

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	536
Land:	Pakistan
Kilde:	US Department of State
Titel:	Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 5 - Haqqani Network (HQN)
Udgivet:	24. juni 2020
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	31. august 2020

Document #2032611

USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 5 - Haqqani Network (HQN)

Aka HQN

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

Activities: HQN has planned and carried out numerous significant kidnappings and attacks against U.S. and Coalition Forces in Afghanistan, the Afghan government, and civilian targets. In September 2011, HQN wounded 77 U.S. soldiers in a truck bombing in Wardak province and conducted a 19-hour attack on the U.S. Embassy and International Security Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, killing 16 Afghans. In June 2012, an HQN suicide bomb attack against Forward Operating Base Salerno killed two U.S. soldiers and wounded more than 100 others.

In April 2016, HQN was blamed for an attack in Kabul against a government security agency tasked with providing protection to senior government officials. This attack was the deadliest in Kabul in 15 years, killing 64 people and injuring more than 300. Afghan officials also blamed HQN for a June 2016 double suicide attack outside of Kabul against Afghan police cadets and first responders; 30 people were killed.

On May 31, 2017, a truck bomb exploded in Kabul, killing more than 150 people. Afghan officials blamed HQN for the attack. In October, an American woman and her family were recovered after five years of HQN captivity.

HQN was believed to be responsible for a January 2018 ambulance bombing in Kabul that killed more than 100 people. Afghan officials blamed HQN for a January 2018 attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul that killed 22 people, including Americans. HQN was also blamed for a May 2018 attack on the Afghan interior ministry that resulted in the death of a police officer.

In November 2019, the HQN released two hostages, including a U.S. citizen, who were kidnapped at gunpoint in August 2016. Afghan authorities also released Anas Haqqani, a leading figure and fundraiser for HQN.

Strength: HQN is estimated to have between 3,000 and 5,000 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan and Pakistan

Funding and External Aid: HQN is primarily funded from taxing local commerce, extortion, smuggling, and other licit and illicit business ventures. In addition to the funding it receives as part of the broader Afghan Taliban, the group receives some funds from donors in Pakistan and the Gulf.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of the Haqqani Network (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2019)

Countries:

Afghanistan, Pakistan

Source:

[USDOS – US Department of State](#)

Original link:

<https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/#HQN>

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Published:

24 June 2020

Document ID:

2032611

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