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Letter dated 6 August 2026 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the thirty-eighth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015), which was submitted to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, in accordance with paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution 2734 (2024).

I should be grateful if the present letter and the report could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Christina Markus **Lassen**
President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair
of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions
1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning
Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and
associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

Letter dated 26 June 2026 from the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team addressed to the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

I have the honour to refer to paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution 2734 (2024), by which the Security Council requested the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to submit, in writing, comprehensive, independent reports to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, every six months.

I therefore transmit to you the Monitoring Team's thirty-eighth comprehensive report, pursuant to annex I to resolution 2734 (2024). In formulating the report, the Monitoring Team considered information that it received up to 9 June 2026. I also note that the document of reference is the English original.

The report has been agreed by consensus across the Monitoring Team. I welcome the opportunity to discuss it with the Committee.

(*Signed*) Colin **Smith**
Coordinator
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team

Thirty-eighth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities

Summary

The threat level remained broadly unchanged. However, it intensified in the Sahel and South Asia.

Al-Qaida senior leadership remained marginalized. Its capability and intent to conduct external operations remained unclear.

The death of Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ali Al-Mainuki was a blow to Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, Q.115, hereinafter "ISIL (Da'esh)"), which may affect further its ability to communicate across its global network.

In the Sahel, Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM, QDe.159) launched a surprise attack in conjunction with the Front de libération de l'Azawad (FLA) against the Government of Mali and announced its intention to blockade Bamako.

There was a resurgence of violent rivalry between JNIM and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS, QDe.163), the latter receiving increased support from Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP, QDe.162); this was the most intense direct confrontation globally between an Al-Qaida branch and an ISIL (Da'esh) affiliate.

Al-Shabaab (SOe.001) appeared to shift towards more targeted and strategic operations, while ISIL in Somalia (not listed) remained under counter-terrorism pressure.

Cross-border attacks between Pakistan and Afghanistan escalated, provoked by a high number of attacks by Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP, QDe.132) against Pakistan.

ISIL (Da'esh) tried to exploit the closure of detention camps in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP, QDe.129) took advantage of the security vacuum in southern Yemen in early 2026 to strengthen its capabilities.

The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF, CDe.001) operated at a heightened level of lethality, while simultaneously expanding their territorial reach, extending their presence as far north as Haut-Uélé Province.

Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) continued to prioritize kidnapping for ransom, to generate revenue and delegitimize local security forces.

Contents

		Page
I.	Overview and evolution of the threat	5
II.	Regional developments	6
	A. Africa	6
	B. Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Levant	12
	C. Arabian Peninsula	14
	D. Europe and the Americas	16
	E. Asia	17
III.	Impact assessment	19
	A. Resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2462 (2019) on the financing of terrorism	19
	B. Resolution 2396 (2017) on foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators	20
IV.	Implementation of sanctions measures	21
	A. Travel ban	21
	B. Asset freeze	21
	C. Arms embargo	21
V.	Recommendations	22
VI.	Monitoring Team activities and feedback	22
Annexes*		
I.	Terrorist propaganda	24
II.	Recruitment and mobilization of youth and minors	28

* Circulated in the language of submission only and without formal editing.

I. Overview and evolution of the threat

1. In the short term,[1] the overall threat level remained broadly the same. Nevertheless, it intensified in the Sahel and South Asia.

2. However, the threat landscape experienced several convulsions that may have ramifications over the medium term. These accelerated some established trends, such as the focus by Al-Qaida and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh) on Africa and their emphasis on regional affiliates, introducing additional uncertainty.

3. Al-Qaida's prioritization of, and capability for, external operations remained unclear. It faced several practical constraints, including the marginalization of its senior leadership. The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team previously noted that Sayf al-Adl (QDi.001), the de facto leader of Al-Qaida, was reported to be in the Islamic Republic of Iran (though one Member State refutes the presence of any Al-Qaida personnel there) (S/2025/71, para. 4). The conflict in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the region since 28 February 2026 may have jeopardized his security, and there was speculation that he may attempt to travel to another country, most likely Afghanistan.

4. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) remained the vanguard of the global Al-Qaida movement, committed to external operations. In parallel, AQAP propaganda became increasingly strident. Ibrahim al-Qosi (not listed), part of the AQAP leadership shura council, was described as the ideological leader of Al-Qaida, and he remained influential across the global network.

5. Both Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) tried to exploit the conflict in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the region by exhorting their followers to take up arms. Al-Qaida's efforts were criticized by some of their followers, and ISIL (Da'esh) accused Al-Qaida of selling out to the Islamic Republic of Iran, appealing for disillusioned fighters to defect to ISIL (Da'esh). It also called on its supporters to prioritize attacking Shia communities (see annex I)

6. Overall, ISIL (Da'esh) was at a lower ebb, fettered by leadership challenges (including the geographic dispersal of key figures) and subject to sustained counter-terrorism pressure. The statement in February by Abu Hudhayfa Al-Ansari (not listed), an ISIL (Da'esh) spokesperson, acknowledged that the past two years had been spent "drenched in blood". ISIL (Da'esh) lacked the capacity to provide coherent direction to its network. Its propaganda, however, and its ability to incite violence, remained potent.

7. The death in May of Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ali al-Mainuki was a significant setback for ISIL (Da'esh). He held several positions, including deputy leader of ISIL (Da'esh) and head of its General Directorate of Provinces. His death – barely a year after the death of his predecessor, Abu Khadija – may further affect the ability of ISIL (Da'esh) to communicate across its global network. ISIL (Da'esh) responded defiantly, downplaying the impact of al-Mainuki's death.

8. On 22 February, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic closed Hawl camp. During the transfer of control, there were reports of mass escapes at the camp, and 15,000–20,000 former detainees remained unaccounted for. Although most likely remain in the region, some foreign detainees attempted to return to their home countries. ISIL (Da'esh) tried to exploit the situation to swell its ranks.

[1] Short-term is up to six months, medium-term is six months to two years and long-term is greater than two years.

9. After a number of successful kidnappings for ransom, generating large amounts of revenue and delegitimizing local security forces, both Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) continued to look for more opportunities to target foreigners and extort businesses. The revenue generated through kidnapping was likely used to support attacks across their global networks. The ransom payment of approximately $50 million noted in the Monitoring Team's thirty-seventh report (S/2026/44, para. 107) played a key role in financing the Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) offensive in Mali, while a portion of the funds was likely channelled to the broader Al-Qaida network.

10. The Monitoring Team continued to gather information on trends in the recruitment of youth and minors (see annex II), as well as the use of commercial satellite communications.

11. This reporting period marked 15 years since the death of Usama bin Laden. The next reporting period marks 25 years since the attacks of 11 September 2001. If Al-Qaida fails to mark these events in some way, it may be seen as further evidence of its declining relevance as a global movement.

II. Regional developments

A. Africa

West Africa

12. JNIM continued to expand and remained the leading terrorist threat in the Sahel. The group was estimated to have 7,000–8,000 members, with around half concentrated in Mali.

13. On 25 April, JNIM escalated its activities through a coordinated offensive across multiple regions of Mali. The group's immediate objective was not to overthrow the Government or seize Bamako, but to increase pressure on the authorities, unify opposition forces and consolidate its influence in northern and central Mali.

14. The offensive was planned and conducted in cooperation with the Tuareg-majority Front de libération de l'Azawad (FLA, not listed). While tactical coordination between the two groups had been observed previously, these operations marked a significant deepening of their collaboration.

15. JNIM and FLA regained control over parts of northern Mali, notably Kidal. Operations also extended into central and southern Mali, including Bamako and the garrison town of Kati. In Kati, 200 JNIM fighters launched an assault, and the Minister of Defence was killed by a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack. Overall, the group suffered several hundred casualties, many from Katiba Macina, whose fighters were heavily engaged in southern and central Mali.

16. Most of the approximately $50 million ransom received in 2025 for the release of a hostage was redistributed among JNIM *katibas*. These funds played a key role in financing the group's offensive across Mali. A portion of the ransom was also allocated to Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM, QDe.014).

17. The principal strength of JNIM was its ability to command, control and coordinate operations across its *katibas*, enabling complex and geographically dispersed attacks. This capability was increasingly supported by the widespread use of commercial satellite communication systems. Dozens of terminals were used by local commanders and fighters, providing resilient, high-speed connectivity in remote areas and facilitating real-time coordination between units.

18. JNIM continued to recruit new members, particularly in south-western Mali. As part of this effort, the group prominently featured a Bambara spokesperson to discuss its operations in southern Mali, likely to broaden its appeal within the community and expand its support base.

19. JNIM senior leadership maintained a cautious approach regarding geographic expansion, prioritizing internal cohesion and the ongoing offensive in Mali over uncontrolled territorial growth.

20. In Burkina Faso, JNIM claimed over 130 attacks in 2026 and expanded closer to Ouagadougou. In the Niger, the group claimed at least 17 attacks since January but remained significantly less active than Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS). In Benin, it claimed six attacks in the north and began recruiting among local populations. JNIM elements also carried out two unclaimed attacks, possibly in response to statements by a former commander who defected to ISGS and alleged that JNIM had a non-aggression understanding with some regional authorities. Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Senegal continued to function primarily as transit and logistical zones rather than as targets for attacks.

