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Letter dated 19 July 2024 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the thirty-fourth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions [1526 \(2004\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#), which was submitted to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, in accordance with paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution [2734 \(2024\)](#).

I should be grateful if the attached report could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Vanessa **Frazier**

Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities



Letter dated 28 June 2024 from the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

I have the honour to refer to paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution 2734 (2024), by which the Security Council requested the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to submit, in writing, comprehensive, independent reports to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, every six months, the first by 30 June 2024.

I therefore transmit to you the Monitoring Team's thirty-fourth comprehensive report, pursuant to annex I to resolution 2734 (2024). In formulating the report, the Monitoring Team considered information it received up to 21 June 2024. I also note that the document of reference is the English original.

(Signed) Justin **Hustwitt**
Coordinator
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team

Thirty-fourth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities

Summary

The threat posed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant – Khorasan (ISIL-K, QDe.161) has grown with significant terrorist attacks outside Afghanistan, notably in Moscow on 22 March, and with increased threat levels in Europe and other areas.

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, QDe.115, hereinafter “ISIL (Da’esh)”) has used these attacks, as well as attacks in Africa and other regions, to support an enhanced propaganda effort to heighten public perceptions of threat and in order to recruit new members. The identity and location of the group’s leader, Abu Hafs al-Hashimi al-Qurashi is still not clear.

ISIL (Da’esh) continues to be focused on Africa, with improved coordination between groups in West Africa, with ISIL in Somalia strengthening and the Al-Karrar office important in terms of broader ISIL (Da’esh) finances and connectivity between elements of a dispersed organization.

Contiguous territorial gains by both ISIL (Da’esh) affiliates and Jama’a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM, QDe.159) in the Sahel continue to result in high casualty levels and implications for regional security and stability.

There is heightened concern among Member States about the terrorist threat emanating regionally from Afghanistan from ISIL-K and Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP, QDe.132) in particular. But they are also concerned by new inward travel to Afghanistan of some Al-Qaida (QDe.004) personnel and training, recruitment and reorganization activities.

Listed terrorist groups have continued to demonstrate resilience and adaptability in the face of counter-terrorist pressure.

Listed terrorist groups have increased use of anonymity-enhanced cryptocurrencies. Terrorist adoption of other technologies continues at pace, making near military-grade capabilities available to sanctioned terrorist groups. This includes the exploitation of 3D printing and the development of unmanned aerial and maritime weapons and surveillance systems. Exploitation of these technologies potentially enables evasion of restrictions imposed under the ISIL (Da’esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime.

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I. Overview and evolution of the threat

1. The putative threat posed by external ISIL-K terrorist operations has become manifest in the first half of 2024, both in the immediate region around Afghanistan and further afield into Europe and beyond. Those terrorist operations caused large loss of life, most notably in the attack on the Crocus City Hall near Moscow on 22 March, where 145 people died and several hundred were injured; and have heightened official threat levels in many European States. Isil-K has done this through a mixture of strategy and opportunism, directing operatives from Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, but also harnessing volunteers outside Afghanistan and tapping into diaspora communities, often from Central Asia, to provide logistical support. ISIL-K has not claimed formally in their own name every operation for which Member States believe it to be responsible, but ISIL (Da'esh) has. In addition to the executed attacks, the number of plots disrupted or being tracked through the Islamic republic of Iran, the Levant, Asia, Europe, and potentially as far as North America is striking. It is a terrorist threat common to States with geostrategic differences and rivalries, to nations of all faiths and to secular nations.

2. ISIL (Da'esh) core structures have used ever-improving media capabilities to derive propaganda value from their attacks, seeking to recruit support and provide direction to potential lone actors. It has helped offset a narrative that the intensity of ISIL (Da'esh) operations was diminishing in some theatres. In the first weeks of 2024, the ISIL (Da'esh) "kill them wherever you find them" campaign claimed coordinated operations in each of the group's self-proclaimed "provinces". Despite considerable leadership attrition, counter-terrorism pressure in key theatres, and questions around leadership and the identity of the so-called "caliph", ISIL (Da'esh) has stimulated media coverage which has, in turn, amplified a perception of heightened threat.

3. The group has also continued to focus on its activities in Africa. In West Africa, the Al-Furqan office has grown in both importance and capability, establishing cells and facilitation networks in northwest Nigeria and facilitating Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP, QDe.162) support for the operations of Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS, QDe.163) in the Sahel, on the direction of ISIL core leadership. ISWAP has increased its activities. Despite localized clashes, the détente between ISGS and JNIM appears to be holding to mutual benefit, with the continued trend of the groups taking and holding larger areas of contiguous territory in the Sahel (S/2024/92 paras. 33–37), with a high number of casualties and implications for regional stability.

4. ISIL (Da'esh) Al-Karrar office in Somalia continues to be significant in terms of the wider group's finances and acts in some ways as connective tissue for a dispersed organisation. ISIL in Somalia has become stronger. ISIL (Da'esh) makes every effort to exploit propaganda material on attacks committed by African affiliates. In Mozambique, while most deaths have been suffered by Mozambican armed forces in confronting the Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a (ASWJ, not listed) as Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique forces withdraw, the pace of terrorist operations has increased in the first half of 2024. Also in Somalia, Harakat Al-Shabaab Al-Mujaahidin (Al-Shabaab, SOe.001) has demonstrated resilience to the counter-terrorist operations of the Federal Government of Somalia and continues to generate large revenues of value to broader Al-Qaida affiliates, and Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP, QDe.129) in particular.

5. The terrorist threat emanating from Afghanistan is causing heightened concern in many Member States. In addition to ISIL-K external operations, the scale and ambition of TTP operations into Pakistan have increased. And, while the Taliban have substantially constrained the activities of the Al-Qaida core and their affiliates in the

country, Member States have noted inward travel of well-established Al-Qaida figures, notably in connection with training activities. Continued reorganization and training are judged indicative of the group's longer-term intent.

6. ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and their affiliates have therefore demonstrated both resilience and adaptability in the face of counter-terrorism and environmental pressures. For example, AQAP has suffered significant leadership losses in 2024. But it has sustained its activities and Member States' concerns about the threat it poses both within Yemen and beyond have, if anything, increased. The new leader Saad ben Atef al-Awlaki (Yemeni, not listed) is perceived as more violent than his predecessor and more likely to exercise autonomy from Al-Qaida's core leadership. In addition to developing improved unmanned aerial systems, the group is reported to be pursuing enhanced maritime capability, including drones or autonomous vessels.

7. The widespread accessibility of technology has continued, putting near-military grade capabilities into the hands of sanctioned terrorist groups. One Member State reported Al-Shabaab experimenting with 3D printing, to manufacture components for adaptation of commercial unmanned aerial systems. Taken with another example from 2023 (S/2024/92, para. 67), it illustrates how computer code written in a secure environment could be disseminated to terrorists in the field, enabling them to print components for attack devices such as improvised explosive devices or weaponised unmanned aerial systems, potentially evading the arms restrictions of the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime.

II. Regional developments

A. Africa

West Africa

8. The situation in the Sahel has not improved since the previous report. Although the situation varies by country, JNIM and ISGS have both expanded and consolidated their areas of operation.

9. Complete destabilization of the countries in the region in the medium-term remains a possible risk and continues to be an objective of these groups. This is accompanied by a strategy aimed at extending their influence in the northern parts of some littoral States to enhance terrorist access to resources and logistical corridors essential for their expansion.

10. The most significant threat in the Sahel continues to be JNIM, owing to the vast territory it controls or operates within. With approximately 5,000 to 6,000 fighters, it continues to expand, mostly in Burkina Faso, but also significantly in Mali and the Niger.

