United Nations S/2025/482

Security Council

Distr.: General
24 July 2025

Original: English

Letter dated 21 July 2025 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-sixth 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*) Christina Markus **Lassen**
Chair
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 30 June 2025 from the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team in accordance with paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution 2734 (2024) 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 (a) 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.

I therefore transmit to you the Monitoring Team's thirty-sixth comprehensive report, pursuant to annex I to resolution 2734 (2024). In formulating the report, the Monitoring Team considered information that it received up to 22 June 2025. I also note that the document of reference is the English original.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss with the Committee the issues raised.

(*Signed*) Colin **Smith**
Coordinator
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team

Thirty-sixth 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 from Al-Qaida, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, QDe.115, hereinafter "ISIL (Da'esh)") and their affiliates remained dynamic and diverse. It was most intense in parts of Africa. Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM, QDe.159) and Al-Shabaab (SOe.001) continued to increase the territory under their control. The death of Abdallah Makki Mosleh al-Rafi'i (alias Abu Khadija, not listed), deputy leader of ISIL (Da'esh), was a major setback for the organization. The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic was fragile, and ISIL (Da'esh) remained determined to undermine the interim government led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS, QDe.137).

In South Asia, regional relations remained brittle after a series of terrorist attacks. There were growing concerns about the threat from foreign terrorist fighters.

Contents

I. Overview

1. Al-Qaida central leadership remained weak. It aimed to provide strategic guidance to its affiliates, but this was mostly ineffectual. Although Sayf al-Adl (QDi.001) was the de facto leader, there appeared to be increasing dissent and dissatisfaction with his leadership.

2. Al-Qaida affiliates continued to operate largely autonomously. They continued to co-opt local grievances and tailor their narrative to ingratiate themselves with local communities. This ideological pragmatism helped to extend the territory under their control. It now spans large areas of Africa (under JNIM in the Sahel and under Al-Shabaab in East Africa) and the Syrian Arab Republic. Territorial gains allowed Al-Qaida and its affiliates to raise more funds for their activities and bolster recruitment.

3. There were indications that Al-Qaida's appetite for external operations had increased. These would likely be opportunistic, rather than the result of longer-term direction and planning. Al-Qaida tried to exploit the Gaza and Israel conflict by encouraging lone-actor attacks. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP, QDe.129) was the most vocal on the issue and ran a series of related crowdfunding campaigns to help to replenish its coffers. Al-Qaida affiliates remained active across South Asia, stoking regional tensions.

4. ISIL (Da'esh) had still not officially confirmed the identity of its overall leader, who had adopted the name Abu Hafs al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi. This may be due to concerns that confirming their leader's identity would make him a higher-priority target for counter-terrorism operations, or it may be to avoid questions surrounding the legitimacy of the new leader. Some Member States believed that the overall leader of ISIL (Da'esh) was Abdul Qadir Mumin (not listed); however, opinion remained divided.

5. The death of Abu Khadija in March was a major setback for the organization. Abu Khadija had held several roles in ISIL (Da'esh), including as the deputy head of the organization, responsible for operational planning, and as the head of two ISIL (Da'esh) regional offices: Bilad al-Rafidayn (Iraq) and Ard al-Mubaraka (Levant and Arabian Peninsula). He was widely seen as battle-hardened and experienced. His death, though, was unlikely to destabilize the global network.

6. ISIL (Da'esh) activity in the Middle East was constrained by sustained counter-terrorism pressure, notably in Iraq and in the Syrian Badia region. It continued to suffer losses there. Nevertheless, ISIL (Da'esh) remained determined to try to exploit the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. ISIL (Da'esh) will continue to project an external threat from the Syrian Arab Republic if divisions in the country allow a permissive space from where they can plan and execute attacks.

7. Partly because of its losses in the Middle East, the organization's pivot towards parts of Africa continued. These shifts were reflected in its operations and its propaganda priorities. Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ali al-Mainuki (not listed) was the head of the ISIL (Da'esh) Al-Furqan office, the regional office in West Africa. Although Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic may remain the ISIL (Da'esh) spiritual homeland, its operational focus is now largely elsewhere.

8. Tamim Ansar al-Kurdi (not listed) was head of the ISIL (Da'esh) regional Al-Siddiq office overseeing Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K, QDe.161) and operations in Central and South Asia. There were increasing concerns about foreign terrorist fighters returning to Central Asia and Afghanistan, aiming to undermine regional security.

9. Although Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) are organizationally distinct, and in some regions in conflict with one another, some lower-level fighters hold their affiliations lightly. There continued to be reports of operational cooperation between fighters from the two organizations in some theatres.

II. Regional developments

A. Africa

West Africa

10. The situation in the Sahel remained deeply concerning. Although dynamics varied across countries, the overall trend was an expansion of the area of operations of JNIM and a resurgence of activity by Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS, QDe.163), particularly along the Niger and Nigeria border, where the group was seeking to entrench itself.

11. ISGS remained confined to a relatively limited zone, but appeared intent on extending its reach, especially within the Niger. The threat it posed remained localized. Isolated and lacking the means to project force outside the region, aside from nationals present in the Sahel, it remained focused on survival. The group's continued existence was helped by an implicit truce with JNIM, rooted in their shared objective of targeting Sahelian security forces.

12. ISGS increasingly resorted to kidnappings, either directly or through local criminal networks. If successful in securing ransom payments, the group could significantly bolster its financial resources, enhancing its capacity for recruitment and armament. Despite the current isolation of ISGS in the tri-border area of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, it may increase its operational capabilities.

13. Since late 2024, ISGS demonstrated its intention to shift activities towards the north-west border of Nigeria, relying on the Lakurawa group, which reportedly pledged allegiance to ISGS. Lakurawa maintained bases in the Dosso and Tahoua Regions in the Niger and operated from forested areas in the Tangaza, Gudu, Illela, Binji, Silame and Gada local government areas in Sokoto State and the Augie local government area in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

14. One Member State reported that Lakurawa was headed by Namata Korsinga, former deputy to the emir of ISGS in Tahoua. Another assessed that the group operating in Kebbi and Sokoto States was led by Habib Tajje. The name Lakurawa is a generic term referring to recruits; not all individuals referred to as Lakurawa are members of the group.

15. ISGS appeared to be consolidating a sanctuary north of Niamey, positioning itself for deeper incursions into the Niger. Its expansion into Nigeria broadens its recruitment base, particularly among Hausa-speaking communities in northwest Nigeria. This strategy strengthens its influence and could foster closer ties with Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP, QDe.162), a goal reportedly encouraged by the Al-Furqan leadership.

