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Country Report on Terrorism 2022 - Chapter 5 - Al-Murabitoun

Aka al-Mulathamun Battalion; al-Mulathamun Brigade; al-Muwaqqi'un bil-Dima; Those Signed in Blood Battalion; Signatories in Blood; Those Who Sign in Blood; Witnesses in Blood; Signed-in-Blood Battalion; Masked Men Brigade; Khaled Abu al-Abbas Brigade; al-Mulathamun Masked Ones Brigade; the Sentinels.

Description: Al-Murabitoun is now a component of JNIM and was designated as an FTO on December 19, 2013, originally under the name al-Mulathamun Battalion. Al-Murabitoun was originally part of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) but became a separate organization in 2012 after its leader, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, split from AQIM. After the split, Belmokhtar threatened to fight against western interests and announced the creation of the al-Mulathamun Battalion. In 2013 the al-Mulathamun Battalion and the Mali-based Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (known as MUJAO) announced that the two organizations would merge under the name "al-Murabitoun." In 2015, al-Murabitoun announced a re-merger with AQIM. In 2017 the Sahara Branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front came together to form Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM).

Activities: Since 2013, al-Murabitoun has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks involving civilians, including an attack against a gas facility in southeastern Algeria where more than 800 people were taken hostage during the four-day siege, resulting in the deaths of 39 civilians, including three U.S. citizens; and an attack at the La Terrasse restaurant in Bamako, Mali, that killed a French national, a Belgian national, and three Malians in 2015. Al-Murabitoun also has been involved in attacks against military personnel, claiming responsibility for a 2017 suicide car

bombing at a military camp in Mali that killed more than 47 people and fighting against French forces in Mali in 2018.

Between 2015 and 2016, al-Murabitoun was involved in a series of hotel attacks, claiming responsibility for a hotel siege in central Mali and participating in the strike against the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako in 2015. More than 170 people, including U.S. citizens, were taken hostage in the Radisson attack and at least 26 people were killed, among them a U.S. international development worker. Al-Murabitoun reportedly also was involved in the 2016 AQIM attack on a hotel in Burkina Faso that killed nearly 30, including a U.S. citizen.

In December, Fawaz Ould Ahmed was extradited to the United States to face charges including the murder of a U.S. citizen and conspiracy to provide material support to AQIM and al-Murabitoun. Ahmed admitted to a Malian court in 2020 to carrying out the La Terrasse restaurant attack and planning hotel attacks including the Raddison Blu Hotel attack in 2015. Al-Murabitoun did not separately claim responsibility for any attacks in 2022.

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, and Niger.

Funding and External Aid: In addition to the support it may receive through its connections to other terrorist organizations in the region, al-Murabitoun is likely funded through kidnapping for ransom and other criminal activities.

Associated documents

Document ID 2101635 Chapter

30 November 2023 | [USDOS – US Department of State](#) (Author)

Algeria

Annual report on terrorism (covering 2022)

[Country Report on Terrorism 2022 - Chapter 1 - Algeria](#) (Periodical Report, English)

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Mali

Brief description of the Ansar al-Dine (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2022)

[Country Report on Terrorism 2022 - Chapter 5 - Ansar al-Dine \(AAD\)](#) (Periodical Report, English)

en

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Burkina Faso

Annual report on terrorism (covering 2022)

[Country Report on Terrorism 2022 - Chapter 1 - Burkina Faso](#) (Periodical Report, English)

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Libya

Annual report on terrorism (covering 2022)

[Country Report on Terrorism 2022 - Chapter 1 - Libya](#) (Periodical Report, English)

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Niger

Annual report on terrorism (covering 2022)

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Brief description of the Al-Murabitoun (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2022)

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