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USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 5 - ISIL-Libya

Aka Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Libya; 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 an FTO on May 20, 2016. In 2014, then-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 following month, Baghdadi formally established the branch after announcing he had accepted oaths of allegiance from fighters in Libya.

Activities: Since becoming established, ISIS-Libya has carried out multiple attacks throughout Libya 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 from Sirte, Libya, in two separate incidents in December 2014 and January 2015. That same month, 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. These attacks killed more than 40 people and wounded dozens of others.

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, Libyan forces drove ISIL-Libya from its main stronghold in Sirte and into the desert areas and neighboring cities.

In May 2018, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for 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 claimed responsibility for an attack on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that killed three people.

In May 2019, ISIL-Libya claimed responsibility for a number of attacks on the Libyan National Army (LNA). These included a dawn assault on a military training camp in the southern city of Sebha which killed at least nine soldiers and an attack on the town of Zillah in which three soldiers were killed and four captured.

Strength: ISIL-Libya is estimated to have fewer than 500 fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Libya

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 ISIL-Libya (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2019)

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Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and
Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien
[T \(Telefon\)](tel:+43158900583) +43 1 589 00 583
[F \(Fax\)](tel:+43158900589) +43 1 589 00 589
info@ecoi.net

Contact
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