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aka HQN

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 19, 2012, the Haqqani Network (HQN) was formed in the late 1970s, around the time of the then-Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. HQN's founder Jalaluddin Haqqani established a relationship with Usama bin Laden in the mid-1980s, and joined the Taliban in 1995. After the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, Jalaluddin retreated to Pakistan where, under the leadership of Jalaluddin's son Sirajuddin Haqqani, the group continued to direct and conduct terrorist activity in Afghanistan. In July 2015, Sirajuddin Haqqani was appointed a Deputy leader of the Taliban.

Activities: HQN has planned and carried out a number of significant kidnappings and attacks against U.S. and Coalition Forces in Afghanistan, the Afghan government, and civilian targets. HQN's most notorious attacks include the June 2011 attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul, which killed 11 civilians and two Afghan policemen; a September 2011 truck bombing in Wardak Province, Afghanistan, which wounded 77 U.S. soldiers; the September 2011 19-hour attack on the U.S. Embassy and International Security Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, which killed 16 Afghans, including six children; a June 2012 suicide bomb attack against Forward Operating Base Salerno, which killed two U.S. soldiers and wounded more than 100; and a 12-hour siege of the Spozhmai Hotel in Kabul in June 2012, which resulted in the death of at least 18 Afghans, including 14 civilians. HQN was also involved in holding U.S. Army Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl, who was kidnapped in 2009 and remained in captivity until his May 2014 release.

HQN's attacks continued throughout 2016. In January, Afghan officials blamed HQN for a suicide attack in Kabul, which killed seven journalists affiliated with a television station that had been critical of the Taliban. In April, HQN was blamed for an attack in Kabul against a government security agency tasked with providing protection to senior government officials, killing 64 people and injuring more than 300 others in what was the deadliest attack in Kabul in 15 years. Afghan officials also blamed HQN for being involved in a June double suicide attack outside of Kabul against Afghan police cadets and first responders; 30 people were killed. In addition to these and

other suspected HQN attacks, Afghan police disrupted multiple HQN plots and many suicide operations in Kabul before they could be carried out.

Strength: HQN is believed to have several hundred core members, but it is estimated that the organization is able to draw upon a pool of upwards of 10,000 fighters. HQN is integrated

into – and cooperates closely with – the larger Afghan Taliban and draws strength through cooperation with other terrorist organizations operating in Afghanistan, including al-Qa'ida and Jaish-e Mohammad.

Location/Area of Operation: HQN is active along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and across much of southeastern Afghanistan, particularly in Loya Paktia (which consists of Paktia, Paktika, and Khost provinces, and includes parts of Logar and Ghazni), and has repeatedly targeted Kabul in its attacks. The group's leadership has historically maintained a power base around Pakistan's tribal areas.

Funding and External Aid: In addition to the support it receives through its connections to other terrorist organizations, HQN receives much of its funds from donors in Pakistan and the Gulf, as well as through criminal activities such as kidnapping, extortion, smuggling, and other licit and illicit business ventures.