.

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<sup>19</sup> The Macina Liberation front is based mainly on ethnic Fulani shepherds, affiliates of Ansar Dine. Apart from the radical imam Amadou Kouffa, Suleiman Keita was in charge of the group. They are active in Mali and Ivory Coast, where seven members of the group were arrested while preparing the attack in the capital of Mali. In 2015 and 2016 the group organized attacks on representatives of the Mali security forces and international facilities in Bamako and in the Mopti region. On 7 August 2015, it carried out an attack on Byblos Hotel in Sevare, where the UN mission members stayed. Security forces recaptured the hotel the next day. At least thirteen people were killed, including five UN mission workers and four soldiers. Four terrorists were also killed and seven others were arrested; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/mali-arrests-suspected-mastermind-of-hotel-terror-attack/> [access: 25 IV 2016].

<sup>20</sup> More on the conflict in the Republic of Mali: K. Danielewicz, *Terroryzm w Afryce. Geneza oraz przebieg konfliktu w Mali w latach 2012–2014*, Oświęcim 2016, pp. 82–151.

In October 2014 these troops overran Derna and Al-Baghdadi sent there Abu al-Bar al-Azdi, a Yemeni to become an emir in the newly established emirate of the Islamic State called Wilayat al-Barqa (Cyrenaica Province). He also sent there his deputy, former general in Saddam Hussein army, Abu Nabil al-Anbari to strengthen the organization's influences in relation to Al Qaeda's competition and other groups. In February 2015 Libyan branch of the IS was empowered even more after the city of Sirt and nearby oil fields were captured. In May 2017 Ansar al-Sharia Libyan organization, affiliated with Al Qaeda, decided formally to dissolve itself. The reason for this was human loss and death of the most important leaders. The group which had been trying to consolidate in eastern Libya was combated both by the self-proclaimed Libyan National Army under gen. Khalifa Haftar, and the troops under the General National Congress. The members of the group called all radical forces of Islam in Libya to form a united front. Ansar al-Sharia claimed responsibility for the attack on a consulate compound and CIA cell in Benghazi on 11 September 2012. Four Americans died at the time, including the U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens, Sean Smith, a consulate employee and CIA agents, Tyrone S. Woods and Glen Doherty. On 27 January 2015 a car bomb was detonated at the Corinthia Hotel entrance in Tripoli, some gunmen stormed past the guards and entered the hotel lobby shooting at random people. After the police entered the hotel, terrorists detonated explosive belts. In the attack 11 people died, including 6 foreigners. It is probable that the same perpetrators had attacked the Embassy of Algeria in Tripoli ten days earlier, wounding three guards. In the announcement posted online the IS affiliated militants claimed responsibility for the attack. The attack was supposed to be a retaliation for Abu Anas al-Libi death in an American prison, the mastermind behind the attacks on the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on 7 August 1998.<sup>21</sup> On 23 August 2017 jihadists affiliated with the IS attacked gen. Haftar's troops in the Al-Jufra district in the west of Libya. Nine soldiers, who were taken hostage, were beheaded and two other civilians died. In February 2015, on the beach near one of the hotels in Sirte, 21 of Egyptian Copts working in Libya were also beheaded. The execution was filmed. The bodies of the victims were found at the end of September 2017. Libyan, Mali and Algerian organizations linked to Al Qaeda established their Council in Africa, made up of Al Qaeda Brigade in Sirte, Al Al-Kaka ibn Amr Brigade in eastern Libya, AQIM and Muwaka'un bi ad-Dima in Mali, and several smaller groups from Libya and Algeria, also affiliated with AQIM.

Organizations with Ansar al-Sharia in their name are also present in other African countries: Egypt, Morocco, Mauretania, and Tunisia. These structures did not pledge allegiance to Al Qaeda or the Islamic State. They act locally. Tunisian Ansar al-Sharia showed quite a significant operational activity. Originally following the revolution in 2011, Salafis acted legally under the protective umbrella of the Islamist government led by the Tunisian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood known as Hizb an-Nahda

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<sup>21</sup> Abu Anas al-Libi was captured in Tripoli in October 2013 by the American special forces and transported to the USA. He died in hospital while waiting for a trial.

