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Country Report on Terrorism 2018 - Chapter 5 - Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya

Aka Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in Libya; Wilayat Barqa; Wilayat Fezzan; Wilayat Tripolitania; Wilayat Tarabulus; Wilayat al-Tarabulus.

Description: The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya (ISIL-Libya) was designated as a FTO on May 20, 2016. In 2014, ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi dispatched a group of ISIS operatives from Syria to Libya to establish a branch of the terrorist group. In October 2014, several hundred operatives set up a base in Darnah, and the next month, Baghdadi formally established the branch after announcing he had accepted oaths of allegiance from fighters in Libya.

Activities: Since becoming established, the group has carried out multiple attacks in the country and has threatened to expand ISIS's presence into other countries in Africa. In January 2015, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a luxury hotel in Tripoli, Libya, that killed eight people, including a U.S. contractor.

In February 2015, ISIL-Libya released a propaganda video showing the murder of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians who had been kidnapped in Sirte, Libya, in two separate incidents in December 2014 and January 2015. Also in February, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for bomb attacks against a petrol station, a police station, and the home of parliamentary speaker Agila Salah in the town of al-Qubbah. The attacks killed at least 40 people and wounded dozens of others.

From 2015 to 2016, ISIL-Libya doubled its presence in the country; in early 2016, reports suggested the group counted as many as 6,000 fighters in its ranks. In 2016, ISIL-Libya expanded operations into Libya's oil crescent, launching attacks on some of the country's largest oil installations: burning oil tanks, killing dozens, and forcing facilities to shut down operations.

In December 2016, Libyan forces drove ISIL-Libya from its stronghold and main base in Sirte into the desert areas and neighboring cities. In January and September 2017, U.S. air strikes killed an estimated 100 ISIL-Libya fighters in Libya.

In May 2018, ISIL-Libya claimed an attack on Libya's electoral commission headquarters in Tripoli that killed 14 people. In September, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on Libya's National Oil Company headquarters that left two dead and 10 others wounded. In October, ISIL-Libya was implicated in an attack on a town in central

Libya that resulted in five people killed and 10 others kidnapped. In December, ISIL-Libya attacked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, killing three people, and later claimed responsibility for the attack.

Strength: Earlier estimates of ISIL-Libya suggest the group has fewer than 500 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIL-Libya is no longer in control of any major cities in Libya but continues to operate in rural regions in central and southern Libya and in the western town of Sabratha.

Funding and External Aid: ISIL-Libya’s funding comes from a variety of sources, including criminal activity, such as smuggling and extortion, and external funding. The group also receives support from ISIS.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2018)



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