21. While militarily inferior to JNIM, ISGS posed a growing threat in the region. The group was assessed to have around 2,000 members and significantly increased its operational capabilities.

22. The Niger remained the primary area of operations for ISGS, accounting for 75% of its claimed attacks in 2026. While the group traditionally focused on marginalized and weakly governed areas, the attack on Niamey international airport on 29 January demonstrated its ability to conduct complex urban operations. Around 40 fighters organized into two assault groups attacked the airport using motorbikes, pick-up trucks, reconnaissance drones, small arms and mortars. They destroyed two light aircraft, one fighter jet and one helicopter, suggesting that degrading the Niger's counter-terrorism capabilities was a key objective.

23. Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) played a key role in preparing the operation. The presence of Kanuri-speaking assailants in propaganda footage released shortly afterwards suggests that ISWAP members may also have participated directly.

24. Relations between JNIM and ISGS evolved into open competition. ISGS criticized the JNIM alliance with FLA in Mali and claimed to have killed nearly 100 JNIM members in clashes in the Niger and Burkina Faso between February and April. Reported defections from JNIM to ISGS remained limited but reflected enduring ideological and strategic tensions that ISGS will likely continue to exploit.

25. In Mali, ISGS conducted a series of opportunistic attacks following the JNIM/FLA offensive. These operations were mainly concentrated in the Gao and Ménaka regions, where the group was already established.

26. ISGS also expanded its presence in north-western Nigeria. Although the group was previously concentrated in Sokoto State, it also established itself in Kebbi and Zamfara States. This expansion was driven partly by the recruitment of hundreds of individuals linked to the Lakurawa (S/2025/482, paras. 13 and 14).

27. In the Lake Chad basin, ISWAP experienced a significant leadership loss with the killing of al-Mainuki on 16 May during a joint Nigeria-United States of America operation in Metele in Borno State, Nigeria. Al-Mainuki, who headed the ISIL (Da'esh) General Directorate of Provinces and the Al-Furqan office, was killed alongside several key ISWAP operatives, including individuals involved in the group's communications and propaganda apparatus. Member States noted that al-Mainuki used several aliases, including Sheikh Abdulghafur Abu Khalid, Abu Abd

al-Raqib and Abu Zaynab, in communications with different ISIL (Da'esh) provinces to obfuscate his identity.

28. Al-Mainuki played a key role in the group's expansion in West Africa and the Sahel. Member States assessed that in the short term his death would affect the group's ability to coordinate regional and global activities. The movement of foreign terrorist fighters into the Lake Chad basin, Al-Furqan's operations and its role within the larger ISIL (Da'esh) global network would likely be disrupted. However, ISWAP collaboration with ISGS was unlikely to deteriorate given established close ties. Al-Mainuki's successor within Al-Furqan and the ISIL (Da'esh) General Directorate of Provinces had yet to be identified.

29. Despite these developments, ISWAP remained the most active ISIL (Da'esh) affiliate, carrying out more attacks than any other affiliate between January and May. Member States reported that the group conducted over 174 attacks during this period, exceeding the number recorded during the same period in 2025. In mid-February, ISWAP was reported to have acquired approximately 35 commercial drones, some of which were assessed to have been used in ISIL (Da'esh) operations across both the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin.

30. There was a surge in Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad (Boko Haram, QDe.138) activities and capabilities during the reporting period. Member States noted that the group carried out several complex operations against military and civilian targets as well as against its rival, ISWAP. In January, clashes between the two groups were reported in the Sambisa Forest, the Mandara Mountains and Abadam in Borno State, driven primarily by competition over territorial control and resources. Boko Haram also increasingly produced propaganda with more structured messaging, in some cases resembling ISWAP style, while also expanding its use of social media platforms for recruitment and outreach.

31. Member States further noted an upsurge in kidnapping for ransom operations by Boko Haram. In early March, it attacked the village of Ngoshe in Borno State and abducted over 416 individuals. In late March, Boko Haram fighters kidnapped seven Chadian nationals along the N'guigmi–Daboua route in the Chad-Niger-Nigeria tri-border area, one of whom was killed while the group demanded ransom. These attacks were associated with the Bakura Modu (not listed) group operating in the Lake Chad basin. One Member State reported that, in early February, the Adamu Yunusa (alias Adamu Sadiqu) faction of Boko Haram carried out an attack on the villages of Woro and Nuku in Kwara State in Nigeria, killing over 160 people and abducting more than 176 civilians, later demanding ransom. These activities did not indicate a coherent operational strategy by the group.

Central and Southern Africa

32. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) continued to pose a significant security challenge. ADF remained active in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces, while expanding its presence into Tshopo and Haut-Uélé Provinces.

33. ADF had 1,500–2,000 members, including approximately 600 adult male fighters. Member States noted that the ADF leader, Musa Baluku (CDi.036), and the Madina camp had relocated northwards to Dimba, situated west of the Mambasa–Djamu road in Haut-Uélé Province. The camp hosted 80 fighters and hundreds of dependants.

34. ADF maintained three other strategic groups. One was commanded by Ssebagala, alias Mzee Meya, consisting of 100 fighters and operating in Kartum, Oese, Atroulo, Bamanje and Kandoyi in Irumu territory. A second was commanded

by Muhammad Lumisa, alias Mzee Wa Kazi, operating around Kadika, Mekanya, the Mangina–Pori axis, Petina Lukeke and Sintarudi, all in Irumu territory. Both were tasked with collecting illegal taxes from farmers. A third group led by Abu Waqas, alias Abwakasi (listed as Ahmad Mahmood Hassan, CDi.040) comprised over 100 fighters. They were highly mobile, never moving with family members. The group operated between Bafwakao in Mambasa territory and oscillated between Penge and the Muchacha area along the Ituri River in Ituri Province.

35. Between January and May, ADF carried out over 80 attacks, resulting in more than 400 deaths, displacing many civilians. In early May, ADF carried out its first attack in Haut-Uélé Province, demonstrating northern expansion. In early April, the group carried out an attack in the village of Bafwakao, killing 43 civilians. In mid-March, ADF attacked gold-mining sites in Muchacha and Babesua, killing over 50 people, destroying infrastructure and abducting 30 civilians. Member States attributed this attack to the Abu Waqas group.

36. Meddie Nkalubo (CDi.042) maintained his role as the ADF chief logistical and financial facilitator. He was co-located with Musa Baluku in Dimba and continued to serve as a key link between ADF and the ISIL (Da'esh) core. The arrest in 2024 of Abubakar Swalleh (QDi.436), Nkalubo's primary cryptocurrency facilitator, disrupted his facilitation network. However, one Member State reported that Nkalubo had restructured the network to incorporate other regional facilitators, including Halid Hassan Mohamed and Mwinyikombo Ali, alias Mwinyikombo Abdallah Shekivui (both not listed).

37. ADF suffered some loss with the killing on 14 March of Muhammad Kasibante, alias Defender, a senior ADF commander in charge of logistics, in a joint operation by Ugandan and Democratic Republic of the Congo forces in the village of Asangwa, Lubero territory, and in Mambasa territory. Abu Twaha, a mid-level ADF commander, and Abu Hussein al-Yemeni were also killed in Irumu territory in mid-May.

38. In Mozambique's Cabo Delgado Province, despite ongoing multinational military operations, the strength of Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a (ASWJ, not listed) had increased to an estimated 400–500 fighters. Between December and March, the group intensified recruitment efforts by calling for new recruits, exploiting illegal migration routes to move new regional recruits.

39. ASWJ remained active across the Macomia, Mocímboa da Praia, Muidumbe, Palma, Quissanga, Meluco and Nangade districts of Cabo Delgado Province, with negligible activity in neighbouring Niassa and Nampula Provinces. The Mocímboa da Praia-Macomia-Muidumbe tri-district area served as the ASWJ core operational hub due to its terrain. Notwithstanding, emerging activities in the mineral-rich Meluco and Montepuez districts as well as the Ancuabe and Chiúre districts indicated a gradual southward expansion. ASWJ fighters operated in small groups of 10 to 15 to avoid detection, while conducting multiple coordinated attacks. Since January several attacks occurred along the N380 corridor in Macomia, with the group showing an interest in maritime operations, including extortion and attacks on civilian vessels.

40. There were no significant changes in the ASWJ leadership structure. Sheikh Hassan Ulanga remained the group's leader; Farido Sulemane Arune served as his deputy and operational leader; Suleimane Nguvu acted as logistics facilitator and explosives expert; and Mamudo Ibraimo Dado oversaw finance and logistics (all not listed). Member States reported that the ASWJ leadership was enforcing adherence to sharia and strengthening religious authority, requiring commanders to have knowledge of jurisprudence; those lacking were subjected to training programmes and disciplinary measures.

East Africa

41. In Somalia, Member States reported no significant losses within the leadership of ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia. Abdul Qadir Mumin, its leader, and his deputy, Abdurahman Fahiye (both not listed), were assessed to be alive. The group maintained a residual presence in Puntland, but its operational capacity and territorial influence remained constrained due to counter-terrorism operations.