(Renaissance Party). Some Salafi groups tried to establish political parties, most of which rejected democracy from the start. Ansar al-Sharia was blamed for the 2012 ransacking and burning the American embassy in Tunis in response to releasing American film *Innocence of Muslims* regarded as an insult to Islam. During the mob riots four people were dead and many others were wounded. The group was designated as a terrorist organization and outlawed by the Tunisian government after mass demonstrations following the assassination of the two opposition politicians by the organization in February and July 2013. The decision damaged the organization, its members started to act in a conspiracy but it had not been able to recover entirely. It was replaced by the Katibat Uqba Ibn Nafi<sup>22</sup> established in December 2012 on the initiative of the AQIM leader Abdel Malekdrudel. Khaled Chaieb alias Abou Sakhr Lokman became its leader, who took over the leadership of the outlawed Ansar al-Sharia in January 2014. In September 2014, one of the Uqba Ibn Nafi Brigade fractions pledged allegiance to the IS (again under the leadership of Abu Sakhr), while other militants remained loyal to AQIM acting in Libya and Tunisia. In July 2014 Abu Sakhr met Mokhtar Belmokhtar to carry out common attacks on tourism infrastructure and governmental facilities in Tunisia. At the beginning of March 2015 Tunisian extremists announced establishing a new organization – Jund al-Kilafah fi Tunis, which pledged allegiance to the Islamic State. It was just after the IS appeal to Tunisians for joining caliphate troops. On 29 July 2013, militants of the Uqba Ibn Nafi Brigade and AQIM laid siege to a military post in Chambi Massife, west Tunisia, killing 8 soldiers. One year later (16 July) fifteen other soldiers were killed there, and twenty others were wounded. Tunisian and Algerian security forces carried out antiterrorist operations on both sides of the border. Jihadists had been attacking soldiers, police officers, and security forces in different regions of Tunisia until March 2016.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the most bloody attacks were carried out in the country in 2015. Western tourists were their target. On 18 March 2015, in Bardo Museum 24 people were killed and ca. fifty others were wounded. On 24 June 2015, in Sousse, 36 people died, and 39 others were wounded. On 24 November a suicide bomber linked to the IS blew himself up while trying to get on a bus together with the president's security guards. Thirteen people were killed and twenty others were wounded.

Since 2013, when the Egyptian forces under the leadership of gen. Abd al-Fattah as-Sissi (the incumbent president of Egypt) overthrew the President Muhammad Mursi linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, extremist groups in Egypt have escalated attacks on the military and police forces, especially in Sinai. So far dozens of soldiers and policemen have died in Sinai. It was there the Islamic State managed

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<sup>22</sup> The name of the group refers to a legendary Tunisia conqueror, who established in 672 AD the oldest Arab building in North Africa – The Great Mosque of Kairouan. Kairouan is regarded by the Arabs as a fourth sacred place after Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. Uqba ibn Nafi died in 683AD in the territory of present Algeria in a battle with united Berber forces under the leadership of Kusail; E. Szymański, *Tradycje i legendy ludów Afryki Północnej*, Kraków 1994, pp. 63–66.

<sup>23</sup> [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bataille\\_de\\_Chaambi](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bataille_de_Chaambi) [access: 12 May 2017].



to establish a strong cell. In November 2014, Ansar Bait al-Maqdis (Supporters of the Holy House) organization established in 2011, took an oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. It formed an official branch of the IS, known as Wilayat Sinai. The group called Agnat Misr (Soldiers of Egypt) established in 2013, also took the side of the IS. Although the groups do not have control over any territory, they are very active to date, often carrying out bloody attacks on different targets, but mainly in Sinai. Their targets are mostly soldiers and public officials of Egypt, the Copts, and tourists. The IS militants had a strong presence in the area of Rafah city, in the suburbs of Sheikh Zuweid city, and in the area of the biggest Sinai city, Al Arish. On 31 October 2015, they led to the catastrophe of an aircraft operated by Metrojet Russian Airlines, killing all 224 passengers and crew on board flying back home from the city of Sharm el-Sheikh. On Good Friday 2017, they attacked Coptic churches in the city of Tanta, the Nile Delta, and in Alexandria, where at least 45 people died. On 27 May 2017, the IS claimed responsibility for shelling one day earlier a bus with Coptic pilgrims in Al Minja province, killing 26 and wounding 25 people. Nevertheless, the most tragic attack took place on 24 November 2017. The group of 25-30 terrorists opened fire on worshippers in a mosque in the town of Ar Rawda near Al Arish. In the attack 305 people died. That was the worst massacre in the modern history of Egypt.