11. Several Member States noted a decrease in JNIM activities north of Gao, Mali. However, JNIM continues its strategy of blockading certain cities like Timbuktu and Kidal to try to strangle the local economy. It appears that fighters have been transferred from this region to the centre of the country to strengthen JNIM capabilities.

12. Several Member States have reported the intent by JNIM to reach non-aggression agreements with the Cadre stratégique permanent pour la paix, la sécurité et le développement (CSP-PSD), to focus its efforts solely on the Malian Armed Forces and their foreign private auxiliaries in the north. Although no explicit agreement has been reached. It is worth noting that Houssein Ghoulam, a cadre from

the Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad, which is integrated into CSP-PSD, defected along with several dozen fighters, and joined JNIM in March 2024.

13. South of Gao, JNIM has adopted a different approach and increased attacks in the Mopti and Segou regions, as well as in the south of the country. Without directly threatening Bamako, JNIM, through the Katiba Macina (not listed), with about 3,000 fighters under the command of Amadou Diallo alias Amadou Koufa (QDi.425), maintains strong pressure on the capital by attacking convoys entering or leaving.

14. In the Kayes region, in western Mali, JNIM accelerated the establishment of, and intensified contacts with, local cells now overseen by Katiba Macina members dispatched to develop operational activities. In the Kaï and Sikasso regions, there is an increase in movements of JNIM fighters and offensive actions despite the lesser maturity of cells in this area. This region is strategic as it provides access to Burkina Faso, where JNIM operates freely.

15. Member States expressed particular concern about the situation in Burkina Faso. JNIM enjoys considerable freedom of action throughout the country, increasing pressure on various localities while moving further south. In the north, there is a reported strengthening of the sanctuary in Djibo, where its affiliate Ansarul Islam (not listed) operates under the command of Jafar Dicko (not listed). In this region, Ansarul Islam continues to blockade villages and towns, and intensifies attacks on the roads leading south. It also has reinforced its sanctuary around the town of Pama in the southeast, facilitating logistical corridors from Mali and thereby strengthening the southward expansion strategy. The situation is particularly alarming. The cells present operate independently from JNIM central command, and some perpetrate extreme violence against civilian populations, contrasting with the group's general policy of restraining abuses against these same populations.

16. This southward expansion has consequences in the northern parts of the littoral States. While not yet an acute problem in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, they potentially serve as logistical sanctuaries, albeit on a small scale. The situation differs in northern Togo and northern Benin, which are increasingly targeted by violent attacks. JNIM has appointed an emir in Benin to lead operations, although attacks are generally carried out by cells based in Burkina Faso.

17. This southward expansion also targets the Niger, where the group is conducting actions further away from the Burkina Faso border, interfering with the expansion of ISGS, which seeks to bypass Niamey from the north-east.

18. The territory controlled by JNIM is crucial to its survival and expansion. By positioning itself as the defender of the population against ISGS abuses and local security forces and their auxiliaries, which it frequently condemns in its propaganda, it collects zakat and secures substantial revenue through coercion (kidnappings, livestock thefts, etc.). Similarly, many Member States reported that JNIM enhances and renews its equipment and weaponry through seizures after large-scale attacks on garrisons or auxiliary camps.

19. While it has not abandoned attacks on foreign interests in the Sahel, such as kidnappings, JNIM primarily seeks to increase its presence and legitimacy on the ground to establish itself as an essential actor. This local agenda could evolve if it manages to establish an emirate from central Mali to northern Benin, potentially aligning more closely with Al-Qaida's objectives and becoming attractive to those wishing to extend the conflict regionally.

20. ISGS comprises between 2,000 and 3,000 fighters and has entrenched its stronghold in Mali and the border area with Burkina Faso and the Niger.

21. Particularly resilient, ISGS continually seeks to expand its territory southward, mainly through the Niger, where it has increased attacks since the beginning of 2024, possibly owing to the movement of fighters from the Liptako region. After a hiatus since 2021, the use of improvised explosive devices in complex attacks against security forces has been noted.

22. The occasionally problematic coexistence with JNIM shapes the areas of focus and territory of ISGS, but it still aims to consolidate its logistical axis with north-western Nigeria and the détente enables expansion. Though more violent, ISGS also seeks to adopt a strategy similar to JNIM to convince populations to cooperate more or less freely. This strategy could be particularly effective if it aims to gain a foothold in the Sokoto region in north-western Nigeria, where ethnic and local disputes could be extensively manipulated.

23. Even a fragile truce between JNIM and ISGS allows them to continue expanding and controlling essential logistical routes for their survival. If this truce persists, and in the absence of significant progress in counter-terrorism efforts in the region, the formation of a hub, attracting fighters seeking to escalate the threat internationally is increasingly likely. Moreover, the ability of these groups, particularly JNIM, to exploit porous borders, local disputes, abuses against the local population and the marginalization of pastoral populations has become central in their propaganda and fundamental to their capacity to extend into territories where these issues are present, as in northern Benin and, to a lesser extent, northern Togo.

24. In the Lake Chad basin, Member States noted no significant change in the ISWAP leadership nor in its numbers (S/2024/92, para. 23). The group, which is reported to have 11 shura council members, maintained its activities within the Lake Chad basin with no indication of territorial expansion. However, it enhanced its support for ISGS operations in the Sahel through the ISIL Al-Furqan office. This increased support was occasioned by a directive from ISIL core to boost ISGS operations in the region.

25. Member States noted that Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ali al-Mainuki (not listed), the head of the Al-Furqan office, has been coordinating the movement of weapons, fuel, equipment and fighters to support operations in Burkina Faso and Mali. To facilitate the logistics movement to the Sahel, the Al-Furqan office has established ISWAP cells and facilitation networks in some States in northwestern Nigeria, with the networks within Sokoto State playing a pivotal role. There are, however, no reports of significant financial support from ISWAP.

26. Several Member States reported that the mandate of the Al-Furqan office has expanded to cover West Africa, the Sahel and North African ISIL affiliates, thereby collapsing the ISIL Zu al-Nurayn office. Some Member States assess that the leadership structure of the office may change with this new mandate.

27. There was a notable upsurge in the use of improvised explosive devices and vehicle borne improvised explosive devices by ISWAP in its operations against security forces in northeastern Nigeria. Member States attributed this to ISWAP's need to increase its casualty count and visibility for ISIL core propaganda purposes rather than an improvement in explosives capabilities. One Member State, however, noted that some ISWAP fighters had received explosives training outside the Lake Chad basin, and this may have given the group some impetus. Member States also noted a resurgence in kidnapping in north-eastern Nigeria, which was mostly attributed to ISWAP. They observed that continuous counter-terrorism operations by national and regional forces in the area, as well as lack of holding facilities, have led to the release of some of their victims.

28. Clashes between ISWAP and Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad (Boko Haram, QDe.138) persisted as noted in the previous report (S/2024/92, para. 24). This has not suppressed the activities of either group. Some Member States indicated that the faction led by Bakura Modou (not listed) is reconstituting itself and seeking to acquire more weapons and ammunition. Bakura Modou has increasingly secured his position as the head of Boko Haram, despite the presence of other factions outside the Lake Chad region. Member States also note the increased presence of the Adamu Saddiqu (not listed) faction of Boko Haram within Kaduna State.

Central and Southern Africa

29. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF, CDe.001) remained resilient despite the successes of Operation Shujaa. After a lull in activity following the death of Musa Kamusi, there has been a dramatic increase in attacks by ADF, resulting in high numbers of civilian fatalities. In the months of May and June alone, ADF killed over 260 civilians, with Member States reporting 500 deaths in North Kivu since January.

