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Country Report on Terrorism 2020 - Chapter 5 - Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)

Islamic Jihad Union

Aka Islamic Jihad Group; Islomiy Jihad Ittihodi; al-Djihad al-Islami; Dzhamaat Modzhakhedov; Islamic Jihad Group of Uzbekistan; Jamiat al-Jihad al-Islami; Jamiyat; The Jamaat Mojahedin; The Kazakh Jama'at; The Libyan Society

Description: The Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) was designated as an FTO on June 17, 2005. The group splintered from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in the early 2000s. Najmiddin Jalolov founded the organization as the Islamic Jihad Group in 2002, but the group was renamed Islamic Jihad Union in 2005. Although IJU remains committed to overthrowing the Government of Uzbekistan, today it is active primarily in Afghanistan and, more recently, in Syria, where many of its members relocated from Afghanistan.

Activities: IJU primarily operates against international forces in Afghanistan and remains a threat to Central Asia. IJU claimed responsibility for attacks in 2004 in Uzbekistan, which targeted police at several roadway checkpoints and at a popular bazaar, killing approximately 47 people, including 33 IJU members, some of whom were suicide bombers. In 2004 the group carried out near-simultaneous suicide bombings of the Uzbek Prosecutor General's office and the U.S. and Israeli Embassies in Tashkent.

In 2007, German authorities detained three IJU operatives, including two German converts, disrupting the group's plans to attack targets in Germany — including Ramstein Airbase, where the primary targets would be U.S. diplomats, soldiers, and civilians.

In 2013, two IJU videos showed attacks against a U.S. military base in Afghanistan and an IJU sniper shooting an Afghan soldier.

According to statements and photos released by the group, IJU participated in the five-month-long 2015 Taliban siege of Kunduz city. At least 13 police officers were killed in the attacks, and hundreds of civilians also were killed. In 2015, IJU pledged allegiance to the then-newly appointed Taliban leader Mullah Mansour.

In 2017, IJU released a video showing its militants using assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades to fight Afghan troops in late 2016. IJU released a second video in 2018 showing a joint raid with the Taliban in northern Afghanistan. The video, dated 2017, shows a nighttime clash with Afghan forces. In 2019 the United Nations confirmed that IJU was operating inside Syria under control of al-Nusra Front. IJU did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

Strength: IJU consists of 100 to 200 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Europe

Funding and External Aid: Sources of funding are unknown.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of the Islamic Jihad Union (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2020)

Countries:

Afghanistan, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Uzbekistan

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