Somali Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (Mujahideen Youth Movement), linked to Al Qaeda, managed to overrun the most territory of Somalia together with its capital city of Mogadishu between 2007 and 2010. After the intervention of Kenyan forces in 2011, Al-Shabaab was ousted from the major territories and it is currently dispersed. Nevertheless, it has not been shorn of operational capabilities as far as terrorist attacks in Somalia and neighboring Kenya are concerned.<sup>24</sup> Al-Shabaab pledged loyalty to Al Qaeda only in 2012. In 2014, faction of Abdul Kader Muhammad Abdul Kader, leader of foreign operations, and Muhammad Sandher expressed their support for the rapprochement with the IS. In September 2014, the leader of the organization Ahmed Abdi Godane was killed in an American drone strike. After his death Ahmed Umar alias Abu Ubaidah alias Ahmed Diriye took over the leadership, with his deputies Mukhtar Robow alias Abu Mansur and Mahad Karate alias Mahad Warsame Kalej. An Advisory Board consisting of 10 experienced jihadists was established as assistance. Its main goal was the supervision of different activities of the group: operational, political, propaganda, and religious. There are units responsible for internal security, carrying out attacks abroad (mainly in Kenya), responsible for militants abroad (Muhajirun),

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<sup>24</sup> Before Kenyan military troops intervened in Somalia, Al Shabaab had split up into a nationalist faction with Hasan Dahir Awys opting exclusively for a power struggle in Somalia, and the faction with Ahmed Abdi Godane, claiming for establishing caliphate in eastern Africa. After Godane's death in 2014 national factions with Ahmed Imar and Mukhtar Robow at the helm gained an advantage in the organization: <https://etc.usma.edu/posts/the-life-and-death-of-al-shabab-leader-ahmed-godane> [access: 3 X 2014]; Y. Olomjobi, *Frontiers of Jihad. Radical islam in Africa*, 2015, pp. 161–165.

mainly from Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan and Somalis from Western countries. For the last few years, radicals outside Somalia have shown decreased interest in entering the organization. The main reason is the popularity of other, more accessible frontiers of the struggle, especially in Iraq and Syria. On 13 December 2017 Robow was granted amnesty, and at the beginning of December in the same year Mahad Karate died due to an American drone strike.

The organization is known for its bloody attacks in Kenya, where its members had carried out ca. 140 attacks since the Kenyan military troops entered Somalia in October 2011 until the end of 2014. On 21 September 2013 a group of masked and armed attackers entered Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, taking many hostages and killing non-Muslims. Until the facility was recaptured on 24 September, 71 people died and 175 were wounded. The attack was a retaliation for the Kenyan troops' activities in Somalia. On 21 November 2014, the bus with 60 passengers was hijacked about 50 kilometers from the town of Mandera near the border with Somalia and Ethiopia. They separated Muslims from non-Muslims. The non-Muslims were ordered to get on the bus where they were shot dead and the assassins managed to defect to Somalia. In the attack 28 people were killed. A similar attack took place in December 2015 in the rural area of El Wak, on the Somali border, but this time Muslims protected Christian passengers by refusing to be split into groups. In the attack two people were killed. On 2 April 2015, four armed Al-Shabaab gunmen stormed Garissa University, killing the guards at the entrance gate. Initially the attackers were shooting indiscriminately on students, then started the selection releasing Muslim students and executing the rest, mainly Christians. In the attack 148 people were killed. After ca. a 20-hour siege, terrorists were killed. On 6 and 25 October 2016, terrorists attacked twice the town of Mandera. In those two attacks 18 people died, and many others were wounded. Muslim Youth Center Al Hijra is the Kenyan branch of Al Shabaab.