30. Member States report that ADF commander Abwakasi (listed as Ahmad Mahmood Hassan, CDi.040) led recent attacks that killed over 200 civilians. Abwakasi was observed taking photographs of each attack and then transferring them to another device with Internet connection. At the same time, Member States noted an increase in propaganda highlighting ADF attacks, following months of near silence. Regarding the leadership of ADF, it is reported that Seka Baluku (alias Musa Baluku, CDi.036) is gravely ill and seeking hospitalization.

31. Member States report a rise in regional foreign terrorist fighter recruitment, highlighting the recent arrest of several hardened combatants from the Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania by the Uganda People's Defence Force while securing potassium nitrate and containers to make a large-scale bomb. This follows a period without ADF bombings in either the Democratic Republic of the Congo or Uganda. Also intercepted were Somali fighters travelling to transfer knowledge and technology with ADF.

32. In Mozambique, the situation in Cabo Delgado Province is more fluid following a change in the security landscape. There has been a spike in carefully orchestrated attacks by ASWJ. The group has 250 to 350 fighters and no longer seeks to engage in conflict with local villagers but rather focuses its attacks on Mozambique defence forces. During the reporting period, Mozambique defence forces suffered over 40 fatalities in four attacks while fatality rates among civilians remained relatively low. ASWJ has again sought to broaden the theatre of conflict, forcing overextension of Mozambican and deployed forces now facing much less resistance given the drawdown of Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique forces. ASWJ tactics are more sophisticated, calculated and well-executed, evidenced by the 10 May attack on Mozambique and South African forces in Macomia. Fighters have organized themselves into three main groups of roughly 100 fighters each who occupy and attack different districts throughout the Province. These groups then splinter off into medium-sized cells of between 30 and 50 fighters who focus operations on coastal towns, such as Quissanga, southern incursions into Chiure and Ancuabe and their traditional base in and around Macomia. Member States report that the spiritual leader of ASWJs, Abu Yasir Hassan is no longer in Cabo Delgado, having returned to the United Republic of Tanzania with his wife.

East Africa

33. Abdul Qadir Mumin (not listed) remains the head of ISIL in Somalia and the Al-Karrar office. His deputy in Al-Karrar is Abdulrahman Fahiye Isse (alias Abu

Abdallah Al-Hashimi, alias Abu Musab al Sharqaw, not listed) who replaced Bilal al-Sudani. Othman Salim is the administrator and Abu Jandal oversees immigration.

34. ISIL in Somalia has repositioned itself within Somalia by aggressively bolstering the physical strength of the group. Following Bilal al-Sudani's death, ISIL in Somalia has expanded their recruitment strategy within East and North Africa. Member States report a growth in recruits from these regions and Yemen, currently estimated at 300 to 500 fighters. The recruitment relies on a network of spotters that put prospective recruits in touch with logisticians that arrange and pay for their transfer from departure to Puntland. Several Member States noted the use of commercial carriers transiting through key international air hubs onward to Ethiopia. ISIL in Somalia then transfers the recruits to one of the foreign terrorist fighter training camps Buurta Istiqbaalka, in the Cal Miskaat Mountains in Puntland, through Jigjiga in Ethiopia and Somaliland. The physical growth of ISIL in Somalia is linked to the growing financial role the group is seeking to play in providing financial resources to ISIL-K and African affiliates.

35. Abdul Qadir Mumin, as head of Al-Karrar, has taken measures to strengthen the financial infrastructure of ISIL following the loss of Al-Sudani's network. Member States report that Mumin travelled to Yemen between January and March. A Member State reported that Al-Karrar generates approximately \$360,000 a month. ISIL in Somalia has enhanced its extortion within the area of Bossaso focusing on businesses, exports and the shipping industry. They are replicating Al-Shabaab's illicit taxation and extortion methodology to enhance the group's resource base, taxing some commercial, mining, trading, frankincense production and farming activity in Puntland. Member States reported that ISIL in Somalia has become more prominent within the global ISIL network.

36. The enhanced financial and military capabilities of ISIL in Somalia enable it to challenge Al-Shabaab more effectively. The former group now asserts control over some areas, including the Cal Miskaat Mountains and areas around Bosasso, increasingly engaging in combat and recently killing over 50 Al-Shabaab fighters.

37. Al-Shabaab remains resilient, intent on carrying out operations in Somalia and neighbouring countries. Member States note that it continues to project itself in the region and beyond by fostering relations with Al-Qaida affiliates and with ideologically divergent extremist groups, highlighting Al-Shabaab's continued financial support to AQAP.

38. Member States observe that Ahmed Umar (alias Abu Ubaidah, SOi.014), the Al-Shabaab leader firmly controls the group despite reports of internal dissent. The external operations unit of Al-Shabaab, previously headed by Moalim Osman (not listed), remains key in projecting the external threat and has been pivotal in Al-Shabaab's efforts to secure advanced weapons. Furthermore, Abdiaziz Dubow, (alias Maalim Ayman, SOi.019), a senior external operations commander responsible for East Africa, who reportedly was targeted in an air strike in December 2023, remains active.

39. Several Member States noted Al-Shabaab's renewed efforts to recruit fighters to counter the offensives by the Federal Government of Somalia. The group is focused on recruiting individuals with engineering expertise to assist with drone modifications, as well as clerics for propaganda dissemination. Its media and propaganda capabilities have improved with increased use of social media; however, the Government made efforts to disrupt some of the digital platforms by blocking more than 25 Al-Shabaab websites, 1,000 Facebook profiles and 500 TikTok accounts.

North Africa

40. In North Africa, the threat from terrorist groups affiliated with ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida is declining as a result of counter-terrorism operations undertaken by regional countries. Jund al-Khilafah in Tunisia (JAK-T, QDe.167) continues its low-level activity, limited to mountainous areas with little operational capability.

41. In Algeria, security pressure exerted on residual terrorist group members considerably reduced their combativeness, forcing them to take refuge in remote areas to avoid targeted military operations. In Morocco, security services dismantled four ISIL cells and arrested 17 individuals, revealing multiple trends and plots: incitement to commit terrorist acts against critical infrastructure and security institutions, planning of assassinations targeting security officials and public figures, the use of confiscated weapons for attacks, and the use of online resources for learning firearm handling techniques and fabrication of improvised explosive devices.

42. In Libya, counter-terrorism operations by national forces significantly reduced ISIL and Al-Qaida activities. In early January 2024, Libyan security services announced the arrest of Hashem Abdul-Jawad Abu Sedra, the leader of ISIL-Libya (QDe.165), which yielded critical intelligence enabling the dismantling of multiple ISIL-linked networks.

43. One Member State notes that several ISIL logistical networks remain present in south-western Libya (Fezzan) and are utilized for the transportation of individuals, vehicles and weapons from the Sudan through Chad to the tri-border area of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger. Meanwhile, in north-eastern Libya, ISIL-Libya remains active and conducts kidnappings for ransom, including of traffickers. The Libyan intelligence service apprehended three Libyan nationals recruited for travel to Mali to join the ranks of listed terrorist groups. In May, another ISIL cell composed of Syrian nationals was dismantled. This cell was responsible for facilitating ISIL (Da'esh) operatives from outside Libya, helping them join the organization within the country, and recruit young people to join ISIL-Libya.

44. Some Member States estimate ISIL-Libya has 200 to 400 active fighters along the Chad-Niger axis. One Member State reports another 400 fighters along the Sudan axis, while another State notes that leaders of the Sahara Army (S/2023/95, para. 35) are seeking to increase revenues through illegal hydrocarbon extraction and trafficking in mineral resources. Al-Qaida in Libya maintains its presence in Fezzan and south-western Libya, with between 50 and 150 members.