42. The group was estimated to have 150–250 fighters, primarily concentrated in the Cal Miskaat mountains. Member States noted that, in January, the tempo of security forces' operations against the group declined, enabling ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia fighters temporarily to reoccupy some previously cleared positions. During this period, the group attempted to reconstitute its local support networks in and around the Cal Miskaat area, the Jaceel valley and the Golis Mountains, aiming to restore operational mobility and sustain offensive capabilities in the region.

43. The movement of foreign terrorist fighters into the region declined, with ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia discouraging potential recruits from travelling to Puntland. This trend could be reversed if regional counter-terrorism pressure weakens. Illicit transit networks and migration routes previously used by the group remained a potential risk and could be reactivated to facilitate foreign terrorist fighter movements. One Member State identified Abu Farah al-Habashi as a key facilitator for ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia who played a central role in enabling movements of foreign terrorist fighters.

44. The financial capabilities of ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia remained limited, with the group unable to support other ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates. Despite these constraints, the group continued to generate low-level revenue through the extortion of businesses in the coastal towns of Boossaaso and Qandala. One Member State highlighted the role played by the major financial facilitator Abdi Abdullah Adan, alias Abu Jinda (not listed).

45. In the rest of Somalia, Al-Shabaab appeared to shift towards more targeted and strategic operations rather than sustaining broadly elevated attack levels, following the surge in attacks observed in 2025. It undertook fewer attacks in and around Mogadishu, with a greater concentration of operations in the Hirshabelle, Juba Hoose, Juba Dhexe, Shabelle Hoose and Galmudug regions.

46. There was notable progress by Somali security forces and their partners in degrading the Al-Shabaab leadership. Abdullahi Osman Mohamed Caddow, alias Engineer Isma'il (SOi.022), who oversaw the group's improvised explosive device operations, was killed in December 2025. Abdullahi Hassan Abdi Osoble, alias Abdullahi Wadaad, responsible for finances, was killed in January and Mohamed Sahal Idl, alias Abu Usaama, designated to replace him, was killed in February. Despite these losses, Al-Shabaab's leader, Ahmed Diriye (SOi.014), remained active and was believed to be in southern Somalia.

47. Al-Shabaab's finances remained resilient despite a reduction in revenue collection. Declines were partly caused by drought in Jubbaland, Shabelle Hoose and Shabelle Dhexe and reduced collections in Mogadishu from $12 million–$15 million per month to $5 million–$9 million due to increased security measures.

48. Member States noted that Al-Shabaab maintained relations with both AQAP and the Houthis. They expressed concern that sustained links with the Houthis could enhance Al-Shabaab's operational capabilities, posing an increased threat to Somali security forces and African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia troops. Al-Shabaab continued seeking to improve the range and accuracy of its mortar

systems and to acquire drone-jamming technology to evade surveillance and air strikes.

North Africa

49. Sustained counter-terrorism pressure kept ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida in North Africa contained, but both groups continued to exploit limited ungoverned spaces, especially bordering the Sahel region.

50. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM, QDe.014), though degraded, maintained 200–300 fighters across the region. Its leader, Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Anabi (QDi.389), moved between northern Mali and northern Burkina Faso, coordinating with Iyad Ag Ghali (QDi.316) and participating in JNIM leadership meetings. AQIM likely channelled a share of the approximately $50 million ransom obtained by JNIM to the Al-Qaida core and AQAP. The group was the ideological backbone and logistical enabler for JNIM, facilitating links with criminal networks.

51. In Algeria, AQIM remnants were confined to remote areas. JNIM activity along the Malian border remained the primary threat. Authorities neutralized or secured the surrender of 20 terrorists and arrested 75 support network members. ISIL (Da'esh) sporadically reactivated cells near border zones of Sahelian countries. In Tunisia, Jund al-Khilafah (QDe.151) remained a limited threat, with approximately a dozen isolated fighters. In January, authorities disrupted a four-member ISIL (Da'esh)-linked cell in Kasserine, preventing an imminent attack.

52. In Morocco, ISIL (Da'esh)-linked networks maintained cross-border ties, particularly with Sahel-based elements. In March, Moroccan and Spanish authorities jointly dismantled a cell, arresting three individuals in Tangiers and one in Mallorca for financing fighters in Somalia and the Sahel and planning an attack in Spain. Another ISIL (Da'esh) six-member cell disrupted in April highlighted that recruitment was spreading into rural areas.

53. ISIL-Libya (QDe.165) remained weakened, with approximately 100 fighters operating in small cells in the Fezzan region and supported by hundreds of sympathizers. The group increasingly relied on online propaganda and recruitment. The Libyan Intelligence Service arrested over 15 suspects, including arms procurement and logistical facilitators, and disrupted multiple recruitment networks, including a cell that recruited girls for attacks on educational institutions. They also identified and arrested women and children smuggled from the Syrian Arab Republic using forged passports, highlighting concerns over the smuggling of ISIL (Da'esh)-linked individuals from the Syrian Arab Republic. Al-Qaida in Libya remained active in the south-west, leveraging tribal connections to sustain logistical support networks for Sahel-based affiliates.

54. In the Sudan, a group of youths attempted to travel to Somalia to join ISIL (Da'esh) but were deterred by counter-terrorism operations. Authorities also arrested 10 ISIL (Da'esh)-linked individuals involved in financial schemes, including local investments in agriculture. Sudanese-manufactured assault rifles appeared in ISWAP propaganda, raising concerns over the proliferation of weapons into the Sahel through criminal networks.

B. Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Levant

55. ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida continued to regard the Iraqi-Syrian theatre as a key ideological and operational arena. Despite reduced freedom of manoeuvre, both groups continued to exploit security gaps across the Syrian Arab Republic. The conflict in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the region created opportunities for ISIL

(Da’esh) and Al-Qaida, enabling them to exploit sectarian tensions and benefit from diverted counter-terrorism pressure.

56. ISIL (Da’esh) maintained up to 3,000 fighters, predominantly in the Syrian Arab Republic, although the figure may be understated due to recruitment from prison escapees and ISIL (Da’esh)-associated families. Syrian authorities disrupted ISIL (Da’esh) activity through arrests, weapons seizures and the dismantling of cells across multiple governorates, detaining more than 235 operatives and foiling attacks, including one planned for 31 December. Despite improvements in stability in parts of the Syrian Arab Republic, a weakening of counter-terrorism efforts could allow ISIL (Da’esh) and Al-Qaida to regenerate in the Syrian Arab Republic.

57. The transfer of control in parts of the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Government in early 2026 altered the threat landscape. Following the offensive in January, at least 150 ISIL (Da’esh) fighters, including around 20 senior members, escaped from Shaddadah prison, although some were later recaptured. To mitigate further escape risks, 5,704 ISIL (Da’esh)-affiliated detainees (15 of Arab nationalities and 47 of other nationalities) were transferred to Iraq, while the fate of approximately 3,000 remaining prisoners was unclear. Around 15,000–20,000 ISIL (Da’esh)-affiliated individuals, mostly women and children, formerly held at Hawl camp, also remained unaccounted for following the camp’s closure on 22 February, raising significant concerns among Member States and prompting calls for heightened vigilance by Syrian authorities. Most were assessed to have remained in Idlib and the area. Rawj camp remained operational with approximately 2,500 third-country nationals.

58. Some Member States assessed that more than 1,000 of the unaccounted individuals may have joined ISIL (Da’esh) or other armed groups, while others sought to join Syrian government forces. Given the limited capacity of ISIL (Da’esh) to absorb large numbers of recruits, it prioritized experienced fighters, adolescents and women facilitators.

59. The threat in the Syrian Arab Republic was further complicated by attribution challenges arising from the emergence of front groups claiming attacks on behalf of ISIL (Da’esh) or Al-Qaida. Saraya Ansar al-Sunnah (not listed) was assessed as being ISIL (Da’esh) operating under an alternative name and claimed responsibility for the attack on 26 December on a Shia mosque in Homs. Furthermore, in response to the conflict in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the region, Ajnad Bayt al-Maqdis (not listed) emerged in the Syrian Arab Republic in February and pledged allegiance to Al-Qaida. Although it claimed around four attacks against foreign military targets in the Syrian Arab Republic, the group was assessed to lack a physical presence or command structure and to exist primarily online. Al-Qaida has yet to acknowledge the group or its claimed operations.

60. Member States noted the presence of key ISIL (Da’esh) leaders and experienced Iraqi members in the Syrian Arab Republic. Some operatives avoided the Ard al-Mubaraka office, headed by Abu Abd al-Jabbar, concerned that it had been infiltrated by intelligence services. One Member State noted that Ard al-Mubaraka now covers Levant countries, Bayt al-Maqdis, Bilad al-Haramayn, the Salman al-Farisi Brigade, Sinai and Europe.

61. ISIL (Da’esh) prioritized hit-and-run attacks against religious, political and military targets. Several plots against the President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Ahmad al-Sharaa, and senior government officials, including one in early 2026 against the President, were disrupted. Abu Hudhayfa Al-Ansari (not listed), the ISIL (Da’esh) spokesperson, called for intensified attacks against al-Sharaa and his Government (see annex I).