16. JNIM reached a new level of operational capability to conduct complex attacks with drones, improvised explosive devices and large numbers of fighters against well-defended barracks. It adjusted its strategy towards political entrenchment. The group increasingly positioned itself as a governing actor, seeking to control territory, establish rudimentary governance and gain local support. To that end, it forged local agreements, to secure cooperation and attract new communities, often under duress.

Its core ambition remains the creation of an emirate that could challenge the legitimacy of military regimes, force them to cede authority and implement sharia.

17. Messaging was more political and direct, appealing to local populations and highlighting its expanding recruitment base, particularly in central and western Mali. JNIM focused its attacks on State security forces and their support forces and militia, especially the Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie in Burkina Faso and foreign military contractors in Mali, who are designated as primary adversaries.[1]

18. In Mali, the situation was more diverse and complex but deteriorating. In the north, where JNIM operated with relative freedom, attacks had resumed. There were indications that JNIM may attempt to retake the city of Kidal. In the Ségou, Koulikoro, Sikasso and Kayes Regions, there was a notable uptick in attacks, marked by extensive use of improvised explosive devices and drones, especially for coordinated operations.

19. In Burkina Faso, JNIM operated across most of the territory, enjoying substantial freedom of movement. It continued to target security forces and units of the Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie, with devastating effect. The group also changed strategy, launching direct and large-scale attacks on urban centres. It no longer limited itself to raids on barracks for weapons; instead, it temporarily occupied towns, often avoiding violence against civilians and engaging in measures such as prisoner releases to win public favour. Numerous attacks were recorded in the border regions with Mali and the Niger, targeting both military installations and civilian settlements.

20. In the Niger, JNIM maintained a smaller presence, but still conducted significant operations, particularly in the Dosso Region, north of Niamey, an area also contested by ISGS. JNIM actions there were aimed at preventing ISGS from establishing a foothold stretching from Burkina Faso to Benin.

21. Despite its weakened state, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM, QDe.014) continued to exert influence over JNIM, both ideologically and through its leadership. Although internal debates persist over whether to sever ties, such a move appeared unlikely in the short term. Affiliation with AQIM still enabled JNIM to unify its semi-autonomous *katiba*, as well as the various ethnic and clan-based networks within its ranks. Nevertheless, JNIM was observing developments in the Syrian Arab Republic closely, which may offer a blueprint should the group eventually seek independence from Al-Qaida.

22. Armed with weapons seized during its attacks, JNIM benefited from recruitment – often voluntary as populations faced perceived abuse from national forces. Coupled with its proficiency in drone warfare and its ability to manoeuvre freely, JNIM is now capable of directly threatening regional capitals. It is also poised to expand operations into northern Togo, Benin and the Sokoto region in Nigeria, where its ally Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan (Ansaru, QDe.142) could resume violent activity, furthering its territorial ambitions.

23. In the Lake Chad basin, ISWAP remained active, despite its operations being limited to Yobe, Adamawa and Borno States in Nigeria, the Diffa Region in the Niger and the Far North Region in Cameroon. The group achieved some territorial gains within Borno State, where it conducted several complex attacks targeting security installations and civilians. ISWAP also emerged as the most prolific propaganda producer for ISIL (Da'esh), surpassing other affiliates in content volume, while

[1] One Monitoring Team expert contextualizes the changes imposed in this paragraph.

simultaneously supporting regional branches in the Sahel and North Africa through the Al-Furqan office.

24. Some Member States reported that ISWAP numbers had risen to between 8,000 and 12,000 members, with indications of an influx of some foreign terrorist fighters in the region over the past year. Member States noted that the Al-Furqan office, based in the Lake Chad basin, continued to recruit and train fighters for other ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates in the region. Some Member States reported that Al-Mainuki, the head of Al-Furqan, joined the ISIL (Da'esh) core Shura Council and was supported by Abdulghafur Abu Khalid in overseeing Al-Furqan operations.

25. There was an uptick in ISWAP operations in Borno State in Nigeria and the Far North Region in Cameroon. The group's operational capacity improved, with several attacks targeting security installations in Borno State being reinforced with improvised explosive devices and vehicle borne improvised explosive devices and supported by reconnaissance drones. In late December 2024, ISWAP carried out its first rudimentary armed drone attack against military installations in Borno and Yobe States. The armed drones were equipped with grenades and deployed to the security camps, indicating that the group was adapting the use of such drones. Member States attributed this improved operational capability to newly acquired expertise. As at late 2024, Member States reported that 13 ISIL (Da'esh) trainers had arrived in the Lake Chad basin from the Middle East, facilitating the acquisition, assembly and deployment of drones that were believed to have been used in these attacks.

26. Within Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad (Boko Haram, QDe.138), the Bakura Doro faction remained the most active, carrying out operations around the Komadugu River in northern Borno State, where it seized areas previously controlled by ISWAP, including the tumbums (islands). Member States observed that Boko Haram factions in Nigeria were unable to expand their operations beyond their established territories.

Central and Southern Africa

27. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Operation Shujaa has degraded the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF, CDe.001), but the group remained resilient through adaptation to disruption.

28. ADF operated in small, mobile combat units, avoiding prolonged presence. Following the seizure of Goma by Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) rebels, an agreement was reached between M23 and ADF that neither group would enter the other's territory. M23 has stretched security resources in the region, leaving a limited security footprint in Beni, Ituri and Lubero, giving ADF complete freedom of movement in these areas. The M23-ADF agreement has enabled unhindered ADF mobility.

29. The ADF leader, Musa Baluku (CDi.036), was in Madina (ADF headquarters), south of Ituri, with 200 operatives and 2,000 dependants. Smaller supply and support camps were located to the south on either side of Madina in Mambasa and Komanda. They supported logistics, protection and surveillance. Abwakasi (listed as Ahmad Mahmood Hassan, CDi.040), whose operational territory is south Lubero, operated freely, accounting for the highest number of ADF-related deaths. Lubero had the greatest concentration of attacks, followed by Mount Hoyo (Rwenzori), also frequented by Musa Baluku. Civilian deaths increased, with more than 400 deaths in the reporting period.