45. In Egypt, the threat from Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (not listed) has been contained by counter-terrorism pressure from Egyptian security forces. The group is deprived of sources of revenue, with smuggling routes effectively controlled. Their strength is now assessed to be a few hundred fighters, mostly locals, who avoid direct confrontation.

B. Iraq and the Levant

46. Since January, ISIL (Da'esh) increased its operational pace in the Syrian Arab Republic, compared with a slower pace in Iraq where they inflicted limited material damage and loss of life. The ISIL (Da'esh) combined strength in both countries is now between 1,500 to 3,000 fighters, as it continues to face battlefield losses, desertions, and recruitment challenges.

47. The group has benefited from regional conflicts and some reduction in counter-terrorism efforts to expand its operations and embed sleeper cells in neighbouring countries. Some Member States noted that ISIL exploited the conflict in Israel and

Gaza through deception; it recruited online and manipulated unaffiliated individuals to carry out attacks without any reference to ISIL. Some of these individuals were apprehended in a country adjacent to the core conflict zone.

48. ISIL core leadership continues to develop its flat decision-making structure. Most of ISIL senior leadership remain in the Syrian Arab Republic. The General Directorate of Provinces now has five main functional regional offices and is the group's engine, while several Member States note that the delegated committee continues to consider lineage and other qualifications before assigning the "caliph".

49. Member States hold divergent views as to the identity of ISIL (Da'esh) leader Abu Hafis al-Hashimi al-Qurashi. Among possible candidates, Abdallah Makki Mosleh Al-Rafi'i (Iraqi, alias Abu Khadija, not listed, head of offices in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic)¹ and Abdul Qadir Mumin (Somali, not listed, head of Al-Karrar office in Somalia) have been identified, owing to their key positions in the General Directorate of Provinces and overall direction of ISIL. Ahmad Hamed Hussein al-Ithawi (Iraqi, alias Abu Muslim, Abu Hafis, not listed, deputy ISIL leader in Iraq) was also noted as a possibility, among others.

50. Some Member States thought it possible for ISIL to shift to an African-origin leader, based on adaptability, operational developments and the need to empower ISIL leaders from Africa. In contrast, other States contested the possibility of a core leader from outside the Iraqi-Syrian region, emphasizing its strategic and ideological importance. The two top ISIL positions are caliph and General Directorate of Provinces head, and the above-mentioned candidates could occupy either.

51. In the Syrian Arab Republic, March saw one of the highest levels of violence in the central desert, Badia, since the fall of the caliphate. Activity was subsequently partially contained by intensified counter-terrorism operations by the Syrian Government and allied forces. Member States attribute the temporary surge in ISIL attacks to a diversion in counter-terrorism pressure owing to regional conflicts and continued tensions between Syrian Democratic Forces and eastern tribes. The group bolstered its networks in the Badia moving in cells of 10 to 15 fighters. ISIL attacks are mostly unsophisticated and aimed against Syrian Government military positions (around Sukhnah and Palmyra in Homs Governorate and Rusafah in Raqqah Governorate) and against civilians, such as shepherds and truffle harvesters.

52. In the East, the group continues with hit-and-run attacks in rural Deir ez-Zor and Hasakah Governorates, including attempts to release members from detention facilities. In April, a counter-terrorism operation near Al-Sinaa prison resulted in the apprehension of 40 ISIL members. SDF operations supported by allied forces continued to target key ISIL logistical facilitators, such as Mohamed Atiyah (alias Abu Mahmud) in January. In the South (Dara'a and Suwaida), the group maintains an unassuming low-profile, but still poses a threat that could transcend borders.

53. Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS, QDe.137²) is the predominant terrorist group in north-western Syria, with no discernible change in strength. HTS leader Abu Mohammed al-Jawlani (QDi.317) is largely managing internal rifts (S/2024/92, paras. 54 and 55). The group regularly undertakes operations targeting ISIL fighters in its controlled territories and reported capturing an ISIL cell responsible for the killing on 4 April of Maysar Ali Musa Abdallah Al-Juburi (alias Abu Maria al-Qahtani, QDi.337) by a suicide bomber.

54. HTS aims to strengthen its military wing by establishing a joint operations room named "Shahba Community" in collaboration with armed factions, including Ahrar

¹ Referred to as the Bilad al-Rafidayn and Al-Ard al-Mubarakka offices.

² Listed as Al-Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant.

al-Sham, Nour al-Din al-Zenki movement and the “50th Division”. In areas under its control, the group is undertaking civil initiatives by introducing identity cards with photographs and fingerprints, and seeks to convince village council leaders to voluntarily accept its rule. The continuous protests in Idlib in response to HTS harsh governance and arbitrary arrests may undermine HTS authority among civilians, potentially strengthening other armed groups, including Hurras al-Din (HAD, not listed).

55. The Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (QDe.088), also known as the Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIM/TIP), in the Syrian Arab Republic operates primarily in the provinces of Idlib, northeastern Latakia, northern Hama and western Aleppo. It is led by regional commander Kaiwusair (not listed), assisted by Zahid Qari and Shaykh Touba, both appointed in March by the Afghanistan-based overall leader Abdul Haq (QDi.268). ETIM/TIP cooperates with HTS, jointly attacking Syrian military positions in Idlib and Aleppo in March. The group receives financial support from HTS, operates businesses in regional countries, including Türkiye to generate funds, and trains foreign terrorists with ever-increasing levels of sophistication. One Member State reports ETIM/TIP increased audio and video recordings to expand its audience internationally, particularly to encourage Muslim women to participate in terrorist activities; it also noted possible linkage of some members of the group to ISIL (Da’esh).

56. HAD continues to operate mainly in south-eastern Idlib and northern Latakia, with strength of a few thousand fighters. HAD is quietly reactivating itself, with leadership instructing fighters to take exceptional security measures to avoid detection. The group continues to focus on a local agenda as it failed to meet its aspirations to conduct external attacks at the start of the Gaza and Israel conflict, owing to operational and logistical challenges. Notwithstanding their differences, one Member State observed ad hoc opportunistic collaboration between HAD and HTS, with HAD gaining logistical support from HTS to fight against Syrian government forces.

57. In Iraq, apart from a brief surge in operations in January during the “kill them wherever you find them” campaign and another in late March during Ramadan, ISIL activities remain largely contained. But the group remains capable of sporadic, impactful attacks. It operates in small detachments, not exceeding five members in areas with difficult terrain. The ISIL modus operandi consists of kidnapping for ransom, infrastructure disruption and the selective targeting of security forces while avoiding direct confrontations.

58. Operations continued primarily on the edges of the Kurdistan region in Iraq, as well as Al-Anbar Governorate, targeting Iraqi security forces, tribal leaders and civilians. A relatively large attack occurred in May in a rural area between Salah al-Din and Kirkuk on an army outpost, resulting in approximately 10 security forces casualties. Western al-Anbar, particularly al-Rutbah and the desert in al-Rawah, remains a significant haven and operational zone, benefiting from smuggling across the Iraqi-Syrian border.

59. ISIL in Iraq continues to be led by Jasim Khalaf Dawud Ramiz al-Mazroui'i (alias Abu Abd al-Qader, not listed), who oversees 9 geographic and 11 administrative units. The group strengthened its economic unit and tasked members with creating a database of potential extortion targets. ISIL in Iraq is intensifying organized crime operations to secure additional financing.

C. Arabian Peninsula

60. On 10 March, AQAP announced the death of its leader, Saudi national Khalid Batarfi. The group delayed the announcement to coincide with the first day of Ramadan. Batarfi's death is a significant setback for AQAP. Most Member States attribute his death to chronic illness, while one Member State suggested possible poisoning. Khaled Mohammed Salahaldin Zidane, son of Sayf al-Adl (QDi.001) also perished around the similar time frame, in a house fire in Ma'rib Governorate. Zidane played a key role in AQAP media operations and collaborated with Sayf al-Adl to strengthen Al-Qaida's presence in Yemen. His death potentially diminishes Sayf al-Adl's influence over AQAP and may push Al-Qaida to recalculate its strategy in Yemen. Two senior field leaders also died. A few Member States suggested that some of these deaths may have occurred under mysterious circumstances or because of internal conflicts.