Al-Shaabab has still control over some areas in the south and middle Somalia. In Mogadishu the associates of the organization collect a revolutionary tax from entrepreneurs and businessmen. There are at least 2 explosions each month. Al-Shabaab carries out attacks on politicians, businessmen, kidnaps workers of humanitarian missions, deploys mines, attacks hotels, and soldiers of the AMNISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia). For example, on 30 July 2017, 24 soldiers were killed in an ambush by Al-Shabaab. The attack took place a few hours after a car bomb had exploded in the capital of Mogadishu killing five people and leaving thirteen others wounded. On 14 December 2017, a bomber dressed in a police uniform blew himself up at the Police Academy in Mogadishu. At least 18 policemen were killed and 15 civilians were wounded. It is said that the death toll could have been much worse if the attacker had detonated his explosives in the crowd of policemen preparing themselves for their early morning parade on the square. Nevertheless, the deadliest attack by Al Shabaab and one of the most bloody attacks ever took place on 14 October 2017. The group carried out an attack on a hotel and a market place in the capital city with large trucks filled with explosives. The second explosion turned out to be

especially tragic, because the truck blew up next to an oil tanker, which intensified the blast. In both attacks 512 people were killed and 295 others were wounded. Since 165 people could not be identified, they were buried in a common grave. From that moment on, the US increased the frequency of airstrikes on Al Shabaab positions. On 13 November 2017, Pentagon confirmed killing more than 40 jihadists of Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State within 4 days. In a subsequent operation against Al-Shabaab, on 21 November 2017, the American troops killed more than 100 jihadists. According to the UN report, since 2017 the activity of jihadists in Somalia has increased significantly.

The Nigerian organization Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihad (Group of the People of Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad), better known as Boko Haram is equally vicious. In September 2014 it announced establishing its own caliphate. At the beginning of 2015, its leader Abubakar Shekau and his group was aligned with the Islamic State, establishing officially in April 2015 the West-African Province of the Islamic State or the Province of the Western Sudan (Wilayat Gharbi Ifriqiyyah). The IS wanted to take control over Boko Haram and to weaken Abubakar Shakau's position within the organization. The reason was Shakau's objection to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's plans to expand Boko Haram's activities outside Niger and Cameroon, and to delegate the leadership in the organization to a collegial body (Majlis al-Shura), composed of, among others pointed by the IS leader, Mamman Nur and Abubakar Adam Kamar. This way Shekau would be deprived of a one-man leadership in Boko Haram. To diminish Shakau's influences, Al-Baghdadi ordered to divide Boko Haram troops into 3 groupings and to dislocate them to the northern Cameroon, the Lake Chad area and eastern Niger. Shekau's task was to coordinate activities mainly in the northern Nigeria. The conflicts between the leaders concerning the scope of activities in different regions and the sphere of competence caused that Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan (Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa) left Boko Haram. Its leader Khalid al-Barnawi established cooperation with Al Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb.

Until 2015 Boko Haram took control over almost three states in north-east Nigeria: Borno, Jobe and Adamawa. After the Islamic State it is the most murderous organization which had already killed more than 20,000 people and caused migration of ca. 2 million people from the area. According to different sources, military capability of the organization was estimated at from 4,000 to 30,000 jihadists in 2015. The group became famous for kidnapping 276 schoolgirls from their school in Chibok on the night of 14-15 April 2014. That case was the best known case in the media, but not the only one. A few months later, jihadists were to kidnap 300 school children and other 100 kids and women from the town of Damasak. The media was silent on this point. Admittedly, it's true that kidnapping the girls in Chibok made public opinion look at Nigeria with great concern. There was even a social media campaign #BringBackOurGirls, supported by the US First Lady Michelle Obama, which aimed to put pressure on the Nigerian forces to find the children. Despite the promises of African politicians and the passage of time, many girls from Chibok are still in captivity. Those