30. The M23 takeover of Goma led to the release of all prisoners, including five key ISIL (Da'esh) recruiters and financiers. Among them was Leonard Mashata, a significant recruiter and ADF collaborator, tasked with resuscitating an ADF cell in south Kivu. He trafficked children, under duress, from Burundi to ADF camps and

was also a key recruiter for ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia. His release marked a significant setback.

31. ADF sourced telephone parts for improvised explosive devices and expanded their recruitment network. Member States warned of possible future attacks and bombings in Beni and Bunia and in Uganda, such as the intercepted suicide bombing in Munyonyo, Uganda, in June.

32. Despite successes in disrupting ADF financing networks, Abubakar Kasakya (not listed) remains a significant threat in terms of recruitment and financing. Regional Member States reported that he directly funded the triple suicide bombings in November 2021 in Uganda, using his kidnap-for-ransom network across Southern and East Africa.

33. In Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique, regional Member States estimated that Ahl-al-Sunna wal Jama'a (ASWJ) had 300–400 fighters. Leadership remains unchanged, with Suleimane Nguvu (Tanzanian, not listed), a strategic communications facilitator, now a subleader since January 2025. ASWJ remains resilient, conducting regular low-intensity attacks. While civilian casualties are decreasing, ASWJ continued brutal attacks. ASWJ regrouped frequently across vast complex terrain. Its centre of activity remains Mocimboa da Praia, Muidumbe, Mbau and Macomia, with two isolated attacks in the Niassa Special Reserve.

34. ASWJ attacked Kambako hunting lodge on 19 April and Mariri Environmental Centre on 29 April, causing mass displacement. Commander Abu Munir (not listed) led both attacks with 40 seasoned fighters, beheading two guards and killing two anti-poaching scouts and six soldiers. Mozambique Defence Armed Forces pursued, killing several attackers as they fled the Niassa Special Reserve.

35. Notwithstanding an influx of fighters trained in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ASWJ recruitment lagged due to limited resources. The group increasingly engaged in criminal activity, forcibly recruiting kidnapped youth, with approximately half their fighters under 17 years old. In the past four months, ASWJ has rapidly increased kidnappings and ransom demands – including for fishermen, boats, engines, trucks, drivers and workers – with immediate payments requested via mobile money apps. Average ransom ranges from $50 to $100. Member States reported that ASWJ earned $3,000 in one week in the Meluco mining area.

East Africa

36. In Somalia, Member States assessed that Abdul Qadir Mumin (not listed) remained the head of the Al-Karrar office and likely remained head of ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia. However, his deputy, Abdurahman Fahiye (not listed), assumed a significantly larger leadership role within ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia. Mumin was reportedly hiding close to Medlehe in Qandala, following an intensive counter-terrorism offensive in Puntland. "Operation Hilaac", led by the Puntland Security Forces, was aimed at dislodging ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia from Buur Dhexaad and their network of caves and bunkers in the Cal Miskaat mountains.

37. On 31 December 2024, ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia launched a pre-emptive attack on a security forces' base in Dharjaale in Puntland, in anticipation of a large-scale military counteroffensive supported by international partners. The attack on Dharjaale was led almost entirely by foreign terrorist fighters of Arab origin, highlighting their key role and presence in Puntland. Member States estimate that more than half of ISIL (Da'esh)'s 600–800 fighters in Somalia are foreign terrorist fighters, mostly from the region, North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. While Arab fighters led the initial assault, subsequent clashes involved mostly African fighters. Tensions arose

over preferential treatment of Arab fighters, while African fighters were assigned manual labour and exposed to front lines in subsequent deadly offensives.

38. A successful five-month counter-terrorism campaign was led by security forces in Puntland, during which 200 ISIL fighters were killed and more than 150 arrested; however, no senior leadership had been killed in recent operations. In February 2025, a United States of America air strike killed Ahmed Maeleninine, a mid-level recruiter, financier and external operations leader, in Puntland. Member States are concerned that, without sustained counter-terrorism pressure, the threat may re-emerge.

39. Al-Shabaab maintained its resilience, intensifying operations in southern and central Somalia. Member States observed that the group had increased its operations from December 2024 and launched a major offensive in February 2025 towards Shabelle Hoose and Hirshabelle regions, by deploying more than 3,000 fighters from the Lower Juba region. The offensive included coordinated attacks on military installations, the temporary seizure of towns and control of some key bridges and supply routes into Mogadishu, as well as assassinations. The Federal Government of Somalia managed to reclaim some of the captured towns.

40. Al-Shabaab leadership remained largely unchanged following the killing, on 24 December 2024, of Mohamed Mire, head of Al-Shabaab internal affairs and a close confidant of Ahmed Diriye (alias Abu Ubaidah, SOi.014). Member States reported that Mire may have been succeeded by Dahir Ga'amey, former head of Al-Shabaab Courts, noting that attrition of Al-Shabaab leaders was unlikely to affect the group's stability. Member States further assessed that the total number of Al-Shabaab fighters had increased and was now estimated at 10,000–18,000 fighters.

41. Al-Shabaab continued to prioritize the enhancement of its weapons capabilities, allocating about a quarter of its operational funds to acquiring arms from the Houthis and AQAP in Yemen. Al-Shabaab ties with the Houthis continued, with reports indicating the training of Al-Shabaab fighters and the exchange of weapons. One Member State reported that Abdirizak Hassan Yussuf (Somali, based in the Arabian Peninsula) facilitated the movement of weapons between the Houthis and Al-Shabaab and collaborated with Abu Kamam, an arms trafficker based in Yemen.

North Africa

42. Ongoing counter-terrorism efforts contained ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida elements in North Africa. Regional Member States highlighted challenges in managing the return of foreign terrorist fighters from the Iraqi-Syrian zone, noting the use of forged passports and irregular migration routes. They also noted the growing vulnerability of youth and minors, who are increasingly exposed to extremist content on social media.

43. AQIM remained active in southern Algeria, in mountainous areas of western Tunisia and in south-western Libya, with approximately 200 fighters across these countries. Algerian counter-terrorism efforts resulted in arrests, weapons seizures, the disruption of support networks linked to Sahel-based groups and the detention of ISIL (Da'esh) supporters involved in propaganda. AQIM continued to use Libya mainly as a transit route for weapons, goods and fighters heading to the Sahel.

44. ISIL (Da'esh) is attempting to reconstitute its presence in the region by recruiting North African fighters, training them in the Lake Chad basin, the Sudan and Somalia, and deploying them back to revive the dormant Dhu al-Nurayn office, overseen by the Al-Furqan office since 2023.