62. While continuing to underreport its activities significantly, ISIL (Da'esh) remained active primarily in Dayr al-Zawr and the Badia, conducting monthly an estimated 20–40 unsophisticated attacks, including checkpoint raids, assassinations and vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attacks. The group sought to inflame sectarian tensions and undermine the Government's legitimacy through attacks targeting minorities. On 1 May, ISIL (Da'esh) claimed the assassination of a Shia cleric at the Sayyidah Zaynab shrine near Damascus. Some attacks also involved former so-called "Cubs of the Caliphate". ISIL (Da'esh) along with several foreign terrorist fighters also participated in armed confrontations in Dar'a and Suwayda', infiltrating tribes and other armed actors.

63. Counter-terrorism operations by international forces during the reporting period degraded ISIL (Da'esh) capabilities, particularly in the Badia, resulting in the death or capture of more than 50 fighters and the destruction of over 100 infrastructure targets and weapons caches. It also led to the targeting in January of Bilal Hasan al-Jasim (not listed), a leader affiliated with Hurras al-Din (HAD, not listed) and linked to the gunman responsible for the attack in December in Palmyra (S/2026/44, para. 55). Some Member States continued to highlight infiltration by ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida of newly formed Syrian armed forces, particularly at mid-level ranks, alongside concerns over limited resources and personnel. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic was assessed to be significantly less engaged in operations targeting Al-Qaida-aligned individuals and HAD members.

64. Despite the self-declared dissolution of Al-Qaida's Syrian affiliate, HAD, it persisted through a clandestine and decentralized structure, with up to 1,000 fighters. Members remained dispersed across Idlib, Aleppo, Homs and the outskirts of Damascus. HAD hardcore elements remained broadly hostile to al-Sharaa. Approximately 50–70 HAD members reportedly joined Syrian government forces, benefiting from less stringent vetting procedures than those applied to former ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates or leveraging connections with former Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)[2] members. Other HAD members continued to coordinate with Ansar al-Tawhid (not listed) and other armed groups. The HAD ideologue Sami al-Uraydi (not listed) reportedly remained in the Syrian Arab Republic and was active in publishing propaganda.

65. Member States expressed concerns over the integration and movement of foreign terrorist fighters in the Syrian Arab Republic, including whether they retained allegiance to Al-Qaida. The Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement/Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIM/TIP, QDe.088) in the Syrian Arab Republic was reported by one Member State to be recruiting juveniles from local Uighur communities and members of other foreign terrorist fighter groups, including Ansar al-Tawhid. Several thousand foreign terrorist fighters, including from Central Asia, remained in the Syrian Arab Republic – several opposing al-Sharaa's governance. Clashes in Idlib in early May between Syrian forces and Uzbek fighters resulted in arrests, reportedly requiring al-Sharaa's intervention to contain tensions. A few dozen members of the French-speaking, Al-Qaida-aligned Katibat al-Ghoraba al-Faransiya, led by Oumar Diaby (QDi.342), also remain hostile to al-Sharaa's Government. Some other foreign terrorist fighters have become disaffiliated and are seeking to join other groups through existing networks. ISIL (Da'esh) exploited the Government's crackdown on foreign terrorist fighters for recruitment.

66. As the largest foreign terrorist fighter group in the Syrian Arab Republic (approximately 3,500 fighters), ETIM/TIP, integrated into the 84th Division and primarily located in Idlib, continued to enhance its capabilities as part of the Syrian

[2] Delisted on 27 February 2026.

Army. Abdulaziz Dawood, alias Zahid (not listed), leader of the ETIM/TIP Syrian branch, boasted of "returning to Xinjiang, China, through jihad" in his livestreamed broadcast during Ramadan. According to one Member State, Zahid and Dolkun Isa (not listed), the former president of the World Uyghur Congress, met in 2026 in the Syrian Arab Republic, reaching a preliminary agreement on fundraising and recruitment for the group. The group maintained external aspirations and a long-term goal of ultimately establishing its "caliphate" in some Central Asian countries and in Xinjiang.

67. ISIL (Da'esh) in Iraq was at its weakest due to sustained counter-terrorism pressure by Iraqi forces. Nevertheless, the threat was connected to stronger ISIL (Da'esh) capabilities in the Syrian Arab Republic, increased activity along the Syrian-Iraqi border and efforts to reinforce its Iraq province, particularly in the western governorates. The group continued to operate under the Bilad al-Rafidayn office, led by Jassim Khalaf Dawood al-Mazroui, alias Abu Abdul-Qader, alias Abu Abd al-Muhayman (not listed), whose remit also encompassed the Islamic Republic of Iran. Some Member States assessed that constrained ISIL (Da'esh) capabilities in Iraq had prompted a more selective recruitment approach, prioritizing capable youth and foreign terrorist fighters.

68. Despite regrouping efforts, calls to action by ISIL (Da'esh) and Ramadan – which typically coincides with heightened ISIL (Da'esh) activities – the group was unable to conduct significant attacks in Iraq. Its strength was assessed in the low hundreds of fighters able to carry out unsophisticated operations.

69. ISIL (Da'esh) in Iraq was led by Ahmad Zaydan Khalaf al-Ithawi, alias Abu al-Hareth (not listed), supported by his deputy, Abu Ibrahim (not listed), and a structure comprising seven provincial units and nine directorates. The group's networks remained under pressure following the killing and arrest of key leaders, including the arrest in early 2026 of al-Anbar wali Ali Jassem Muhammad al-Rawi, alias Abu Ayman (not listed), which enabled the disruption of additional members involved in logistics, drones and management of the group's chemical file.

70. Recently transferred ISIL (Da'esh) detainees in Iraq continued to adhere to its ideology. The conflict in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the region may increase detention security risks, given continued ISIL (Da'esh) prioritization of detainee releases. In March, a drone strike by local armed actors hit near Karkh prison, which holds many transferred ISIL (Da'esh) detainees, underscoring the vulnerability of detention facilities to spillover effects from broader regional tensions.

71. The group maintained a limited presence in desert areas, generating an estimated $500,000 annually through extortion and illegal taxation of shepherds and farmers. This was enough to sustain basic operations, including payments to fighters and detained families.

72. In the wider region, States neighbouring the Syrian Arab Republic continued to highlight the growing trend of self-radicalized individuals. Recent attacks and disrupted plots in Türkiye predominantly involved youth radicalized independently, without formal affiliations or direct guidance from ISIL (Da'esh) or Al-Qaida.

C. Arabian Peninsula

73. Several Member States assessed AQAP as the Al-Qaida affiliate with the greatest intent for extraregional external operations. Despite a decline in claimed attacks inside Yemen, the group's threat increased, supported by enhanced freedom of movement and media outreach. AQAP external operations also increasingly focused on facilitating or enabling attacks from sympathisers abroad.

74. Security developments in southern Yemen in early 2026 – coupled with regional dynamics linked to the conflict in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the region and diverted counter-terrorism pressure – created additional operational space for AQAP to reorganize. Its strength remained unchanged at around 2,000 fighters of mixed nationalities, operating in small cells in Abyan, Ma'rib, Baydah, Shabwah and Wadi Hadramawt. They used improvised explosive devices less, shifting towards targeted suicide attacks and smaller, strategically placed attacks aimed at security forces. With fewer than five attacks claimed during the reporting period, some Member States assessed the group to be pursuing a "wait-and-see" strategy.

75. In parallel, AQAP enhanced its military capabilities. Several Member States reported that, amid the security vacuum in southern Yemen since January, AQAP had seized substantial quantities of weapons, including advanced jamming equipment, infrared-guided missiles, air-defence platforms, mortars, heavy machine guns and sniper rifles. AQAP is seeking to upgrade drones capable of carrying explosive payloads up to 1 kg and expanding its maritime capabilities, potentially leveraging Abyan's location on the Arabian Sea. One Member State reported that AQAP had acquired a national identity document printing machine, raising concerns over its potential use in facilitating foreign terrorist fighter movements.

76. The AQAP leader, Saad bin Atif al-Awlaki (Yemeni, not listed), reshaped the group's strategy, prioritizing tribal outreach via marriage alliances and participation in reconciliation meetings. His closest adviser, Ibrahim al-Qosi (Sudanese, not listed), leveraged external networks across the Horn of Africa to enhance AQAP external relations. Some Member States assessed al-Qosi as a contender to Sayf al-Adl within Al-Qaida's senior leadership, with signs that AQAP was becoming less reliant on al-Adl's influence. Strikes targeted several mid-level AQAP commanders. Member States noted heightened security measures among senior AQAP leaders, who increasingly limited their movements and, at times, travelled with children to deter drone strikes.

77. During the reporting period, several Al-Shabaab fighters entered Yemen through coastal routes and moved to Shabwah and Ma'rib, where they met with AQAP to exchange expertise and coordinate logistics. Some operatives later reportedly met with Houthi elements to discuss fighter movements and mutual support. Between 150 and 400 Al-Shabaab fighters reportedly received training from Houthis, underscoring growing cooperation. The targeting of the Al-Shabaab logistical facilitator Abdul Qadir Yahya Ali Ahmed al-Zabidi (not listed) in Ghaydah in mid-February temporarily disrupted Al-Shabaab-Houthi cooperation, which subsequently resumed.