61. AQAP named Saad ben Atef al-Awlaki (Yemeni, not listed) as Batarfi's successor after deliberations between differing factions. Most Member States believe Al-Awlaki's strategy will largely align with that of Batarfi (S/2023/549, para. 58). His military background, leadership traits and strong tribal base, especially in Shabwa, will likely ensure a smooth transition, help revitalize AQAP and enhance external operational capabilities regionally and beyond. Some Member States note potentially tense relations between Al-Awlaki and Sayf al-Adl on dealing with the Houthis, and al-Awlaki trying to limit the role of Egyptian AQAP members.

62. Military operations by AQAP slightly decreased during the reporting period. Attacks remain concentrated in the southern Governorates of Abyan and Shabwa, primarily through detonations of improvised explosive devices and, occasionally, weaponized unmanned aerial systems. AQAP aims to regain areas in Bayda' Governorate, including Qifa which is important for weapons manufacturing. It maintains interest in acquiring unmanned aerial systems with superior technology and extended ranges. It also aims to enhance maritime capabilities by developing weaponized unmanned boats.

63. Member States continue to consider AQAP media productions a major radicalization threat. Capitalizing on the Gaza and Israel conflict, the group revitalized its "Inspire" publications, calling on lone actors to attack in the West. AQAP aims to reach a wider and younger audience, launching brief, appealing "Inspire tweets" published by al-Malahem media. The group's media cadre remains strong, with influential members such as Ibrahim Ahmed Mahmud al-Qawsi (alias Khubayb Al-Sudani, not listed). One Member State noted that AQAP receives external support that improves its media production.

64. AQAP strength is still between 2,000 and 3,000 fighters. Of Al-Qaida affiliates, AQAP maintains the strongest relationship with Al-Shabaab; both collaborate in weapons smuggling, personnel movement between Yemen and Africa, and finances. One Member State notes the continued use of the port in Shakra, Abyan, for smuggling and transit with Somalia. In addition, some States observe low-level opportunistic coordination between AQAP and the Houthis. One Member State noted that the Houthis were providing weapons and funds to AQAP in Abyan, delivered from Al-Bayda Governorate, to pursue shared objectives in southern governorates. Another highlighted the Houthis' release in March of an AQAP member, Sami Dayan, underscoring his role in recent AQAP activities in Abyan.

65. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Yemen (ISIL-Yemen, QDe.166) remains significantly restricted, estimated at between 100 and 150 fighters. One Member State reported that ISIL-Yemen convened meetings to reorganize and intends to establish camps in Hadramawt, Al-Mahra and Shabwa. Some Member States note support

provided to ISIL Somalia via Yemen, for example supplying unmanned aerial systems for testing and weapons, some of which had been acquired by Somali ISIL members in Mukalla, a transit port. In the Gulf Cooperation Council States, Kuwaiti security forces apprehended ISIL (Da'esh)-affiliated individuals planning to target a Shiite Mosque.

D. Europe

66. Terrorist threat levels have risen across Europe following the ISIL-claimed attack on the Crocus City Hall near Moscow. Increased propaganda possibly inspires actors to attack soft targets, including around sporting events in Europe, especially the Paris Olympics.

67. European States now assess that ISIL-K presents the greatest external terrorist threat to Europe. Numerous operations against ISIL-K in Belgium, France, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Türkiye, combined with the identification of attempted terrorist acts in planning stages in Austria, France, Germany, Spain and Türkiye, demonstrate the group's renewed willingness, multiplied efforts, and potential capacity to carry out large-scale attacks on European soil. Despite several ISIL-K cells being dismantled in Europe, logistical and financial support remain available to operatives arriving from Afghanistan and Central Asia. The group's capability to strike in countries depends upon the extent of these resident networks and their access to weapons, along with the level of operatives' military training, ability to evade counter-terrorism measures, and identification of viable and proportionate targets. More unsophisticated plots are anticipated in Europe over the next year. Some European Member States suggested parallels to the terrorist threat scenario from 2015 to 2017.

68. ISIL-K relies on networks of facilitators between Afghanistan and Türkiye, capable of moving operatives from Central Asia and Afghanistan towards Europe to conduct external operations.

69. ISIL-K sponsors located in Afghanistan are led by Abu Manzar (Tajik national, not listed) after the arrest by Turkish authorities of Khukumatov Shamil Dodihudoevich (Tajik national, alias Abu Miskin, not listed) in June 2023. One Member State notes the presence of clandestine "super-connectors" that exploit Türkiye to form networks and cells in Europe. Another observed strong connections between networks communicating in Russian and Central Asian languages with logistical hubs in Türkiye and in transit countries, such as Ukraine. According to one Member State, ISIL-K targets Afghan and Central Asian diasporas in Europe as potential recruits, including travellers from Afghanistan and Ukraine toward Europe, seeking asylum or refugee status. Ismatullah Khalozai (Afghan, not listed) oversees the group's finances in Europe for migrant smuggling.

70. Some Member States attribute responsibility for the armed attack carried out on 28 January 2024 against the Santa Maria Church in Istanbul to the Salman al-Farisi Brigade, an ISIL affiliate operating in Türkiye. In February 2024, Turkish security forces arrested 16 Central Asian, Caucasian and Afghan individuals linked to ISIL-K. They also thwarted six potential terrorist attacks. In response to these operations, the group relocated some senior members and operatives and changed its means of communication.

71. Several Member States highlighted the sanctuary provided by the Syrian Badia region where ISIL training camps are located. In this region, ISIL benefits from facilities and freedom of action to plan operations, relying on ISIL cadres for recruiting and coordinating operatives already present in Europe, and experienced fighters willing to relocate from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic to conduct acts of

terrorism on European soil. One Member State notes that long-standing ISIL networks that previously supported ISIL in the Syrian Arab Republic have been activated to deliver support to ISIL-K operatives in Europe.

72. European investigations illustrate the global and interconnected nature of ISIL facilitation. In March, two Afghan individuals were arrested in Germany and accused of planning a firearms attack against the Swedish Parliament. Also in March, the Spanish Civil Guard arrested an individual in Barcelona who trained four members of an ISIL-K cell that was dismantled in March in Sweden, demonstrating links with another individual detained in December 2023 in Canada who planned to conduct an attack. In June, the Spanish Civil Guard conducted a multinational operation, arresting nine individuals and dismantling one of the largest ISIL media networks in Europe, with servers operating in Iceland, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands Spain and the United States of America and supporting multiple media outlets to disseminate propaganda and messages urging terrorist attacks in over 30 languages, including Bahasa Indonesia and Pashto.

E. Asia

Central and South Asia

73. Member States registered ongoing concern that terrorism emanating from Afghanistan will be a driver of insecurity in the region and further afield in most scenarios (See [S/2024/499](#)). ISIL-K remains the most serious threat in the region projecting terror beyond Afghanistan, while Al-Qaida (QDe.004) exercises strategic patience, prioritizing its relationship with the Taliban. Despite Taliban attempts to exercise control over Al-Qaida, greater collaboration among Al-Qaida affiliates and TTP could transform the latter into an “extra-regional threat”.