who managed to escape on their own are free. In May 2017, as a result of an agreement with the authorities of Nigeria, 82 girls were set free in exchange for some Boko Haram prisoners. According to Amnesty International, between 2014 and April 2015, Boko Haram kidnapped at least 2,000 women and children. They are used as sexual slaves and kitchen aids, as bargaining chips in negotiations to release prisoners and for suicide bombings. In Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad 44 children were forced into suicide attacks in 2015, compared with only four in 2014. Some of the children were only eight years old. The total number of suicide attacks in those three countries and in Niger, carried out by Boko Haram and its sister organization from northern Cameroon, Jama'atu Ansaru Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan, increased from 32 in 2014 to 151 in 2015. The number of girls and women taking part in these attacks has also increased. Between 1 January and 16 August 2017, 83 children were used as bombers, of these 55 were girls, and one was a baby strapped to a girl. Most of the girls were under 15 years old. Usually terrorists attach explosives to children and leave them in any crowded public place. Then, the bomb is detonated remotely. In a few cases children managed to get to the local services, which then removed and secured the explosives properly. In March 2014 a teenage girl, who managed to thwart an attack, said that he was one of the 276 schoolgirls from Chibok school kidnapped by Boko Haram in 2014. It is the first organization in the world, in which children and women represent a higher percentage of bombers.<sup>25</sup> The authorities of Nigeria informed several times about its leader's death, Abubakr Shekau. Abu Musab al Barnawi was to become its new leader. The decision was announced and published in a jihadist weekly *Al-Naba* on 2 August 2016. Two days later Shekau confirmed he was still the leader of the organization. On 27 June 2017 a video was released online, on which he claimed responsibility for a Nigerian policewoman kidnapping and criticized Nigerian authorities for spreading false news on the end of his organization.

Terrorist activities of Boko Haram led to a total destruction of 900 schools, some of them were burnt, and to closing twice as many establishments. More than 600 teachers and school workers were killed and 19,000 were forced to flee.<sup>26</sup> Hundreds of murdered or kidnapped schoolchildren and thousands of wounded people should also be mentioned. Since the Islamists in Nigeria were forced onto the defensive by the coalition forces of Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon, they target civilians in their own attacks. Children with explosives strapped to them are sent to crowded market places and stations. On the other hand, thanks to military successes, the Nigerian army has released hundreds of kidnapped people in recent months. According to the report of the UNICEF and International Alert, London based foundation, women and teenagers returning to their villages are treated with suspicion or are even rejected. Victims of rapes quite often bear jihadists' children. Local societies are also afraid that kidnappers have inculcated

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<sup>25</sup> <https://kobieta.wp.pl/horror-ktorego-swiat-nie-chce-dostrzec-w-2017-roku-boko-haram-wysadzilo-w-powietrze-55-dziewczynek-6158590054090881a> [access: 24 VIII 2017]; <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/zamach-w-maiduguri-zabitych-10-osob-wielu-rannych-6188198088788097a> [access: 16 XI 2017].

<sup>26</sup> <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/pala-szkoly-porywaja-dzieci-morduja-nauczycieli-krwawa-kampania-fanatykow-boko-haram-6025269939212929a> [access: 22 IV 2016].

radical ideas into them. In April 2016, it was rumored that members or sympathizers of Boko Haram from Senegal were able to carry out attacks on the beaches of Italy, France and Spain. In October 2017, the first in a series of trials of 2,300 people accused of terrorist activity in Boko Haram started. Khalid Barnawi is one of the persons accused of kidnapping and killing 10 foreigners.