78. The AQAP and Houthi relationship has evolved since January into stronger field partnership based on intelligence coordination, encompassing the provision of military supplies, including weaponry, that were previously inaccessible to AQAP. AQAP fighters were noted to be present in Houthi-controlled areas fighting alongside Houthis against the Government of Yemen.

79. The AQAP financial position improved, and the group was no longer under financial pressure. This was attributed partly to funding from Al-Shabaab and likely from AQIM and, according to some Member States, partial financial and logistical support from the Houthis. AQAP expanded domestic revenue streams by utilizing front individuals operating in the real estate and vehicle trade sectors to evade detection.

80. The AQAP media wing, Al-Malahem Media Foundation (not listed), continued to be one of Al-Qaida's most effective outlets, urging "solo jihad" globally. Member States noted that sanctioning AQAP media entities could help disrupt some of these activities.

81. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Yemen (ISIL-Yemen, QDe.166) remained weak but benefited from the security vacuum in early 2026. An ISIL spokesperson, al-Ansari, was reported to be in Yemen. ISIL-Yemen maintained an estimated 150 fighters (primarily Yemenis and from East Africa). Some Member States noted that responsibility for ISIL-Yemen was moved to the Al-Karrar office structure in East Africa, prioritizing movement of members to the Sahel, indicating an outward-focused shift despite limited local strength.

D. Europe and the Americas

82. The terrorist threat in North America and Europe[3] remained contained but persistent. It was still primarily driven by homegrown lone actors inspired by ISIL (Da'esh) propaganda online, who were involved in small-scale attack plots and lacked direct ties to the organization or its regional affiliates. Four attacks were carried out during the reporting period, three of which involved perpetrators with prior terrorism-related convictions.

83. In the United States, two attacks occurred within a five-day period. On 7 March, two Pennsylvania teenagers inspired by ISIL (Da'esh) attempted to detonate multiple improvised explosive devices at a protest outside the residence of the Mayor of New York City. On 12 March, a former National Guard member previously convicted of supporting ISIL (Da'esh) opened fire at Old Dominion University in Virginia, killing one person and wounding two others.

84. In Paris, on 13 February, an ISIL (Da'esh) supporter armed with a knife attempted to stab gendarmes, injuring one. A former member of the Sharia4Belgium movement, he had been released from prison in December 2025 after serving 13 years of a 17-year sentence for terrorism-related offences in Belgium.

85. On 28 May, another attack occurred in Switzerland, where a man stabbed passers-by at Winterthur train station near Zurich, injuring three people. The attacker had been charged with supporting ISIL (Da'esh) in 2015.

86. In June, a Belgian court sentenced seven members of a network involved in facilitating and financing ISIL (Da'esh) activities in the Syrian Arab Republic and Central Asia to prison terms ranging from 5 to 15 years. The network, which operated across several European countries, was composed primarily of individuals from the Caucasus.

87. A dozen attack plots were also disrupted. In the United States, authorities foiled a plot by an individual from North Carolina to execute a mass casualty attack on 31 December at a grocery store and a fast-food restaurant. On 5 June, three ISIL (Da'esh) supporters were arrested in Kansas and California for plotting multiple attacks. On 8 June, another ISIL (Da'esh) supporter in New Jersey was charged for planning an attack, possibly targeting the National Guard or a Jewish place of worship.

88. Security services also thwarted several attack plots, notably in France, Germany, Italy and Spain, mostly involving young pro-ISIL (Da'esh) supporters.

89. The conflict in the Islamic Republic of the Iran and the region had a limited effect among ISIL (Da'esh) or Al-Qaida supporters in North America and Europe. Interest in the conflict in Gaza also declined, although its longer-term impact on radicalization dynamics was likely to remain significant.

[3] Western and Eastern Europe.

90. The use of artificial intelligence has become a recurring feature in European counter-terrorism investigations. Several individuals used ChatGPT to seek detailed information on the manufacture of improvised explosive devices, while others requested guidance on target selection, counter-surveillance techniques, evasion of police questioning or travel to conflict zones.

E. Asia

Central and South Asia

91. Regional tensions in South Asia remained high as cross-border attacks between Pakistan and Afghanistan continued. The de facto authorities (Taliban) continued their support to the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which escalated attacks against Pakistan, provoking military exchanges. The Taliban continued publicly to deny harbouring any terrorist groups. Member States expressed concern that the conflict could create opportunities for terrorist groups, generating additional security challenges for the region.

92. The terrorist threat emanating from Afghanistan remained largely unchanged. The ability of numerous terrorist groups to operate in Afghanistan constituted an enduring threat to neighbouring countries and the Central Asian region. Despite efforts by the de facto authorities to combat Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K, QDe.161) and contain other terrorist groups, the authorities were unable to suppress the terrorist problem.

93. The greatest threat to the de facto authorities and the broader region remained ISIL-K.[4] As a result of counter-terrorism operations by Pakistan and the de facto authorities, it suffered serious setbacks, notwithstanding its continuing intent to conduct external operations. Counter-terrorism operations by the Taliban, primarily in the north and major cities, including Kabul, diminished ISIL-K capabilities. Attacks declined in Afghanistan but increased in Pakistan. ISIL-K was in a rebuilding phase, with renewed capability for infrequent but high-profile mass casualty attacks, reflecting its resilience and adaptability. Regional Member States reported that ISIL-K had modern tactical equipment, including drones, night vision devices and thermal imagers, and received training in urban combat and the use of drones. One Member State reported that ISIL-K and the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA, not listed) shared facilitation networks for the provision of logistics.

94. On 19 January, ISIL-K claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in central Kabul at a Chinese restaurant, killing 12 people and injuring 15. On 10 April, unidentified gunmen opened fire on people in front of a Shia shrine in Herat Province. At least 11 were killed and 11 others injured; neither ISIL (Da'esh) nor ISIL-K claimed responsibility, but ISIL-K has in the past had repeatedly targeted the Hazara Shia community.

95. In Pakistan, on 6 February a suicide bomber detonated explosives during Friday prayers at the Khadija Tul Kubra Shia mosque in Islamabad, accompanied by shooting, killing 32 people and injuring more than 150. The attack was claimed by a group calling itself ISIL in Pakistan but likely was conducted by ISIL-K. ISIL in Pakistan also claimed responsibility for the assassination on 5 May of the Pakistani cleric Sheikh Muhammad Idrees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

[4] Its strength remained largely unchanged (see S/2025/796, para. 77).

96. ISIL-K reportedly moved to the northern part of Afghanistan. It dispersed its training across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border region, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as well as maintaining some presence in the Kabul suburbs.

97. On 25 December, following its annual rahbari shura (leadership council), TTP announced a revised structure with two new divisions covering: (a) Balochistan and the central region; and (b) Kashmir and the division of Gilgit. The restructuring included a new division described as the TTP Air Force.

98. TTP continued to escalate attacks on Pakistan. At the beginning of March, the group announced in multiple languages its spring campaign, "Operation Khyber", calling for increased attacks in and against Pakistan, targeting security forces and civilians. One of the deadliest attacks occurred on 16 February in the Bajaur district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device killed 11 security personnel and one child, wounding others. TTP claimed responsibility, reportedly operating from Afghanistan.

99. The de facto authorities of Afghanistan relocated approximately 2,000 TTP fighters and families from the Pakistani border to further inside Afghanistan, seeking to rein in TTP. The Taliban leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada, reportedly warned the TTP leadership through back-channel communications to halt attacks targeting Pakistan or risk losing the Taliban's support.

100. Al-Qaida's status and strength in Afghanistan remained unchanged. On 28 April, Al-Qaida's official media outlet, the As-Sahab Media Foundation, published a statement supporting the Taliban and, for the first time, TTP in operations against Pakistan. While Al-Qaida provided ideological guidance, training and support to TTP in the latter's insurgency against Pakistan, this public statement was more direct. One Member State reported that BLA terrorists were trained along with TTP by Al-Qaida trainers in Afghanistan.

101. Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS, not listed) continued to evolve from a fragmented group into a regional terrorist entity; it established logistics and financial networks, working in decentralized small, scattered cells instead of large units. The attack in November 2025 on the Red Fort in Delhi was officially attributed to AQIS. There was some concern about AQIS trying to exploit Bangladesh to establish cells there.

102. AQIS formed the backbone of Ittihad-ul-Mujahideen Pakistan (IMP). It was reportedly responsible for multiple attacks, including, on 9 May, a suicide bombing and detonation of a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device near a security post in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, resulting in 21 deaths. In the same location, on 22 February, another such device was rammed into a military convoy, killing two people. The IMP leader was reported to be Waqas, alias Kalim Ullah. The AQIS leadership reportedly remained in Kabul, having been issued *tazkiras*, suggesting close cooperation between the Taliban and AQIS.

103. Regional Member States reported that ETIM/TIP was growing, reconcentrating in Badakhshan, including the Wakhan corridor, and had reportedly established new strongholds in Kunduz. The ETIM/TIP overall leader, Abdul Haq (QDi.268), ordered an increase in combat readiness through the purchase of weapons and military equipment. One Member State noted that ETIM/TIP was training its militants in Al-Qaida's newly established training camp at Barg-e Matal, Nuristan. Regional Member States reported that the group emphasized investment and the development of drones. As noted previously (S/2026/44, para. 94), the group continued to urge its members in the Syrian Arab Republic to move to Afghanistan, and reportedly some have relocated. One Member State assessed that the group was small, not growing,

militarily inactive, did not have access to advanced drones or capability to manufacture such drones and was constrained by the Taliban.