45. Jund al-Khilafah in Tunisia (JAK-T, QDe.167) maintained minimal operational capabilities and established new contacts with ISWAP.

46. In Morocco, authorities dismantled two ISIL-linked cells, arresting 16 individuals involved in planning terrorist attacks. The first cell, dismantled in January, included three brothers. Authorities seized weapons, explosive precursors and digital content containing pledges of allegiance to ISIL (Da'esh). The second, dismantled in February across nine cities, was planning kidnappings of security personnel, attacks on sensitive sites and foreign interests and coordinated arson. The cell was reportedly directed by Abderrahman Sahraoui (alias Abou Malik, not listed), an ISIL (Da'esh) operative in the Ménaka/Gao region of Mali, implying coordination with Sahel-based ISIL (Da'esh) networks.

47. The Libyan intelligence service also dismantled three ISIL (Da'esh) facilitation cells. The first recruited and facilitated the movement of operatives from North Africa to Somalia and the Sahel, providing forged passports and safe houses. The second laundered money through front companies to help fighters and their families escape Al-Hawl camp in the Syrian Arab Republic and relocate to Libya, where they were housed in ISIL (Da'esh)-funded safehouses. This cell also pursued investments in regional countries. The third cell was responsible for transferring funds to ISIL (Da'esh) via cryptocurrencies.

48. In Egypt, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM, not listed) was not active. Heightened security measures in Sinai restricted operational movements. Although propaganda was used to try to exploit the Gaza and Israel conflict to incite attacks against Egyptian authorities, counter-terrorism pressure constrained activities.

49. In the Sudan, in January, authorities dismantled an eight-member ISIL (Da'esh) cell of Sudanese nationals seeking to establish an ISIL (Da'esh) *wilaya* there. Linked to the network of the former ISIL (Da'esh)-Somalia leader, Bilal al-Sudani, the cell had ties to ISIL (Da'esh) elements in Somalia. No major operational activity occurred prior to their arrest. ISIL (Da'esh) called on supporters outside the Sudan to contribute through financial support.

B. Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Levant

50. Six months after the fall of the previous Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the country remained in a volatile and precarious phase. Member States warned of growing risks posed by ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida, who continue to view the country as a strategic base for external operations.

51. ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida members seized stockpiles of heavy weaponry held by the previous government, and more than 500 detainees affiliated with it were released from detention facilities following its collapse. Prison break incidents occurred, including in Aleppo in March, during which more than 70 detainees linked to ISIL (Da'esh) and the Al-Qaida affiliate Hurras al-Din (HAD, not listed) escaped.

52. The interim Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, led by Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS, QDe.137), faced multiple security challenges, including asserting control over territory and diverse armed factions/fighters, as well as controlling foreign terrorist fighters, and countering ISIL (Da'esh) resurgence. Several Member States noted that the transition of HTS and its affiliates from armed groups to an army within a governing authority remained incomplete and still encompassed elements of both. While no active ties between Al-Qaida and HTS were observed, some reported that the Al-Qaida leader, Sayf al-Adl, had instructed affiliated media to issue congratulatory messages following the takeover by HTS. At the same time, Al-Qaida central leadership was criticized by followers for not issuing their own congratulatory message.

53. Some Member States raised concerns that several HTS and aligned members, especially those in tactical roles or integrated into the new Syrian army, remained ideologically tied to Al-Qaida. Many tactical-level individuals hold more extreme views than the HTS leader and interim president, Ahmad al-Sharaa (listed as Abu Mohammed al-Jawlani, QDi.317), and the Interior Minister, Anas Khattab (QDi.336), who are generally regarded as more pragmatic than ideological.

54. The interim government began integrating armed factions into a unified military structure and announced appointments of armed factions leaders and fighters into the new structure. At least 12 appointments were granted to foreign nationals, including 3 to the rank of Brigadier General. Following a directive issued on 17 May by the interim government to integrate all armed factions, including foreign terrorist fighters, into the new military structure within a 10-day period, some fighters reportedly rejected the move. Defections occurred among those who see Al-Sharaa as a "sell-out", raising the risk of internal conflict and making Al-Sharaa a potential target.

55. Foreign terrorist fighters at large in the Syrian Arab Republic are estimated at more than 5,000. Member States noted the complexity of the issue and expressed concern that efforts to legitimize foreign terrorist fighters may regularize their status in the Syrian Arab Republic without reducing their threat. Some noted that certain foreign terrorist fighters (in particular from Central Asia) retained external ambitions, were dissatisfied with the interim government's approach and may operate beyond its control.

56. The interim government had not asserted full control over all factions, including some that hold extremist ideologies, such as Katibat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (KTJ, QDe.168), Ajnad al-Kawkaz, Ansar al-Tawhid, Ansar al-Islam (QDe.098), Ansar al-Din, Katibat al-Ghoraba al-Faransiya (led by Oumar Diaby (QDi.342)) and others. Some maintain ties with Al-Qaida-aligned groups and share logistics. There have been some attempts for foreign terrorist fighters to come to the Syrian Arab Republic, including to join Oumar Diaby's group.

57. The Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (QDe.088), also known as the Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIM/TIP), was part of the HTS coalition that overthrew the previous government of the Syrian Arab Republic in December 2024, and subsequently stationed its members mainly in Damascus, Hama and Tartus. According to one Member State, under the auspices of HTS, ETIM/TIP conducted maritime combat skills training including speedboat assaults, maritime rescues and armed swimming and diving in February 2025 in Latakia to improve its fighters' ability to survive in complex battlefield environments. It also reported that some ethnic groups in a Middle Eastern State supporting "Eastern Turkistan Independence" stepped up efforts to raise funds to acquire weapons and secretly transfer them to ETIM/TIP in the Syrian Arab Republic. One Member State reported that ETIM/TIP has kidnapped, harassed and intimidated Chinese civilians in the Syrian Arab Republic. One Member State assessed that the primary allegiance of ETIM/TIP was to the new Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. Another Member State said that members had been integrated into Syrian society and were employees of the Ministry of Defence of the Syrian Arab Republic.

58. Member States noted the centralization of decision-making in the interim government. At least 9 out of 23 ministers are directly or indirectly linked to HTS, 4 of whom held military roles within the group. They now oversee key ministries (e.g. foreign affairs, defence, interior, justice). Tactical operations are delegated to individuals, many of whom share Al-Qaida ideology, raising doubts about the control exercised on the ground by these actors.