74. Some Member States estimate that ISIL-K has increased from 4,000 to 6,000 fighters, despite the loss of territory and attrition among leadership, while others assess its strength remaining at between 2,000 and 3,500 fighters. The ISIL-K strategy of embedding covertly in Al-Qaida-affiliated groups makes it difficult to estimate accurate figures and to which group fighters are loyal. Sanaullah Ghafari (QDi.431) remains the leader; Abu Ahmad al-Madani (Iraqi, not listed) commands the external operations unit of ISIL-K, active in Kunar and Nuristan Provinces, northern Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

75. ISIL-K has improved its financial and logistical capabilities and intensified recruitment efforts. Qari Rafi Ullah (Afghan, not listed) manages the group’s finances in Afghanistan, while Abu Tamim al-Kurdi³ (not listed) leads the Al-Siddiq office. One way ISIL-K receives money is from Somalia via Yemen, facilitated by the Al-Karrar office, to connect the ISIL-K leadership with new Central Asian recruits. Online recruitment and radicalization efforts focusing on Tajik and, to a lesser extent, Uzbek communities encourage potential recruits to conduct attacks outside Afghanistan. Principal routes to Afghanistan for new recruits involve travel from Central Asia through Türkiye and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

76. ISIL-K has relocated some personnel away from its core area of Kunar and Nangarhar, with factions migrating to Badakhshan, Herat and Nimroz Provinces, adopting an asymmetric warfare strategy better suited to local conditions and to resist Taliban pressure. ISIL-K operational units are highly compartmentalized to preserve the group’s resilience despite continual losses. The group aspires to control Afghan

³ Possibly an alias of Abu Ahmad al-Madani, see para. 75 above and [S/2022/547](#), para. 70.

territory from which to infiltrate neighbouring countries, expanding the terrorist threat to Central Asia, the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

77. In response to high attrition rates, ISIL-K has limited high-impact operations within Afghanistan to soft targets (i.e. Taliban fighters queuing in front of a bank office in Kandahar and Western tourists in Bamiyan), and has focused on external operations, encouraging members of the Central Asian diaspora to travel to Europe and the Russian Federation, as well as other countries. Several Member States assessed that while ISIL core claimed responsibility for the Kerman and Moscow attacks, ISIL-K provided fighters, funds and training to the perpetrators of both actions (see [S/2024/449](#), paras. 51–53). Despite not being able to conduct large-scale attacks in India, ISIL-K seeks to recruit lone actors through their India-based handlers and released a booklet in Urdu magnifying Hindu-Muslim antagonism and outlining its strategy as regards India. One Member State reported affiliation between ISIL-K and Jaish al-Adl (not listed), with ISIL-K providing suicide bombers to Jaish al-Adl for its operations, including the 2 April attack on military stations in Rask and Chabahar in Sistan va Baluchestan Province, in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

78. ISIL-K perceives the Taliban as an ideological enemy and opposes the notion of a Pashtun-centric Taliban governance ([S/2024/499](#)). The group's narrative aims to reduce the Taliban's credibility among the Afghan population and trigger sectarian fault lines, promoting the idea that the Taliban has deviated from Islamic principles, while portraying itself as advancing the "wider Khorasan". Member States consider that in the short term, ISIL-K will preserve battle-readiness, increase revenue generation, and enhance recruitment by attracting renegades from other terrorist groups and the Taliban. ISIL-K also recruits disaffected individuals unknown to security and intelligence services. In the midterm, the group will continue low-impact attacks, combined with sporadic high-impact operations against soft targets to boost the group's media propaganda, undermine economic and political interests, and humiliate the Taliban. In the long term, the group will strive to drag Afghanistan into turmoil and gain and hold territorial control while expanding to northern regional countries and beyond.

79. The status, location, and strength of Al-Qaida in Afghanistan have not changed, remaining dormant ([S/2024/92](#), para. 73). Al-Qaida remains strictly hierarchical, with Sayf al-Adl the de facto leader; affiliates enjoy greater operational autonomy but still seek leaders' authorization on critical decisions. Hassan Al-Waili (not listed) replaced the late Libyan leader Atiyatullah al-Libi to liaise with regional Al-Qaida affiliates. One Member State reported direction from Sayf al-Adl, Abu Jaffar al-Masri (not listed), and Abu Yasser al-Masri (not listed) to activate cells in Iraq through Sayfullah Somali (not listed) and Sher Hafiz (not listed), and in Europe through Abu al-Obaida, (Syrian, not listed), as well as in Libya and Syria.

80. Despite lacking current capacity to conduct large-scale operations externally, Al-Qaida seeks to strengthen cooperation with regional terrorist organizations of non-Afghan origin, such as ETIM/TIP, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (QDe.010) and Jamaat Ansarullah (JA, not listed) for expansion to Central Asia. The group covertly continues its reorganization and training activities, as well as new inward travel from the Middle East through Mashhad and Zabol towards Afghanistan through Zaranj in Nimroz Province and Islam Qalah and Torghundi in Herat Province. Several Member States noted the recent arrival in Kunar and Nuristan of ethnic Arab Al-Qaida commanders who operated in Afghanistan previously and had historical linkages with the Taliban, as well as the presence of Abu Hamza al-Anbari al-Iraqi (not listed) in Wardak and Sar-e Pul Provinces. AQAP members, Abd al-Qadir al-Masri (not listed) and Ali Umar al-Kurdi (not listed), reportedly migrated to Afghanistan from Yemen. Abdelazim Ben Ali (Libyan, not listed) is an adviser of the Taliban Acting Minister of the Interior, Sirajuddin Haqqani (TAI.144).

81. TTP has an estimated strength of between 6,000 and 6,500 fighters, accompanied by approximately 14,000 family members. Noor Wali Mehsud (QDi.427) remains the leader, with Qari Amjad (not listed) reported to be his deputy.

82. With Taliban acquiescence, and at times support, TTP has intensified attacks inside Pakistan (more than 800 attacks during the reporting period), primarily targeting military installations (S/2024/449). TTP camps with Al-Qaida and Taliban involvement focus on training local Afghan fighters and TTP operatives. Several Member States report that the Al-Qaida figure Abu Ikhlas-al Masri (not listed) is actively collaborating with Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (QDe.152) in providing suicide bomber training to TTP in Kunar Province. Two Member States noted the responsibility of TTP for the 26 March attack against Chinese nationals working on a hydropower dam project near Besham in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan. There is increased support and collaboration between TTP, the Taliban and Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS, not listed), sharing manpower and training camps in Afghanistan and conducting more lethal attacks under the banner of Tehrik-e Jihad Pakistan (TJP, not listed). Therefore, TTP could transform into an umbrella organization for other terrorist groups. In the medium term, a potential merger of TTP and AQIS could escalate the threat against Pakistan, and eventually India, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

83. There has been little change in the status of ETIM/TIP in Afghanistan since the Monitoring Team's most recent report (S/2024/449). ETIM/TIP and Jaish-al-Adl (not listed) are reported to have jointly planned and executed attacks on Chinese interests in Pakistan. Several Member States have expressed concern about ISIL-K efforts to recruit ETIM/TIP cadres (S/2024/92, para. 84), especially if curbed by the Taliban.

84. Two Member States note the claims of responsibility by Majeed Brigade (not listed) for the 2 March attack on Gwadar Port Complex and 26 March attack on Naval Air Base Turbat in Pakistan, intended as a warning to foreign investors to withdraw completely. One Member State reported that Al-Qaida promoted cooperation between TTP and Majeed Brigade, while another expressed concern that any future nexus between TTP, Majeed Brigade and ISIL-K in Afghanistan could increase attacks in Balochistan and Sindh, Pakistan.

South-East Asia

85. Threats from ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaeda and their affiliates have been largely suppressed in South-East Asia, with counter-terrorism operations of regional security services constraining attacks. However, risks of resurgence remain.