South-East Asia

104. In South-East Asia, the threat from ISIL (Da'esh)-linked entities and residual Al-Qaida influence continued to be fragmented and decentralized. The operational capacity of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in South-East Asia (ISIL-SEA, QDe.169) and affiliated regional networks declined, but risks persisted through dispersed cells, self-radicalized actors, online recruitment and loosely connected inspired networks. As a result of growing concern for the recruitment and radicalization of minors online, Australia, Indonesia and Malaysia banned social media for children under 16 years.

105. In February, Malaysian authorities arrested six youths between 16 and 21 years on charges of pledging allegiance to ISIL (Da'esh), spreading its propaganda, planning attacks and possessing material related to ISIL (Da'esh). The youths were motivated by the conflict and geopolitical crisis in the Middle East and were active on social media, encrypted communication apps and gaming platforms.

106. Investigation of the Bondi Beach attack on 14 December, the worst terrorist attack in Australia, which targeted the Jewish community at a "Hannukah by the Sea" event, found that the suspects were inspired by ISIL (Da'esh) ideology and had travelled previously to regions associated with terrorist activity. The surviving suspect was charged and is awaiting trial. A Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion was convened to examine the circumstances surrounding the attack.

III. Impact assessment

A. Resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2462 (2019) on the financing of terrorism

107. Affiliates of Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) continued to rely primarily on locally generated revenue streams in areas under their control, such as illicit taxation, extortion and exploitation of legitimate businesses. Several Member States reported an uptick in kidnapping for ransom, a tactic utilized by some groups to raise funds, notably in West Africa.

108. ASWJ continued to extort fishing boats, transportation trucks and trade in marine life, such as sea cucumbers and sea horses. Member States noted incidents of kidnapping for ransom, with demands ranging from $20 to $50, and in some cases above $500 depending on the target. Informal value transfer systems allowed small-scale, recurrent transfers by ASWJ to blend into legitimate economic activity and routine financial flows within the region, obscuring detection.

109. ADF fundraising combined local revenue generation, such as illicit taxation and extortion, with support from regional financial facilitation networks. Nkalubo, an ADF financial facilitator, developed an expansive facilitation network, generating and moving funds through mobile payments and cryptocurrency, in addition to traditional banking systems and informal value transfer systems. He reportedly managed his own crypto wallet from his location in the Madina camp, while Abu Waqas used a credit card for online purchases, delivered to third countries and subsequently transported to the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo overland by ADF couriers.

110. Despite a significant decrease in revenues, ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia moved funds primarily through *hawala* and virtual payments, such as through Skrill, a digital wallet and online payment platform, enabling it to store money electronically, send and receive money internationally, pay merchants online and exchange currency without using conventional banks. Yellow Card, a stablecoin infrastructure, facilitated the purchase, sale and exchange of stablecoins through local currencies.

111. Boko Haram was reported to have demanded ransom in March for seven Chadian nationals in the tri-border region of Cameroon, the Niger and Nigeria. The group reportedly asked for approximately €760,000 for a doctor and €76,000 for the remaining hostages.

112. AQAP increasingly relied on tribal sympathizers and third parties with no known links to terrorism to conceal financial activities such as investments in real estate, local businesses and car sales, underscoring the importance of enhanced due diligence to identify beneficial ownership. Al-Shabaab employed similar methods and exploited unwitting third parties by paying them for identity documents subsequently used to open bank accounts and conduct financial transfers on the group's behalf.

113. ISIL-K reportedly expanded kidnap-for-ransom activities targeting foreign workers and companies in northern Afghanistan while adapting its fundraising following arrests of key individuals in 2025. *Voice of Khorasan* was inconsistent in crypto appeals, removing donation QR codes from the April edition.

114. Member States have provided an increasing amount of information on digital currency addresses of individuals and entities associated with ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and affiliates, including in listing proposals. The United Nations sanctions list, however, currently does not accommodate digital currency addresses.

115. Member States did not report information about the theft or abuse of cultural heritage (under Security Council resolution 2347 (2017)) or on aid diversion or the abuse of humanitarian assistance (under Council resolution 2761 (2024)).

116. Member States did not provide information concerning involvement in trafficking in persons or sexual and gender-based violence (under Security Council resolution 2734 (2024)).

B. Resolution 2396 (2017) on foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators

117. Foreign terrorist fighters continued to be attracted to a range of different theatres. In most conflict zones, numbers travelling remained relatively low and routes changed rapidly. Organized crime groups were sometimes used to facilitate travel.

118. Foreign terrorist fighters in the Syrian Arab Republic remained a key concern, particularly following the closure of camps in the north-east of the country and the large number of foreign former detainees that remained unaccounted for.

119. There were reports of former detainees looking to return to their home countries. For example, around 30 women and children returned to Australia; some of the women were subsequently arrested. Few other former detainees, however, appeared to have tried to return home yet.

120. Some were reported to be looking to travel from the Syrian Arab Republic to Afghanistan. In late 2025, Saifuddin Tadjibaev and Gulmurod Khalimov travelled to Afghanistan. The latter spoke to ISIL-K commanders in Kunar in November 2025, advocating invading Tajikistan. A former Al-Qaida member, Abu Bakr Badakhshani,

who took part in the offensive against the former Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, reportedly entered Afghanistan in late 2025. Although there were isolated cases, such as a small number of Syrians detained travelling on foreign passports, significant numbers of travellers from the Syrian Arab Republic had not yet been confirmed.

121. Action led by the Government of Somalia constrained but did not eliminate the flow of foreign terrorist fighters to join ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia. Some foreign terrorist fighters were diverted to other conflict zones. There were reports that a small number of Al-Shabaab fighters had travelled from Somalia to Afghanistan.

122. Al-Shabaab maintained activities through its Jaysh Ayman wing, which consisted of non-Somali fighters drawn from the region. It recruited through peer-to-peer networks, social media and encrypted online platforms. The movement of fighters was facilitated by organized crime groups, exploiting porous borders and clan-linked corridors into Somalia.

123. ISWAP repeatedly encouraged foreign terrorist fighters to join its ranks. However, there were no indications that significant numbers of foreign terrorist fighters had travelled to the region recently.

IV. Implementation of sanctions measures

124. In the reporting period, three individuals were added to the sanctions list maintained by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and seven were removed. On 27 February, the entry for Al-Nusrah Front (alias HTS) was also removed.

125. The list was last updated on 21 May 2026 and contains 249 individuals and 88 entities.

126. The Monitoring Team noted again that the sanctions regime must continue to evolve as the threat changes, and encouraged Member States to propose designations.

A. Travel ban

127. No requests for travel ban exemptions were approved during the reporting period.

B. Asset freeze

128. Three requests for basic asset freeze exemptions or for amending the terms of previously granted exemptions were approved by the Committee.

C. Arms embargo

129. In the Sahel and West Africa, JNIM possessed the most advanced drone capability among ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida affiliates. The group operated modified commercial drones, notably DJI Mavic 3 models, as well as systems captured from government forces. Its drone strikes remained rudimentary, though, typically involving improvised munitions such as 60 mm mortar shells or modified hand grenades. In most cases, payloads were dropped rather than delivered via impact. ISGS drone capability appeared more limited, although the group deployed several drones during the attack on Niamey international airport, likely for reconnaissance

and tactical coordination. There was no indication that JNIM, ISGS or ISWAP had deployed fibre-optic drones or had adopted tactics such as drone swarm attacks.

130. In the Syrian Arab Republic, ISIL (Da'esh) attacks during the reporting period involved small arms or improvised explosive devices. A significant part of the advanced weaponry reportedly looted from former Syrian government bases was likely degraded by counter-terrorism operations and air strikes conducted by the Global Coalition against Da'esh, including those carried out in December and early January.

131. In Afghanistan, five years after the Taliban takeover, the availability of large quantities of advanced weapons and other military equipment continued to enable the de facto authorities to transfer such weapons to TTP and other groups (S/2025/482, para. 130). Some Member States reported that the proliferation of advanced weapon systems, including night vision goggles, had improved listed entities' fighting capabilities and their lethality to security forces.

132. Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) have shown a sustained interest over many years in developing chemical and biological weapons, but so far have failed to overcome the associated technical challenges. Instructions on how to develop such weapons have been shared widely within online terrorist communities. For example, in February, ISIL (Da'esh)'s English-language *Invade* magazine included instructions on how to develop botulinum toxin and cyanide. ISIL-K has shown a particular interest, and over the past 12 months circulated instructions on developing the toxin ricin. At the end of 2025, Indian authorities arrested three people, including a doctor, who had been tasked by an ISIL (Da'esh) cell abroad to develop ricin. ISIL (Da'esh) in the Syrian Arab Republic also reportedly attempted to acquire chemicals left over by the former Government and reportedly kidnapped a former chemical engineer to help.