At the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016 Tanzim Al Qaeda fi Jazirat al-Arab (Al Qaeda Organization in the Arabian Peninsula, AQAP) established its own emirate. AQAP, regarded as the most dangerous branch of al Qaeda, has been present in Yemen for a long time, nevertheless, during the presidency of Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi and his predecessor Ali Abd Allah Salih, its operational capabilities were limited because American airstrikes and attacks by soldiers of the government in Sana put the organization on the defensive. That situation lasted until January 2015, when Shia rebels from Husi movement forced Hadi to escape from Sana, and following that the retreat of American troops from the country. As a result of Saudi Arabia intervention in March 2015, the conflict became very soon the next competition arena between Saudi Arabia and Iran in the region, which led to the escalation of the conflict and the humanitarian catastrophe. While the clashes between Husi and governmental forces focused in the south-western, the most populated part of the country, AQPA took advantage of the situation in the east taking over other areas, very often left by governmental forces. It built its structures, very often with the silent approval of the local people, who thought that the situation was more stable than in other regions liberated by Yemeni forces, and the alternative to Al Qaeda might have been even worse. AQPA, in fact, ever since its creation in this part of the Middle East, has been using the same tactics as the Islamic State, i.e. taking over and controlling a territory with its population and the whole social and economic potential. Furthermore, AQPA as distinct from other Al Qaeda's branches, was shifting its activities to Europe. It should also be noted that creating quasi state structures in the hot spots by Islamic terrorist organizations constitutes an increasingly widespread phenomenon.

In 2016 AQPA had control over 10 cities. Despite the fact that it exercises power through local supporters, and not under the name of Al Qaeda, rule by extremists are ruthless and are not that much different than their ideological rivals from the IS. Just as the IS in Syria and Iraq, AQPA collected taxes and made profits from the oil fields and oil facilities. The organization's assets, in the poorest country in the Middle East, was assessed at 100 mln USD. For a long time the successes of Al Qaeda remained in the shadow of struggles between Husi and the regime, and the war in Syria. A few months after terrorists from AQPA, brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi carried out a terrorist attack on the Paris headquarters of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo in January 2015<sup>27</sup>, American drone airstrike killed some of the most important figures of the organization, including its leader and number two in the whole Al Qaida, Nasir Al-Wuhayshi in Mukali, Hadramaut province (12 June 2015). This seaside town was captured by

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<sup>27</sup> G. Kepel, *Terror we Francji. Geneza francuskiego dżihadu*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 239–265.

Al Qaida militants in April 2015 after two weeks of struggles. From the beginning of 2016, the US intensified their campaign of airstrikes. In one of such airstrikes on an AQPA facility in Mukalli, 50 jihadists were killed. Although comparing to struggles with the IS, the number of attacks in Yemen was rather small. AQPA took advantage of the void left by the authorities and became stronger than ever. Nevertheless, it is not the first time when jihadists from Yemen have got a chance to widen its influences. Every time the US and Yemeni forces were able to take from terrorists their prizes, but they were not able to defeat them completely.<sup>28</sup> In April 2017, the AQPA leader, Qasim AL-Raymi announced that its organization was going to fight with Shia movement Husi, and is ready to start, under some conditions, negotiations with the President Mansur Hadi. At the beginning of August 2017 Yemeni soldiers supported by advisers from the UAE started an operation against AQPA in Shabwa province.

From the second half of 2014 the Islamic State had been trying to build its outposts in Afghanistan. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, acting on the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan, pledged allegiance to caliph Ibrahim. In Talib movement there was a cleavage and competition as far as effectiveness of attacks was concerned. Emir Hafiz Said Khan became the leader of the Afghan and Pakistani troops of the IS. His goal was to establish Wilayat Khorasan in the territories of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia.<sup>29</sup> Khan was killed on 26 July 2016. Abdul Hasib was appointed his successor, but he was killed in May 2017. Most fighters were recruited from the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan. It is the most active in provinces of Badakhshan, Kunduz, Farah, Raryab, and in the east, in provinces of Logar, Paktika, and particularly in Nangarhar. It was observed that more and more young people and the Taliban were recruited into the IS. Local IS commanders gave larger pay to their soldiers than the Taliban, which attracted recruits. In 2015 the organization Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin Heekmatiar joined the IS. At the beginning of June 2015 its leader declared the common fight with the IS against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, it were the Taliban who won the competition in the end. They seem to control ca. 40% of the territory of the country nowadays and carry out terrorist attacks on governmental facilities, market places and shopping malls, the seats of foreign institutions, Shia cultural institutions, police forces, military and security forces at least once a week.