86. Member States note the intra-regional nature of terrorist threats in South-East Asia, and how ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida affiliates reflect and differ from other regions. Similarities include the decentralized nature of ISIL (Da'esh)-aligned groups and greater autonomy of action. However, South-East Asian leadership and cadres consist of individuals motivated by local perceived grievances rather than core Al-Qaida or ISIL (Da'esh) ideology. Moreover, a disproportionately higher involvement of women and children in terrorist activities is observed in the region, both in support roles and as perpetrators. Some senior members of Al-Qaida-aligned Jemaah Islamiyah (JI, QDe.092) have changed tactics, increasingly focusing on engaging in local political processes.

87. The increased use by local ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida groups of the Internet and social media for propaganda purposes raises serious concerns for regional states. In this context, narratives regarding events in Israel and Gaza since 7 October were seen as being amplified and exploited by Al-Qaida propaganda but have not significantly increased the threat in the region.

88. At the end of 2023 in Malaysia, the Eastern Sabah Security Command reported the capture of five members of Abu Sayyaf Group (QDe.001) who had sought refuge in Sabah. One lone actor conducted the attack in Johor, Malaysia on 17 May, inspired by ISIL.

89. The Philippines has experienced sporadic attacks since January, attributed to ISIL-inspired individuals, rather than directed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in South-East Asia (ISIL-SEA, QDe.169), also known as Dawlatul Islamiyah Waliyatul Mashriq. Several Member States reported Ismael Abdulmalik (alias Abu Turaife, not listed), leader of a faction of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF, not listed) in the southern Philippines, to be the leader of ISIL-SEA; his arrest or death could not be confirmed.

90. In February in the southern Philippines, armed forces reported killing the ISIL-SEA leader responsible for the December 2023 attack on a Catholic Church in Marawi City, as well as arresting Myrna Ajijul Mabanza (QDi.413) for financing terrorist acts. The Maute group leader is the matriarch of the family, Ominta Romato Maute (not listed), who was sentenced to 40 years in prison. One Member State noted that an ISIL-SEA cell remains active, as evinced by ongoing reports of bombings in ISIL propaganda outlets.

91. The Abu Sayyaf Group (QDe.001) appears greatly diminished after at least 19 of its members surrendered between January and March. This allowed local authorities to claim that the group had been dismantled.

92. No attacks have taken place in Indonesia since 2011, but officials reported the detention of more than 150 individuals prior to the November 2023 elections, mostly from Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD, QDe.164,) and Mujahidin Indonesian Timur (MIT, QDe.150) both affiliated with ISIL. MIT largely has been dismantled, but most members received prison sentences of only two to three years, requiring more time to confirm that the group will not reconstitute itself. More than 20 JI members were arrested in the first two months of 2024.

III. Impact assessment

A. Resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2462 (2019) on the financing of terrorism

93. Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) continually seek new ways to raise and move funds. Member States note that traditional sources of illegal income (e.g. kidnapping for ransom, taxation, extortion, trafficking, petroleum products and donations) and investments in some commercial business continue. One Member State reported exploitation of offshore-betting companies where funds can be uploaded and cashed out anonymously. Online platforms have been used by terrorist groups to move funds to countries bordering Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.

94. Member States report increased use of social media messaging services, crowdfunding and mobile applications, often containing videos promoting religious extremism and encouraging donations. Detailed instructions to make payments through registering and replenishing digital wallets are routinely provided to transfer money through cryptocurrencies. One Member State noted that listed terrorist groups are promoting mandatory preliminary sharia assessments to establish permissible use of a specific cryptocurrency. Specialized channels, such as CryptoHalal and Umma Crypto, have been established on the Telegram application to permit channel moderators to control supporters' acquisition of specific liquid currencies and receive information on funds in their possession.

95. This expansion in ISIL's use of digital platforms is a growing concern for Member States. Various cryptocurrency exchanges, gaming platforms, e-wallets, and stablecoins are used to raise and transfer funds. One Member State noted that while the use of cash couriers and hawala are preferred for transferring funds into conflict areas, ISIL has purposely migrated to cryptocurrencies and online payment systems. The increased utilization of digital methods in the form of electronic wallets, sale of prepaid cell cards, and cryptocurrencies is expected to become even more pervasive and significant. Another Member State noted the continuing use of mobile payment providers.

96. Several Member States noted the growing use of anonymity-enhancing cryptocurrencies (also called privacy coins) by ISIL and its affiliates, particularly Monero, a cryptocurrency that uses cryptographic technologies designed to obfuscate transaction details. In one example, in October 2023 ISIL-K launched its first donation drive with a Quick Response (QR) Code linked to a Monero wallet address, announced in the ISIL-K news magazine, *Voice of Khurasan*, and which has subsequently been routinely featured. On 12 November 2023, photograph files were shared over the Telegram channel Media (affiliated with ISIL) with information on the use of Monero. Another Telegram post on the platform Cyber Da'wah (also affiliated with ISIL) solicited financial contributions and included a Monero wallet address with a QR code.

97. Characterizations of Monero being used by illicit actors or regulatory requirements in some jurisdictions have resulted in some cryptocurrency exchanges refusing to list it or other anonymity-enhancing cryptocurrencies, making it more difficult for users to exchange Monero for fiat currencies or other cryptocurrencies, compared with more readily available and liquid cryptocurrencies. Many Member States require that registered or licensed virtual asset service providers manage and mitigate the risks of using anonymity-enhancing technologies or mechanisms, such as anonymity-enhancing cryptocurrencies if they choose to offer them.

98. Noting the financial connectivity among ISIL affiliates, Member States emphasised the importance of revenue generated by affiliates in Africa which are considered less susceptible to disruption, in part because they rely on informal channels and illicit sources. ISIL affiliates benefit from income from ISIL Somalia, which is the top revenue source for the organization overall.

99. One Member State reports that ISIL-K received \$2.5 million in 2023, some of which may have been used in the Crocus City attack; another noted \$1 million went to the group in December 2023 alone. The Monitoring Team has previously reported \$2 million in donations from some Western countries to ISIL-K on the Tron blockchain ([S/2024/92](#), para. 68).

B. Resolution 2347 (2017) on cultural heritage

100. Some Member States expressed concern about the use of privacy enhanced cryptocurrencies in the art industry to finance terrorism in part due to the challenges of this largely unregulated digital market.

101. No specific incidents were reported during the period. Although connections between transnational organized criminal networks and terrorist organizations have been observed in the illicit trafficking of cultural property, all reported cases were exclusively linked to organized crime schemes. It is unclear whether ISIL (Da'esh) retain access to cached cultural artifacts in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, from which it might seek to generate revenue in the future.

C. Resolution 2396 (2017) on foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators

102. Member States continue to be highly concerned about the situation related to foreign terrorist fighters, in particular in camps and prisons in north-eastern Syrian Arab Republic (S/2024/92, para. 105). Repatriations have continued with some countries, such as Iraq, increasing the scale of returns. Data on overall numbers remaining in the camps and prisons is unreliable (estimates ranging from 35,000 to 45,000). There is still no consistent international programme to repatriate inhabitants and some Member States raised concerns that the increased number of returnees and efforts to deradicalize and reintegrate them, have created new security challenges. Sometimes biometric data are neither shared internationally, nor between national authorities. Details of place of birth in the Syrian Arab Republic or nationality, were sometimes obscured in new documentation issued. This made it difficult to keep track of returnees when they travelled internationally. While the percentage posing a threat might be small, the number could be significant.