V. Recommendations

133. The Monitoring Team recommends that:

(a) The Committee write to Member States highlighting the threat of the misuse of third parties in terrorism financing cases and encouraging the implementation of relevant Financial Action Task Force recommendations concerning the identification of ultimate beneficial ownership in terrorism-related investigations. Additionally, the Team notes the need for further enhanced engagement with the Task Force and Task Force-style regional bodies to raise awareness of terrorist groups' investments in legitimate businesses, where ultimate beneficial ownership is obscured;

(b) In light of the increased use of cryptocurrency by terrorist groups, the Secretariat explore the creation of a dedicated "digital currency address" field in the sanctions list in consultation with relevant Panels of Experts;

(c) The Chair raise the need to increase the word limit for this report, which has been successively reduced over the past 12 months for budgetary reasons, leading to a significant loss of detail, noting that it covers a global sanctions regime.

VI. Monitoring Team activities and feedback

134. The present report covers the period from 16 December 2025 to 9 June 2026.

135. The report is based on Member State contributions and assessments. The Monitoring Team is grateful for Member States' continued support and engagement.

136. Reliable data, for example, regarding the number of fighters aligned with specific groups, are difficult to obtain. Where possible, the report reflects either consensus or a range of Member State views.

137. The Monitoring Team notes that the financial uncertainty in the United Nations has seriously impaired its ability to travel and engage with Member States, as well as the length of – and therefore the detail contained in – this report.

138. The Monitoring Team welcomes feedback at 1267mt@un.org.

Annex I

Terrorist Propaganda

1. Propaganda output from Al-Qaida, ISIL (Da'esh), and their affiliates, remained prolific and in multiple languages[1]. Some affiliates, notably ISIL-K, appeared to be using AI tools to translate and rapidly circulate propaganda.

2. There were more than 100 unofficial ISIL (Da'esh) 'supporter groups' online, spreading propaganda across platforms with record engagement rates. For example, the ISIL-aligned Al-Iman Media published incitement targeting Pope Leo XIV during his visit to Spain in June, identifying potential routes and venues for attack. It also encouraged attacks on FIFA World Cup 2026 stadiums in North America and called on supporters to set fire to synagogues.

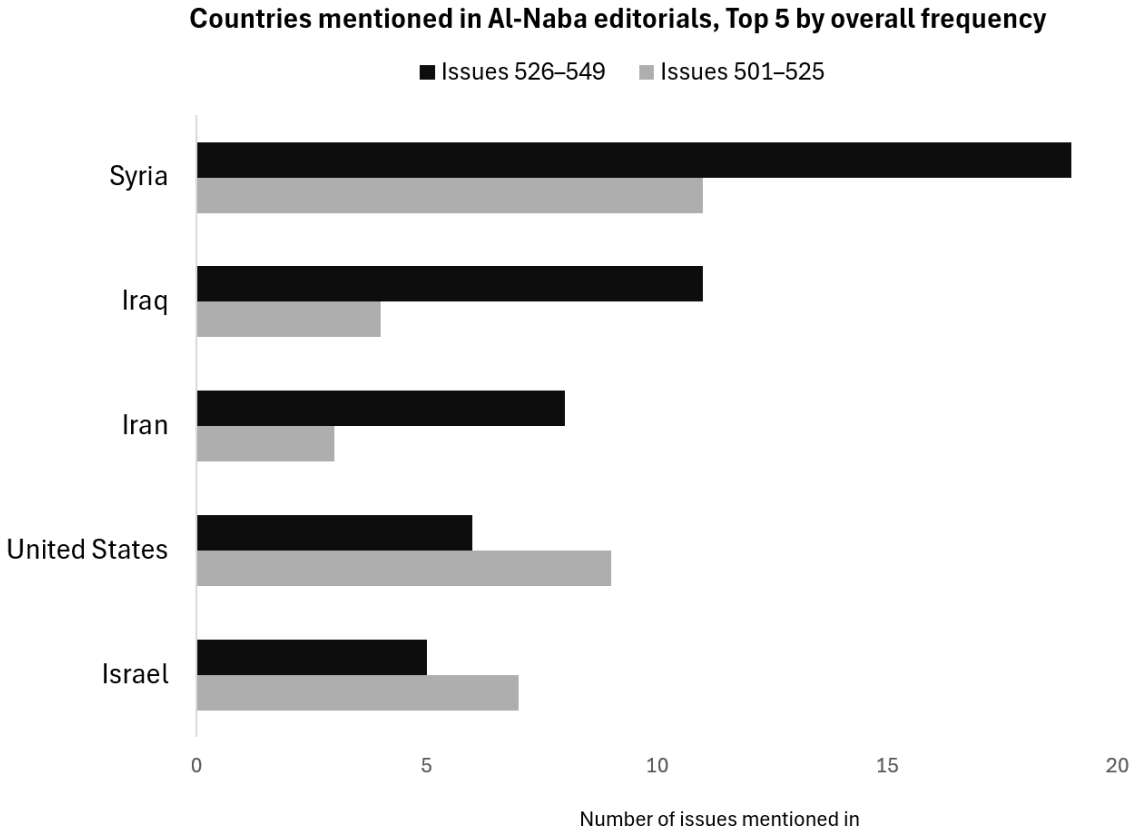
3. There were similar, though fewer, 'supporter groups' associated with Al-Qaida.

4. Supporters often pre-emptively created back-up accounts and channels to mitigate the impact of takedowns.

5. Both terrorist groups put effort into following, and trying to respond to, regional and global developments. However, their messaging was not always very agile or adept. For example, ISIL (Da'esh)'s initial response to the closure of the Al-Hawl camp in north-east Syria was criticized by its followers as being flat-footed and limp. Similarly, on 28 April Al-Qaida put out a statement of support for the Afghan Taliban (and, for the first time, support for TTP) against the Pakistani government; the statement was dated, though, nearly a month before it was issued.

6. ISIL (Da'esh) propaganda remained centred around its weekly newsletter, *Al-Naba*. Many of the editorials in Al-Naba continued to be focused on geopolitical or doctrinal issues, rather than operational ones. In comparison with the previous reporting period, there was a marked increase in references to Syria, Iraq, and Iran, and a small decrease in references to the United States of America and Israel.

[1] ISIL-K recently added Kazakh to its language portfolio



7. ISIL (Da'esh)'s African branches dominated Eid propaganda with imagery projecting strength and territorial presence. ISWAP conducted half of ISIL (Da'esh)'s Ramadan attacks globally and vigorously promoted associated propaganda. ISGS's January attack on Niamey's international airport was documented extensively through a series of communiqués and a detailed report chronicling the assault. Several Member States noted the improving quality of ISIL (Da'esh) media operations. Notably, the quality of footage shared by the ADF had improved markedly over the past year, indicating a more sophisticated propaganda campaign and possibly a desire to be recognised as one of the more effective and active ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates on the continent.

8. In February, a media outlet in Pakistan connected with ISIL (Da'esh) released an English-language propaganda magazine called *Invade*. The production quality and content closely mirrored that of ISIL-K publications. It had a strong operational focus, and included instructions on how to make botulinum toxin, poison oleander, and cyanide. In early May, it followed up with an appeal for crypto-currency donations.

9. ISIL-K's media output declined in 2025, likely due to the loss of key media personnel, but the network has proven resilient. Publication resumed in early 2026 with a new issue of *Voice of Khorasan* and resumption of a delayed Pashto edition focusing on trying to delegitimize the Taliban's religious authority and encourage plots in the West. ISIL-K's "Light in Darkness" campaign also promoted the use of online security tools and cryptocurrencies to strengthen supporters' operational security and to facilitate fundraising.

10. Propaganda from Al-Qaida central leadership was more limited, and sporadic. A central theme of Al-Qaida's central media, *As-Sahab Media Foundation*, was to encourage its affiliates to develop relationships with non-traditional partners to achieve their goals.

11. AQAP's *Al-Malahem Media Foundation* was the most vocal Al-Qaida affiliate. It addressed a range of geopolitical issues, e.g. congratulating JNIM in Mali. In March, it issued AQAP's *Inspire Guide 12*. This focused on the terrorist attack at Bondi Beach, even though the attack was carried out in the name of ISIL (Da'esh)[2]. Previous Inspire Guides have similarly implied a link to Al-Qaida where none appeared to exist. Guide 12 also regurgitated an article by the so-called 'AQ Chef' Ibrahim al-Asiri (QDi.291), who was reported killed in 2017. This suggests a dearth of new content.

12. JNIM's *Al-Zallaqa Foundation* remained prolific. The group claimed several hundred attacks, criticized regional governments and sought to emphasize its ties to local religious figures or communities. It also prominently featured one of its spokespersons, Abu Hudhayfa al-Bambari (not listed), likely as part of efforts to strengthen outreach to the Bambara community in southern Mali. JNIM also extensively publicized its offensive in Mali. Its cooperation with the FLA, acknowledged in several statements, was strongly condemned by ISIL in an editorial published in Al-Naba on 30 April.

Regional developments

13. On 3 February, Al-Qaida's *As-Sahab Media Foundation* put out a statement appealing for its supporters to mobilize and "target these Crusader armies throughout the entire region". This statement reportedly caused some concern amongst its followers, as it was seen as tacit support for Iran. No Al-Qaida affiliates amplified nor responded to this message.

