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aka Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis; Ansar Jerusalem; Supporters of Jerusalem; Ansar Bayt al-Maqdes; Ansar Beit al-Maqdis; ISIL Sinai Province; Islamic State-Sinai Province; Islamic State in the Sinai; Jamaat Ansar Beit al-Maqdis; Jamaat Ansar Beit al-Maqdis fi Sinaa; Sinai Province; Supporters of the Holy Place; The State of Sinai; Wilayat Sinai

Description: Originally designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on April 9, 2014, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM) rose to prominence in 2011 following the uprisings in Egypt. It is responsible for attacks against Israeli and Egyptian government and security elements, and against tourists in Egypt. In November 2014, ABM officially declared allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). In September 2015, the Department of State amended ABM's designation to add the primary name ISIL Sinai Province (ISIL-SP).

Activities: ISIL-SP has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Israeli interests, including a July 2012 attack against a Sinai pipeline exporting gas to Israel and an August 2012 rocket attack on the southern Israeli city of Eilat. In September 2012, ISIL-SP militants attacked an Israeli border patrol, killing one soldier and injuring another.

In October 2013, ISIL-SP claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing targeting the South Sinai Security Directorate in el Tor, which killed three people and injured more than 45. In January 2014, ISIL-SP successfully downed an Egyptian military helicopter in a missile attack, killing five soldiers on board. In 2014 the group also claimed responsibility for four attacks involving car bombs and hand grenades in Cairo, which left six people dead and more than 70 wounded.

ISIL-SP has targeted government officials, including the September 2013 attempted assassination of the Egyptian Interior Minister, and the January 2014 assassination of the head of the Interior Minister's technical office. In February 2014, ISIL-SP claimed responsibility for the bombing of a tour bus in the Sinai Peninsula, killing the Egyptian driver and three South Korean tourists; the attack was ISIL-SP's first against foreign tourists.

In October 2014, ISIL-SP beheaded four individuals who it claimed spied for Israel. Also in October, ISIL-SP claimed an attack on a security checkpoint that killed 33 Egyptian soldiers and wounded 26 others, including civilians.

In April 2015, ISIL-Sinai claimed responsibility for three separate attacks on Egyptian security forces on the same day in Northern Sinai, which claimed the lives of 12 people, including one civilian. On November 4, ISIL-SP released an audio recording in which it claimed responsibility for the bombing of a Russian passenger plane carrying 224 people as it flew from the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh to St. Petersburg, Russia on October 31. All 224 passengers and seven crew members were killed. ISIL-SP also claimed a suicide bombing that killed four Egyptian police officers and wounded at least five civilians in northern Sinai in November 2015.

On August 5, 2015, ISIL-SP claimed responsibility for the July 22 abduction of Croatian citizen Tomislav Salopek, who worked as a topographer for a French energy company. Salopek was kidnapped in the western desert, approximately 20 km west of the Cairo suburb of 6th of October City. ISIL-SP demanded the release of all female Muslims in Egyptian prisons within 48 hours in exchange for Salopek. Salopek was ultimately beheaded and ISIL-SP claimed responsibility for the killing.

Strength: ISIL-SP is estimated to have several hundred fighters in the Sinai Peninsula and affiliated cells in the Nile Valley.

Location/Area of Operation: ISIL-SP operations are based out of the Sinai Peninsula, but its reach extends to Cairo, the Egyptian Nile Valley, as well as possibly more than 200 militants in Gaza.

Funding and External Aid: Although the source of ISIL-SP's funding is largely unknown, there are indications that it may receive funding from external actors.

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