59. Member States raised significant concerns over rising sectarian violence. From 6 March, the coastal region of the Syrian Arab Republic – in particular in Latakia and Tartus – saw massacres and mass arrests of civilians, mostly Alawites, resulting in more than 1,000 fatalities, including women and children. Thousands of fighters and foreign terrorist fighters were mobilized. HTS-aligned elements, including ETIM/TIP, Red Bands, Shaheen Brigades, Sultan Suleiman Shah Division (led by Muhammad al-Jassim (not listed), now a Brigadier General in the Syrian Army), and Hamzah Division (led by Saif al-Din Boulad (not listed), now commander of the Seventy-sixth Division), as well as HAD fighters, took part in the violence. Although the interim government deployed forces to restore order, the situation quickly escalated. On 9 March, Al-Sharaa established a fact-finding committee, with its findings due in four months. In late April, further sectarian clashes erupted in southern Syrian Arab Republic, including in Jaramana and Sahnaya, involving the Druze community. On 22 June, a church attack in Damascus caused more than 80 casualties. Interim government preliminary investigations attributed it to ISIL, noting the perpetrators' possible connection with Al-Hawl camp. ISIL had not claimed responsibility. Fighter affiliations in the Syrian Arab Republic remain fluid and frequently shift.

60. ISIL (Da'esh) exploited shifting security conditions in the Syrian Arab Republic, where some key leaders remained based, and maintained up to 3,000 fighters across Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. Following the fall of the previous government and coalition strikes in the Badia, ISIL (Da'esh) swiftly reorganized and redeployed its operatives. Despite disruptions, the Badia remained its primary haven. The group expanded covertly into populated areas near Damascus and the Aleppo countryside, Homs and southern regions – including Tulul al-Safa, Suwayda', and Dar'a – operating through small mobile cells and reinforcing smuggling networks to facilitate movement. Some Member States observed signs of renewed interest and movement of ISIL (Da'esh)-affiliated individuals towards the Syrian Arab Republic, with one noting that ISIL-K had reportedly agreed to deploy a number of fighters, with some already believed to be in transit.

61. ISIL (Da'esh) also tried to incite sectarian tensions and ran multilingual campaigns to discredit Al-Sharaa, recruiting some dissatisfied fighters, foreign terrorist fighters and former regime soldiers. The interim government foiled more than eight ISIL (Da'esh) plots, including attempts to attack religious sites near Damascus and prisons holding ISIL (Da'esh) members.

62. ISIL (Da'esh) carried out more than 90 attacks across the country, mostly targeting Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in north-eastern Syrian Arab Republic, where about 400 ISIL (Da'esh) fighters remain active. The group continued to plot assaults on SDF-run detention centres and critical infrastructure. The implications of the agreement signed between the interim government and SDF on 10 March remain uncertain.

63. Other Al-Qaida-affiliated groups in the Syrian Arab Republic remained active. In January, HAD announced its dissolution, but this was assessed as largely symbolic. The group retained approximately 2,000 fighters. Its leaders instructed members to keep their weapons, signalling another phase of conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. Senior figures Samir Hijazi and Sami al-Aridi (both not listed) were in north-west Syrian Arab Republic, with Hijazi working with HTS defectors to form new factions in Idlib and the coastal countryside.

64. Despite United States strikes in February targeting HAD operatives, the group retains the capacity to activate cells and restructure. Several HAD members joined Ansar al-Islam (QDe.098), which comprises about 700 fighters and now operates freely, including in urban areas. HAD completed preparations for a drone facility in

Jisr al-Shughur before relocating it. Some members are exploring relocation to Afghanistan, Africa or Yemen under Al-Qaida leadership.

65. In Iraq, counter-terrorism operations by Iraqi and coalition forces continued to weaken ISIL (Da'esh), although its threat remains closely tied to developments in the Syrian Arab Republic. The killing of Abdallah Makki Mosleh Al-Rufai (alias Abu Khadija), the deputy leader of ISIL (Da'esh), in March in Anbar governorate significantly disrupted the group and its communications. However, ISIL (Da'esh) is resilient and could recover within six months. One Member State identified his successor as Jassim Khalaf Dawood Al-Mazroui (alias Abu Abdul-Qader, not listed), the former Wali of Iraq, who survived a strike in October.

66. ISIL (Da'esh) in Iraq, now led by Ahmed Zeidan Khalaf Abed al-Ithaoui (Iraqi, not listed), is at its weakest, with fewer than five claimed attacks, operating in small, mobile cells of five to seven members. The group maintained its guerrilla-style attacks, using mainly improvised explosive devices, including an ambush in January in northern Baghdad on Iraqi forces that caused more than a dozen casualties.

67. ISIL (Da'esh) is working to restore capabilities and rebuild networks in the Badia and along the Syrian border. The release of prisoners under the amnesty law of Iraq – including convicted ISIL (Da'esh) members – may help replenish its ranks. Amid successive leadership losses, the group appointed new mid-to-senior commanders. The rise of younger, more tech-savvy leadership is expected to influence ISIL (Da'esh) strategies.

68. ISIL (Da'esh) continued efforts to expand across the Levant. In March, Lebanese security forces announced the dismantling of a cell that sought to establish an ISIL affiliate, with funding and guidance from the Al-Ard al-Mubaraka office in the Syrian Arab Republic, arresting its leader and main operatives.

C. Arabian Peninsula

69. Since his appointment in March 2024, Saad ben Atef al-Awlaki (Yemeni, not listed) has improved the capabilities of AQAP. Al-Awlaki restructured the group, improved fighters' living conditions and limited infiltration – moves that reportedly strengthened his authority. Member States viewed the group as more cohesive, resilient and poised for external operations. Despite suffering targeted strikes on mid-level operatives, AQAP maintained 2,000–3,000 fighters.

70. Some Member States noted that al-Awlaki may be gradually redefining the relationship of AQAP with Al-Qaida's central leadership, limiting Sayf al-Adl's influence over the group. Some Member States also noted disruption to their direct communication.

71. None of the senior leadership of AQAP or Shura Council members are currently listed, including key figures such as Ibrahim al-Banna (alias Abu Ayman al-Masri) and Ibrahim al-Qosi (alias Khubayb al-Sudani). Some Member States noted that Al-Qosi is increasingly important within Al-Qaida central leadership. He helped al-Awlaki manage discontent from followers of the former leader Khaled Batarfi, amid questions surrounding Batarfi's death.