Superior authority of the Islamic State was also acknowledged by the Philippine Abu Sayyaf organization and Al-Jama'at Islamiyya and Jimat Anshorut Twhid from Indonesia. Because of that there was a cleavage in the last-mentioned organization followed by the establishment of Jama'at Anshorut Sharia. In the Philippines, Abu Sayyaf militants under the IS name captured the city of Marawi in the Mindanao island on 22 May 2017.

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<sup>28</sup> A. Wejkszner, *Globalna sieć...*, pp.146–148; the same, *Ewolucja terroryzmu motywowanego ideologią religijną na przykładzie salafickiego ruchu globalnego dżihadu*, Poznań 2010, pp. 249–252.

<sup>29</sup> The Khorasan Group aka Battalion of Wolves was active in Syria with Muhsin al-Fadhli as the operational leader. The group cooperated with an Yemeni bomb constructor Ibrahim al-Asiri, a member of AQPA. Terrorist attacks in the West were the goal of the group; B. Hall, *ISIS. Państwo Islamskie*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 201–204.

It was just after the governmental forces tried to arrest the leader of the organization Isnilon Hapilon who had come to the city for medical treatment. Abu Sayyaf fighters under Mahmud Ahmad alias Abu Handzalah and supported by Maute group (estimated at over 300 persons) threw the military out, killed Christians and took 200 people hostage. Fighting for the city lasted 5 months. On 23 October 2017, defense minister of the Philippines announced the end of military action, claiming that Islamists were eliminated. Mahmud Ahmad and Hapilon were killed. Almost 500,000 people fled protecting themselves from struggles in Marawi and in the whole region, and more than 800 people died, including jihadists, civilians and military men. The near future will show whether jihadists are defeated because Abu Sayyaf organization, active since 1991, has remarkable ability to revive, recruit new members and fighters and pose a new threat.

The popularity of the IS ideas and the decline of Al Qaeda caused that the IS gained great importance among Muslim terrorist organizations. It took over human resources, finances and military resources of Al Qaeda, becoming the biggest, the richest and the most dangerous terrorist organization in the world. The restitution of caliphate had a deep political, ideological and religious message because of its significance in Muslim tradition. Therefore, it will be very difficult for the current generation of jihadists fighting for development and maintaining the caliphate to deal with its collapse caused by the significant participation of the western forces hated by extremists. Anyway, the memory of colonial period and the UK and France dominance in the Middle East has again revived. Apart from those countries and the US, a new aggressor, Russia has appeared. Syrian and Iraqi authorities, Shiites and Kurds remain traitors and enemies, and as such they have to reckon with the possibility of terrorist attacks against them. The IS as a global hybrid terrorist structure is going to be a particular challenge for the police and security services in many countries. Their officers must expect implacable hostility, fanaticism, disdain for death, and cruelty. Further confrontation between the IS and Al Qaeda will remain in doubt. No scenario can be precluded that the conflict will be replaced by some kind of agreement, or even cooperation, for example common terrorist attacks. One such example took place in January 2015 in Paris, when Kouachi brothers, linked to Al Qaeda, carried out a terrorist attack on Charlie Hebdo publishing house and Amedy Coulibaly, their accomplice declaring his affiliation to the IS, carried out an attack on a Jewish supermarket.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's death can lead to ease tensions between the IS and Al Qaeda. Changes in the Al Qaeda leadership can also lead to the improvement of relations between the two organizations. It seems that Hamza bin Laden, the 28-year-old son of Osama Bin Laden and his third Saudi wife, Hajrija Sabar, known as the 'Prince of Jihad', will take the lead in Al Qaeda in the near future. In August 2015 video footage of Hamza bin Laden and Ayman Al Zawahiri calling on jihadis to attack Washington, London, Paris, and in Tel Aviv was released. After that, the other three video footage of Hamza bin Laden appeared, on which he eagerly encouraged lone wolf attacks to be carried out in the West, and to revenge his father. In August 2016, his video footage appeared online, on which he called for regime change in Saudi Arabia, ruled by *large criminals*

