

Country Report on Terrorism 2021 - Chapter 5 - Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM)

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

Description: Originally designated as an FTO on April 9, 2014, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM, as it was known then) rose to prominence in 2011 following the uprisings in Egypt. In 2014, ABM officially declared allegiance to ISIS. In 2015 the Department of State amended ABM's designation to add the aliases ISIL Sinai Province and Islamic State-Sinai Province (ISIS-SP), among others.

Activities: Before pledging allegiance to ISIS, ABM claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Israeli and Egyptian interests from 2012 through 2014, including attacks on Israeli economic and military assets, as well as attacks on the Egyptian military and tourist sectors. From 2015 through 2020, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for numerous attacks, including the bombing of a Russian passenger plane, the abduction and killing of a Croatian citizen, rockets launched at Israeli cities, attacks on Egyptian Christians, and numerous attacks against Egyptian military and security personnel. In 2020, ISIS-SP increased its attacks against Sinai tribal members, including the killing of a 75-year-old tribal elder who was strapped to a pole with explosives detonated next to him and a suicide bombing that targeted a tribal family gathering, killing at least three persons.

In 2021, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Egyptian security forces and civilians. In February, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for activating an IED against an Egyptian Army patrol south of the Gaza Strip city of Rafah, killing three Egyptian soldiers. In April, ISIL-SP claimed responsibility for the execution of a Coptic Christian and two tribesmen they accused of collaborating with the Egyptian Army. In December, ISIS-SP claimed responsibility for an IED attack that targeted a pro-government militia vehicle.

Strength: ISIS-SP is estimated to have between 800 and 1,200 fighters in the Sinai Peninsula and affiliated cells in the Nile valley.

Location/Area of Operation: Egypt

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-SP receives funding from external actors, including ISIS-core, and from smuggling.