72. AQAP adjusted its operational strategy to prioritize quality over quantity. It conducted more than 30 attacks, in particular in Abyan and Shabwah Governorates. Many of these attacks involved short-range weaponized drones, as well as other light weapons, improvised explosive devices and sniper rifles. In January, AQAP fighters were found in possession of drone-jammers that successfully downed drones on several occasions. AQAP also uses drones for surveillance, to monitor security forces,

for example in Mudiyah district. The longer-term goals of AQAP include a larger in-house drone programme with manufacturing capability.

73. Several Member States continued to highlight the opportunistic relationship between the Houthis and AQAP, despite overt criticism by AQAP of the Houthis. This relationship is enabled by tribal dynamics and facilitators. One Member State identified individuals involved in drone and arms smuggling between the Houthis and AQAP, including Abu Saleh al-Obaidi (not listed), who collaborated with smugglers transporting weapons from Mahrah Governorate to Ma'rib and then to Al-Jawf. Another individual, known as Abu Salman al-Masri (not listed), reportedly managed maritime smuggling operations.

74. The financial situation of AQAP showed slight improvement. The group continued to receive support from Al-Shabaab, deepening ties with it to counter financial isolation. AQAP funded operations through kidnapping and investments in Yemen, often via tribal networks, and plotted kidnappings in Hadramawt. One Member State reported AQAP efforts to control shipments and block supply routes in Hadramawt and Shabwah. AQAP hosted hundreds of Al-Shabaab fighters in Yemen for training, supported it with weapons and praised its efforts, calling on the group to repeat in Somalia what the Taliban had achieved in Afghanistan.

75. AQAP remained a serious threat through operations inspired and directed by it. The Gaza and Israel conflict continued to feature prominently in its media and recruitment, including the April launch of "The way to liberate Palestine" series and a June video by al-Awlaki – his first as leader – inciting attacks against the West. The group also released a video celebrating the fall of the former regime of the Syrian Arab Republic. Some Member States reported the development of an app to provide secure internal communications.

76. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Yemen (ISIL-Yemen, QDe.166) remained constrained, with fewer than 100 fighters, mainly in Ma'rib. Although lacking organizational strength, ISIL-Yemen was involved in recruitment and facilitation efforts coordinated with ISIL affiliates.

D. Europe and the Americas

77. ISIL (Da'esh) continued to represent the most significant terrorist threat to these regions. The nature of this threat has evolved little since the previous assessment and is primarily driven by ISIL-K – with individuals often, although not exclusively, radicalized via social media and encrypted messaging platforms.

78. In contrast to 2024, fallout from the Gaza and Israel conflict had less visible impact. While such events still featured prominently in terrorist propaganda, references to them were less frequent in interviews with suspects involved in either completed attacks or foiled plots.

79. In Europe,[2] several countries remained affected by terrorism. Austria and Germany saw a number of attacks, including some perpetrated by foreign nationals, primarily from the Syrian Arab Republic and Afghanistan. In Sweden, repeated incidents of Qur'an burnings triggered retaliatory acts by radicalized individuals associated with ISIL (Da'esh). France – through a consistent and explicit targeting of ISIL (Da'esh) – had thus far managed to curtail the threat, for example through pre-emptive security operations implemented during and after the 2024 Olympic Games. Nevertheless, the threat level remains high.

[2] Western and Eastern Europe.

80. The threat throughout Europe remained largely domestic: most individuals implicated in terrorist activity were radicalized locally and motivated by ISIL-K propaganda. One Member State identified four dominant profiles within its domestic threat landscape, namely: individuals under 21, radicalized online, comprising most cases; North Caucasian radicals (although their presence has declined since 2024); convicted terrorists or inmates radicalized while incarcerated; and individuals with psychiatric or psychological disorders.

81. As for the external threat, targeted actions against ISIL (Da'esh) – while tactically effective – had not eliminated the group's strategic intent. ISIL-K continued to seek remote recruitment of ideologically vulnerable individuals willing to act further afield.

82. Additional vectors of concern include foreign terrorist fighters of European descent and their families still residing in the Iraq-Syrian Arab Republic conflict zone. Detention centres and camps in north-eastern Syrian Arab Republic remain priority targets for ISIL (Da'esh). An uncontrolled mass release from these facilities would significantly elevate the threat level. The final dimension of this external threat lies in foreign terrorist fighters and widows of ISIL (Da'esh) combatants still present in north-western Syrian Arab Republic. These individuals could attempt to return to Europe with the intent of carrying out attacks. In this context, one Member State has warned that delisting individuals or entities from international sanctions regimes could critically undermine ongoing legal proceedings against foreign terrorist fighters.

83. In the United States, there were several alleged terrorist attack plots, largely motivated by the Gaza and Israel conflict or individuals inspired and radicalized by ISIL (Da'esh). On 1 January, an American citizen pledging support to ISIL (Da'esh) drove a truck into a crowd in New Orleans, killing 14 people – the deadliest attack associated with Al-Qaida or ISIL (Da'esh) in the United States since 2016. Authorities disrupted attacks, including an ISIL-inspired plot to conduct a mass shooting at a military base in Michigan, and issued warnings of ISIL-K plots targeting Americans, regardless of the limited United States presence in Afghanistan.

E. Asia

Central and South Asia

84. On 22 April, five terrorists attacked a tourist spot in Pahalgam, in Jammu and Kashmir. Twenty-six civilians were killed. The attack was claimed that same day by The Resistance Front (TRF), who in parallel published a photograph of the attack site. The claim of responsibility was repeated the following day. On 26 April, however, TRF retracted its claim. There was no further communication from TRF, and no other group claimed responsibility. Regional relations remain fragile. There is a risk that terrorist groups may exploit these regional tensions. One Member State said the attack could not have happened without Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT, QDe. 118), support, and that there was a relationship between LeT and TRF. Another Member State said that the attack was carried out by TRF, which was synonymous with LeT. One Member State rejected these views and said that LeT was defunct.

85. The de facto authorities in Afghanistan continued to maintain a permissive environment for a range of terrorist groups, including Al-Qaida and its affiliates, posing a serious threat to the security of Central Asian and other countries.

86. ISIL-K continued to represent the most serious threat, both regionally and internationally. With about 2,000 fighters, ISIL-K continued to recruit both inside and outside Afghanistan, including among Central Asian States and the Russian North

Caucasus, as well as disaffected fighters from other groups. There were concerns that some extremist fighters could move from the Syrian Arab Republic to Afghanistan and further to stage operations against regional States, firstly in Central Asia. In North Afghanistan and areas close to the Pakistani borders, ISIL-K indoctrinated children in madrassas, establishing a suicide training course for minors aged approximately 14 years old.