and thieves, and American agents. The power in the country must be taken over by a new government that would distribute revenue from oil more fairly and encourage its citizens to jihad. Nevertheless, the real sin of Saudis is their stance in Yemen, where since March 2015 they have been waging a vicious war against Shiite rebels from Husi movement. Hamza accused Riyadhof favoring Shiites and fighting Al Qaeda affiliated jihadists, which is a *double betrayal against Muslims in Yemen*.<sup>30</sup> Hamza bin Laden has his own concept of jihad regardless of his charismatic name which calls to mind the mastermind behind the worst terrorist attack in recorded history. He is against any spectacular long prepared attacks, which can be disrupted by special services. Like the IS, he calls for attacks on Americans, Europeans, and pro-Western Muslims, wherever they are, with any accessible weapon. Apart from that, unlike al-Zawahiri, he did not criticize the caliphate, which may – after the collapse of the IS – win him support and renew Al Qaeda or any other organization founded on it possibly in the future.<sup>31</sup> Being aware of that new threat, the end of September and the beginning of October 2017, 40 operatives from the British SAS came to Syria with the aim of tracking him down and killing.<sup>32</sup> Their attempts have so far been unsuccessful. However, this piece of information publicly available can win the young bin Laden new followers.

### Abstract

Military victory over the Islamic State does not mean defeating this terrorist organization, members of which will move into conspiracy, and will continue terrorist attacks. Organizations allied to the Islamic State operating in the foreign wilayats (provinces) of the caliphate: in Sinai, Libya, Nigeria, or Afghanistan are still active. There are also other groups active, linked to Al Qaeda or formed its franchises before, leaders of which pledged allegiance to caliph Ibrahim (Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi) between 2014 and 2015. There are more than 40 such organizations altogether. Some of them split following internal arguments over which side to be on: Al Qaeda or the IS, involved in the conflict since 2013. Apart from the Middle East, North Africa has become the main arena for activity and competition between jihadist organizations, especially the regions of Sahara and Sahel, where the IS has increased its influences since the second half of 2014. As long as the IS has been defeated in Syria and Iraq, in Africa its operational capabilities to carry out terrorist attacks have remained although its position has also weakened. The consequences of the IS activities and its other affiliates were tragic. The year 2014 was the most violent when 32,858 people were killed in the whole world. In 2016 terrorists killed 25,673 people around the world. It is almost 22% less than in 2014. The list of countries with the highest terror risk has not changed at all.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/syn-osamy-bin-ladena-nowym-liderem-al-kaidy-hamza-wzywa-do-walki-6029048256705665a> [access: 23 VIII 2017].

<sup>31</sup> M. Urzędowska, *Powrót Al-Kaidy i Ben Ladena*, „Gazeta Wyborcza” of 2 November 2017.

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4938874/SAS-begin-mission-kill-capture-Osama-Bin-Laden-son.html> [access: 6 X 2017].



The first five countries are Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Syria, and Pakistan. According to statistics, 75% of all victims came from those countries.

The security situation in Europe may deteriorate in the near future. Jihadist propaganda still meets with a favorable response, and it is going to be more and more effective, if the reality fails to meet the immigrants' expectations, and demanding attitudes turn into anger. Deportations of those who lost their right of residence, also because of the committed offences, or tightening asylum law and conditions of granting state benefits will encourage such behaviors. Denmark, Austria, Germany, and France have already announced the above-mentioned limitations because the line between refugees and economic migrants tends to blur.

Easing tensions between the IS and Al Qaeda, for example, after Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's death can cause increased risk. Changes in the leadership of Al Qaeda can also contribute to the improvement of relations between the two organizations. It seems that Hamza bin Laden, the 28-year-old son of Osama Bin Laden, known as the 'Prince of Jihad', will take the lead in the organization in the near future. Unlike the current leader of Al Qaeda, Ayman al - Zawahiri, he did not criticize the caliphate, which may – after the collapse of the IS – win him support and renew Al Qaeda or any other organization founded on it possibly in the future.

**Keywords:** Al Qaeda, terrorist attacks, security, the Middle East, jihad, jihadists, fanaticism, Islam, caliphate, conflicts, Kurds, mujahedeen, Muslims, Islamic State, salafists, Syrian Democratic Forces, the Taliban, terrorists, terrorism, Wahhabism, threat, attempts.