103. In addition to the camps, one Member State notes that prisons are a greater problem with large numbers detained without trial for six or seven years. There are still approximately 9,000 ISIL (Da'esh) detainees (of whom 2,000 are foreign fighters) and the group continues to try and release prisoners. Member States report that individuals have been smuggled out of the camps for a payment of around \$2,000 and also note several escape attempts. ISIL (Da'esh) continues to be able to raise funds in the Syrian Arab Republic, with one Member State reporting \$45,000 being raised in April 2024, managed by female ISIL members in the Hawl camp.

104. While there is no large-scale movement of foreign terrorist fighters to Africa, and the situation is not comparable to the Syrian Arab Republic, Member States note this is happening and requires close monitoring. The fighters exploit weak governance and capability transfer is a risk. Movement of African fighters within the continent continues and Member States also noted movement to and through Yemen.

105. The situation in Afghanistan is more concerning. Several Member States note an increase in travellers of Arab and Central Asian nationalities to Afghanistan, and some Indian nationals. Some Central Asians are believed to have travelled from Syria. Some travel by Arabs, under the cover of hunting trips, is reported to be largely connected to training activities and Al-Qaida. Some were reported to join the Katiba Umer Farooq (S/2024/499, para. 40) and Al-Qaida "commanders" were also noted to arrive in Kunar and Nuristan Provinces. This is a new development noted by intelligence and security services.

IV. Implementation of sanctions measures

106. In its resolution 2734 (2024), the Security Council encouraged all Member States to more actively submit listing requests of individuals and entities supporting ISIL, Al-Qaida and their affiliates. Neither the Committee nor the Monitoring Team receive many replies to requests for information about listed entities and individuals. As reported previously (S/2023/549) the Monitoring Team notes the downward trend in new listings to the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions list. No new individuals or entities have been added in 2024, and only four names (three individuals and one entity) were added in 2023, with two names delisted.

107. The Monitoring Team further took note of the Security Council's increasing concern about the lack of implementation of the ISIL(Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime, including insufficient reporting by Member States to the Committee. The

Monitoring Team welcomes and seeks opportunities to enhance understanding of the sanctions regime and promote more effective implementation.

108. The Monitoring Team also notes the Security Council's direction to the Committee to keep its guidelines under review and up-to-date. The Team will work together with the Secretariat to submit possible amendments, as appropriate, in due course for the Committee's consideration.

A. Travel ban

109. During the reporting period, one travel ban exemption request was submitted to the Committee through the Focal Point mechanism. No additional information was received from Member States regarding the attempted travel or interdiction of individuals listed on the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime.

110. The effectiveness of travel ban measures relies on the quality of the United Nations Security Council Consolidated List (S/2023/95, para. 93). Responsible use and sharing of biometric data reduce the potential for false positives and decrease the use of fraudulent travel documents. Member States note ongoing challenges and costs in ensuring that biometric collection systems are interoperable with national watch lists and advance passenger information and passenger name record to interdict attempted travel of listed individuals. In addition, Member States face challenges in collecting or accessing biometric data of foreign terrorist fighters located in the conflict zones and of those likely to return or relocate to other areas.

B. Assets freeze

111. The Monitoring Team did not receive any information during the reporting period on the freezing of assets under resolution 2734 (2024) and related resolutions, which has consistently been the case in the recent past.

112. During the reporting period, the Committee received and approved three assets freeze exemption requests, all basic expenses.

C. Arms embargo

113. In the Syrian Arab Republic, ISIL attacks have recently shifted from a passive and defensive approach to distinct and sustained offensive actions. ISIL is rebuilding its fighting capabilities and uses small arms, grenade launchers, heavy machine guns, improvised explosive devices and all-terrain vehicles with mounted weapons in their operations. One Member State reports that ETIM/TIP in the Syrian Arab Republic has cooperated with HTS in Idlib on weapons innovation, including development of unmanned aerial systems. Another Member State maintains there is no indication that ETIM/TIP has access to advanced weaponry such as unmanned aerial systems or the capability to manufacture them.

114. In Yemen, AQAP has used commercial unmanned aerial systems with a 5–7 km range in operations and is looking to secure advanced unmanned aerial systems with greater range. It has successfully weaponized unmanned aerial systems and are developing new military and tactical capabilities to achieve qualitatively enhanced objectives. AQAP is attempting to develop unmanned air and sea weapons systems capabilities (weaponized unmanned boats), supervised by a dedicated unit.

115. AQAP and Al-Shabaab maintain close ties and use an arms smuggler, Ahmed Hasan Ali Sulaiman Mataan (Somali, not listed) to transfer weapons from Yemen to

Somalia. ISIL in Somalia and Yemen also cooperate by transferring small arms and light weapons using a cell in Hadramawt.

116. In Somalia, the proliferation of arms and adoption of new technologies is emerging as a force multiplier for Al-Shabaab in the region. Some technologies exploited by Al-Shabaab include 3D printing of weapons and unmanned aerial systems. Al-Shabaab has sought to recruit engineers to enhance unmanned aerial systems modification for attacks. The group is working on utilising 3D printers for designing explosives, weapons and unmanned aerial systems components in Somalia.

117. Al-Shabaab and ISIL affiliates remain intent on acquiring sophisticated unmanned aerial systems for surveillance and attacks. The growing availability of low-cost unmanned aerial systems is revolutionary for Al-Shabaab's surveillance capability. Al-Shabaab's external operations cell in Jilib has intensified efforts to acquire unmanned aerial systems with greater payload capacity for attacks. Al-Shabaab seeks to procure advanced long-distance UAS with thermal capability to enhance nighttime surveillance and fix accurate target coordinates. External operations cells, supported by local logistical facilitators, procure unmanned aerial systems online and ship through international commercial couriers.

118. TTP continues to use North Atlantic Treaty Organization-calibre and other weapons obtained in Afghanistan to target Pakistani military border posts. One Member State emphasizes the role of night vision capability in this regard. It also and reports that Al-Qaida is funding purchases of weapons and suicide vests for TTP.

V. Recommendations

119. Given the growing use of cryptocurrencies by ISIL (Da'esh), in particular anonymity-enhanced cryptocurrency where wallet addresses or QR codes are available in ISIL (Da'esh) publications, the Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee writes to Member States encouraging them to share any relevant information on digital wallet addresses associated with listed entities. The Committee might also consider directing the Monitoring Team to explore anonymity-enhanced cryptocurrency and other types of cryptocurrencies confirmed by Member States to be used by or associated with ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and their affiliates, as well as the advisability of including crypto wallet addresses linked to listed entities among the identifiers in the standard form for listing proposals. The Monitoring Team, in line with its mandate, will continue to consult with relevant international organizations about practical implementation of the sanctions measures as they relate to ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida's use of virtual assets and to develop recommendations for the Committee's consideration as necessary.

120. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee writes to Member States urging them to utilize better available international databases to enhance sanctions implementation, including the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) Stolen Works of Art database and the mobile application ID-Art in cultural heritage smuggling cases related to terrorist financing.

121. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States encouraging the sharing of real-time biometric information consistent with national legislation to interdict attempted travel of listed individuals.

VI. Monitoring Team activities and feedback

122. The Monitoring Team notes that reliable data on numbers of fighters aligned with groups affiliated with ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida is difficult to obtain,

particularly from conflict zones. In some theatres, individuals can be aligned with more than one group. The figures used in this report reflect either consensus or a range of estimates made by contributing Member States, with a potential margin of error. Where possible, we sought to disaggregate fighters from family members or other affiliates.

123. The Monitoring Team engaged a wide range of Member States in preparation for this report, in New York, through visits and written exchanges. Exceptional financial constraints restricted the travel by the Monitoring Team. It mitigated this through two regional meetings of security and intelligence services and more written requests for information. The Monitoring Team is grateful for assistance received in discharging its mandate.

124. The Monitoring Team welcomes feedback on the present report at 1267mt@un.org.