87. ISIL-K continued to prioritize attacks on Shia communities, the de facto authorities and foreigners. Under the leadership of Sanaullah Ghafari (QDi.431), fighters were scattered across the northern and north-eastern provinces of Afghanistan. ISIL-K tried to establish operations in the States neighbouring Afghanistan and globally.

88. The efforts of the de facto authorities diminished ISIL-K capabilities, but it continued to operate with relative impunity, exploiting discontent with Taliban governance. While the leadership remained predominantly Afghan Pashtun, the rank and file were now mostly of Central Asian origin. Some of the ISIL-K supporters attempting to cross borders were female, including wives of Central Asian fighters.

89. Fighters from Jamaat Ansarullah (not listed), the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU, QDe.010), Khatiba Imam al-Bukhari (KIB, QDe.158) and ETIM/TIP were used by the de facto authorities in law enforcement and army units for providing domestic security, in particular in north Afghanistan.

90. Member States assessed that Al-Qaida in Afghanistan did not present an immediate threat for regional States since it possessed limited resources and had been drastically downsized. Nevertheless, Sayf al-Adl had tasked Abu Jaffar al-Masri (not listed) and Abu Yasser al-Masri (not listed) to reactivate cells in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, Libya and Europe. This was indicative of Al-Qaida's continued longer-term intent to carry out external operations.

91. Al-Qaida presence in Afghanistan was described as consisting mainly of fighters of Arab origin, who had fought with the Taliban in the past. They were spread across locations in the six provinces of Ghazni, Helmand, Kandahar, Kunar, Uruzgan and Zabul. There were reported to be several Al-Qaida-related training sites across Afghanistan and three newer sites were identified, although these were likely to be small and rudimentary. These sites reportedly trained both Al-Qaida and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, QDe.132) fighters.

92. There were concerns that the confidence and ambition of Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) were increasing. Following Asim Umar's death in 2019, Osama Mahmoud had been de facto leader, but in March he was formally declared "emir" of AQIS.

93. TTP had approximately 6,000 fighters and continued to receive substantial logistical and operational support from the de facto authorities. There were reports of divergent views within the de facto authorities on their relationship with TTP, with some arguing for the de facto authorities to distance themselves from the group to improve regional relationships. Some Member States reported that TTP maintained tactical-level connections with ISIL-K. TTP continued to carry out high-profile attacks in the region, some of which incurred mass casualties. It was reported that TTP had continued access to a range of weapons, enhancing the lethality of attacks. One Member State reported that, in January 2025, TTP provided training to terrorists in Baluchistan.

94. Regional Member States assessed that ETIM/TIP continued to expand its strength, as high as 750 militants. According to another Member State, ETIM/TIP in Afghanistan is small (100), not growing, militarily inactive and constrained by the

Taliban. Encouraged by the changing political landscape in the Syrian Arab Republic, ETIM/TIP reportedly accelerated "seeking independence by force" through a new strategic plan and charter issued in March, renaming itself the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party and advocating "return to Xinjiang for Jihad". ETIM/TIP leaders, including Abdul Haq (QDi.268) and Abdulaziz Dawood (Zahid, not listed) incited Uyghurs abroad to action. Such a strategy was substantiated by closer ETIM/TIP collaboration with the Taliban in Afghanistan and HTS in the Syrian Arab Republic. Regional Member States reported that, in December 2024, a three-person delegation including one representative from ETIM/TIP travelled from Damascus to Kabul and discussed with the de facto authorities the eastward flow of foreign terrorist fighters.

95. Some Member States suggested that there was close coordination between the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) (including its Majeed Brigade) and TTP in parts of southern Afghanistan. One Member State reported that they shared four training camps (e.g. Walikot, Shorabak), and that Al-Qaida provided ideological and weapons training. Some BLA attacks showed a high degree of complexity. On 11 March, BLA hijacked the Jaffar Express train in an isolated mountainous region with improvised explosive devices and other weapons, killing 31, including 21 hostages, which demonstrated in a high-profile manner the rise in the group's capacity and brutality. Many attacks were indiscriminate. Two Member States assessed that BLA and TTP do not collaborate at the strategic level, but may have a non-aggression pact, and the relationship remains distant; BLA is not aligned with Al-Qaida and remains both smaller and weaker than TTP.

South-East Asia

96. Effective counter-terrorism initiatives kept the remaining threat low; returnees from the Syrian conflict and the release of prisoners having completed sentences, however, posed persistent challenges. The resilience of terrorist groups and increasing online radicalization of youth portend continuing small-scale activities.

97. ISIL South-east Asia (QDe.169, ISIL-SEA), consisting of multiple factions totalling 150–200 members, was most active in the Philippines. While the status of the emir of ISIL-SEA remained uncertain, leaders were less important than in other theatres. Funding appeared to have dried up, possibly related to the withholding of funds by the ISIL (Da'esh) core or deployment elsewhere, while there was an uptick in kidnapping for ransom in the Philippines. In the south, the number of attacks remained low, surrenders regular and violence limited, largely owing to counter-terrorism pressure. In the Bangsamoro region, some Islamist groups have participated in political processes.

98. In Indonesia, Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (QDe.164, JAD) was unable to conduct significant attacks. The more pervasive threat emanated from increased online radicalization of young men, with JAD ideology remaining potent. Indonesian Counter-terrorism Special Detachment 88 arrested several individuals radicalized via the Internet and inspired to plan terrorist acts.

99. Following the decision in June 2024 by leaders of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI, QDe.092) to disband and renounce violence, numerous dissolution events were held across Indonesia, with most members appearing to accept disarmament. As part of its restorative justice approach, Indonesian officials in May conditionally released from prison Para Wijayanto, the prior emir of JI, who campaigned for non-violence and participation in governance. The potential for small numbers of dissatisfied JI members to form a new group or move to ISIL remains but has not materialized.

III. Impact assessment

A. Security Council resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2462 (2019) on the financing of terrorism

100. Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) remain adaptive in raising funds, with methods varying according to geographic location and the groups' ability to exploit resources and tax local communities through zakat, kidnapping for ransom, taxation of resources and extortion of businesses, among other means.