14. On 4 March the Cyber Jihad Movement[3] (CJM) announced its "entrance into the Iranian-American war and the Afghanistan-Pakistan war". It remains unclear whether CJM carried out any associated cyber operations.

15. On 26 February, ISIL (Da'esh)'s weekly Al-Naba carried an editorial criticizing Al-Qaida for being 'indoctrinated' by, and colluding with, Iran. The following week, Al-Naba called for "the eradication" of Shia communities, which was a "greater good" than targeting Jewish communities. Although this prioritization is not necessarily new, it is the clearest statement in a while that prioritizes attacking the Shia community.

[2] ISIL (Da'esh) claimed to have 'inspired' the attack, and ISIL-K presented it as a model to be replicated.

[3] 37th MT report noted that "In August [2025] Cyber Jihad Movement, an established hacker group, pledged its allegiance to Sayf al-Adl, thereby potentially increasing Al-Qaida cyber capabilities" (para 11). Its relationship to Al-Qaida, however, remains ambiguous.

Statement by Da’esh spokesman

16. On 21 February, the ISIL spokesperson, Abu Hudhaya al-Ansari (not listed) issued his first public statement for nearly two years (the last being in March 2024). The statement coincided approximately with the beginning of Ramadan.

17. Although he did not refer explicitly to the situation in north-east Syria, he emphasized the importance of operations there. The statement also did not refer to the build-up of forces at the time in and around Iran. This suggests that the statement may have been recorded much earlier.

18. Al-Ansari promoted a model of decentralized, persistent operations, marking a shift from territorial control to a global, networked insurgency. In contrast to his previous message in 2024 that celebrated ISIL (Da’esh) successes, the tone of the message was more downbeat, and noted the pressure that ISIL (Da’esh) was under.

Comparison between Al-Ansari messages, March 2024 and February 2026

Key similarities:

- Focus on Africa. Both messages referred repeatedly to operations in Sahel, Central and East Africa; this was presented as evidence that ISIL (Da’esh) territorial control was expanding.
- Appeal for lone-actor attacks. Both called on “lone lions” to strike targets in Europe and America. The 2026 message was more operationally specific, however, and name-checked New Orleans and Bondi Beach attacks.

Key differences:

- Tone. While the 2024 message was triumphalist, the 2026 message acknowledged that ISIL (Da’esh) was in “a difficult position” after 2 years “drenched in blood”.
- Syria. Entirely absent in 2024; a new strategic priority in 2026, with the Syrian government declared ‘apostate’ and a primary target.
- Gaza. Central to the 2024 message, and Da’esh’s appeals for action; almost entirely absent in 2026.

Annex II

Recruitment and mobilization of youth and minors

1. Terrorist groups have long tried to prey on the vulnerable for recruitment and mobilization.

2. In some parts of the world, recruitment of youth and minors[1] [2] by Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) has been an established tactic for many years.

3. For example, ISIL (Da'esh) established its "Cubs of the Caliphate" programme around 2014, targeting boys between 10 and 15 years old. Many of the former 'Cubs' were previously detained in Al-Hawl Camp in north-east Syria. The Monitoring Team has also reported that ISIL-K indoctrinated children in madrassas, establishing a suicide training course for minors aged approximately 14 years old[3].

4. However, as the Monitoring Team has previously noted, the trend towards recruitment and mobilization of youth and minors appears to be accelerating and expanding[4]. Member State reporting suggests it is an increasingly prominent feature of the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and their affiliates. It is unclear whether this is a formal and centralized strategy; it seems more likely to be the result of individual initiatives rather than organized efforts.

5. Many appear to be recruited and mobilized entirely online. 'Traditional' spaces such as prisons or community centers have become less influential. Timelines for recruitment also appear to be reducing further. Member States report cases where recruitment has taken weeks, making it difficult for authorities to detect and intervene.

6. However, neither ISIL (Da'esh) nor Al-Qaida focus exclusively on recruitment of youth and minors, nor on online recruitment. There remains no single pathway to recruitment nor mobilization.

7. Member States suggest that there are three common trends:

- Increased proliferation and availability of terrorist content online. This is exacerbated by some social media companies' algorithmic amplification of content.

- Declining reliance on physical contact between recruiters and prospects. Whereas it was once assumed that there needed to be some form of face-to-face interaction for an individual to be recruited and mobilized, this no longer appears to be the case.

- Increased propaganda and outreach tailored to younger audiences, on a wider variety of platforms (e.g. online gaming and game-adjacent platforms).

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[1] For the purposes of this paper, 15-24 year-olds are defined as youth, and younger than 15 are defined as minors. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf)

[2] This includes those who were inspired to act on behalf of Al-Qaida, ISIL (Da'esh) and their affiliates.

[3] 36th MT report (S/2025/482), paragraph 86.

[4] 37th MT report, (S/2026/44) paragraph 137.

8. Both Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) have continued to experiment with different recruitment strategies, which are constantly evolving, including in order to evade online content moderation.

9. Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) use a variety of communication platforms to glorify violence and promote an idealized life under their rule. They have been adept at trying to exploit global developments. For example, a number of Member States have reported that the 7 October 2023 attacks and subsequent developments, and associated media coverage, have been used by both Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) in their recruitment efforts.

10. There is some evidence to suggest that ideology can be progressively less important for recruitment the younger the potential recruit, and that the appeal to violence itself can be a driver for recruitment and mobilization. Exposure to gore videos or niche websites (especially those that espouse extreme violence) or antisemitic material is often the starting point for recruitment rather than ideology.

11. Initial contact is often made on social media sites or gaming and game-adjacent platforms. Once a potential recruit has been identified, they are directed to encrypted apps (such as Telegram, WhatsApp, Element, Discord, Threema, or Zangi), or on the dark web, for further indoctrination and tasking. In this way, potential recruits are identified and filtered for recruitment, and the identity of the recruiters is concealed.

12. Reporting suggests that terrorist plots involving youth and minors are less likely to succeed and are more likely to be detected and disrupted. This gap may narrow over time[5].

Regional variations

13. Regional variation in patterns and approaches to recruitment and mobilization can be discerned. This may be, in part, due to the ease of online access, preferred communication channels, and cultural issues.

14. While online recruitment appears prominent in some regions, coercive recruitment and economic incentives may continue to play an important role in other regions. This is often driven by strategic utility: children are cheaper to sustain, more easily indoctrinated, possibly less likely to refuse orders, and can be used in a variety of roles.

15. Coerced mobilization is mostly observed in conflict-affected environments, where survival considerations likely outweigh ideological considerations.

16. Underlying risk factors can include conflict exposure, psychological and economic vulnerability, and social isolation, with the prevalence of these factors varying across regions.

17. A pattern of terrorist groups using youth and minors as 'pay for play'/crime-as-service actors has not yet been observed by Member States.

[5] The attack on Saint Elias Church in Damascus in June 2025 apparently involved former 'Cubs of the Caliphate'.

18. Existing research, however, remains concentrated on recruitment and mobilization primarily in Europe and North America. There are significant analytical gaps regarding Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. These should be addressed as a priority.

Case study: JNIM

20. Recruitment and mobilization of youth and minors is a central pillar of JNIM's long-term strategy. It adopts a localized approach, producing propaganda that is culturally and linguistically tailored to its audience. JNIM has deliberately used younger figures in propaganda to appeal to youth (e.g. Nabi Diara aka Abu Hadaifa, and Mahmoud Barry aka Hamza Al-Fulani, not listed). It uses encrypted platforms, such as Telegram and WhatsApp, as well as more mainstream social media, to target younger audiences.

Case study: France

21. In France, 80% of the more than 50 individuals involved in attack plots (completed or foiled) since 2023 have been under the age of 25, with minors accounting for 29% of the total.

22. However, most youth-related cases involve disrupted plots. The proportion of young individuals drops significantly when only completed attacks are considered: since 2023, only one of the eight perpetrators of attacks conducted in France was under 25. This may reflect less robust counter-surveillance capabilities in this age group and/or a lower propensity to progress from intent to execution.

23. Analysis of these profiles indicates that the vast majority radicalized and socialized exclusively online. Content aligned with ISIL (Da'esh) remains by far the dominant ideological influence among young French radicals, while Al-Qaida propaganda has very limited traction. Traditional spaces such as extremist mosques, prisons or community centers appear less significant, although some radical elements within certain diaspora communities still tend to gather in physical settings (for example, mixed martial arts gymnasiums frequented by North-Caucasians).

Case study: Türkiye

24. In Türkiye, recent data indicates that in many cases involving violent radicalization, the individuals detained were under the age of 18. There was also an upwards trend in lone-actor attacks conducted by youth. A shared trait in these cases involved youth being inspired by propaganda and extremist content online, rather than directed by a terrorist organization – a trend also witnessed elsewhere in Europe.

25 Young people detained for engaging with pro-ISIL (Da'esh) content online often share several underlying vulnerabilities: social isolation, a desire to prove themselves, and an underdeveloped understanding of crime and consequence. In many cases, they encounter pro-ISIL content exclusively on the internet, without any in-person contact with supporters in their everyday lives.

26 Many of these individuals had no prior history of violent behaviour before being drawn into extremist content online.