101. While traditional methods of moving money through hawala and cash transfers predominate, adaptations have emerged for storing and transferring funds: ISIL has increasingly used female couriers, cloud hawala systems in which data is stored in the cloud to avoid detection and "safe drop boxes" where money is deposited at exchange offices for retrieval with a password/code.

102. ISIL (Da'esh) maintained access to adequate finances, with the group's financial structures remaining independent of the ISIL (Da'esh) leader. The HTS takeover in the Syrian Arab Republic was considered to pose problems for ISIL financing and likely to result in a decline in revenue. Salaries were reduced to $50–$70 per ISIL (Da'esh) fighter per month, with $35 per family, lower than ever, and not paid regularly, suggesting financial difficulties.

103. Al-Shabaab maintained a robust financial system, primarily funding its operations through extortion and forced taxation (S/2025/71, para. 42). To boost revenues, the group announced plans to implement a $20 tax per household starting in June. One Member State assessed that Al-Shabaab's annual revenue could be significantly higher than the commonly reported $100 million, potentially reaching more than $200 million.

104. Following the military offensive against ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia, regional states noted disruption to the financial network of the Al-Karrar office, including the inability to collect money owing to lack of cooperation by local businesses. Al-Karrar office regional affiliates were no longer receiving funds, resulting in their seeking alternative means of raising funds, such as kidnap for ransom, whereby smaller immediate payments (e.g. $50–$100) were demanded via mobile money applications to secure quick release. ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia is reportedly now keeping physical cash caches. Al-Karrar office also sought to conceal savings in bank accounts of sympathetic businessmen or by investing in local enterprises.

105. While there is no firm amount of revenue to which ISIL-K had access, Member States noted that money was not a constraint, and the group was not lacking funds for operations. ISIL-K revenues came from Al-Karrar office in Somalia, in addition to donations and continued kidnap-for-ransom operations targeting businessmen in Afghanistan. ISIL-K was reported to possess approximately $10 million savings, some of which had been invested in Middle Eastern real estate.

106. ISIL-K use of cryptocurrencies such as Monero, KuCoin, MEXC, Huobi and Totalcoin has become more commonplace but also increasingly complex. Some Member States reported that Monero may be used less due to de-platforming on national exchanges and conversion difficulties. A new cryptocurrency app, Cash Now, allowing exchanges between different cryptocurrencies was reported as facilitating cash availability to ISIL (Da'esh) operatives. Member States noted increased usage of the Telegram funding app (@wallet) by ISIL (Da'esh) since it required no know-your-customer processes. Utilization of "unhosted" wallets for single-use transfers was noted. ISIL (Da'esh) was also experimenting with artificial intelligence (AI)-created fake documentation to circumvent know-your-customer procedures.

107. More Member States arrested and prosecuted individuals for terrorist financing offences, especially in relation to cryptocurrencies. Cases have been brought in Türkiye, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States, inter alia.

108. Member States did not report any information about theft or abuse of cultural heritage (Security Council resolution 2347 (2017)), or of aid diversion or abuse of humanitarian assistance (Security Council resolution 2761 (2024)).

109. Member States did not provide information concerning involvement in the trafficking in persons or sexual and gender-based violence. (Security Council resolution 2734 (2024)).

B. Security Council resolution 2396 (2017) on foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators

110. There were growing concerns about increased travel by foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators, albeit from a relatively low base.

111. Member States estimated that more than 5,000 foreign terrorist fighters were involved in the military operation in which Damascus was taken on 8 December.

112. The Syrian military announced several senior appointments, including prominent Syrian armed faction leaders. Six of these positions were allocated to foreigners, three with the rank of brigadier-general and three with the rank of colonel.

113. The ideological affiliation of many of these individuals was unknown, although several were likely to hold violent extremist views and external ambitions. There were concerns that, should they remain in the Syrian Arab Republic, they could pose a risk to internal security and stability. Some may also look to project an external terrorist threat from the Syrian Arab Republic directed at third countries, for example, their countries of origin.

114. In addition to those foreign terrorist fighters who remained in the Syrian Arab Republic, some individuals and groups were reported to be dissatisfied with the interim government's actions and were trying to relocate outside the country. This included significant numbers of fighters from some Central Asian countries. Some of these foreign terrorist fighters were reported to be trying to return to their home or neighbouring countries; their uncontrolled return could pose a threat to national security.

115. There were also reports of some foreign terrorist fighters, including from Central Asia and aligned with Al-Qaida (e.g. Khatiba Imam Al-Bukhari and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan), relocating from the Syrian Arab Republic to Northern Afghanistan. These were described as "scouts" who were acting as a vanguard before bringing over their families (and other fighters) to join them.

116. Conversely, ISIL (Da'esh) appealed for fighters to travel to the Syrian Arab Republic to replenish its ranks. Reports suggested that small numbers have travelled there so far. There was unconfirmed reporting that ISIL-K had agreed to send a significant number of fighters to the Syrian Arab Republic, and some were currently in transit.

117. ISIL (Da'esh) also issued a call to its followers to travel to West and East Africa to join various ISIL affiliates. It was reported to be financing the travel of foreign terrorist fighters to Somalia. There appeared to be increasing numbers of foreign terrorist fighters travelling to conflict zones in Africa. Some sources indicated that ISIL had succeeded in smuggling some of its fighters from the Syrian Arab Republic

and Iraq to Somalia, via Yemen. In addition, there was reporting of small groups of regional fighters travelling through central and East Africa, either to join ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates there or to travel on to Somalia.

118. ISIL (Da'esh) continued its plans to attack prisons in North-East Syrian Arab Republic, which hold approximately 8,500–9,000 detainees. It also continued to target the Al-Hawl camp, which housed approximately 33,000 people of some 70 nationalities. It recently instructed fighters to escape from prisons and camps in the Syrian Arab Republic, and some ISIL (Da'esh) members had reportedly escaped from Al-Hawl in the reporting period. Many minors were recruited from camps and deployed to the Badia.

IV. Implementation of sanctions measures

119. Some Member States raised concerns about the implementation of sanctions in the Syrian Arab Republic, citing reports of potential financial support, consultancy services and salary payments to the interim government, and modification of some the unilateral measures of some Member States in relation to the Syrian Arab Republic. Other Member States raised concerns that, in the Syrian context, providing support to listed individuals or groups could violate the arms embargo under Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) if weapons are supplied to such entities. Unless the parameters of such support are clearly set out, there is a risk that it could inadvertently benefit United Nations-designated individuals and entities in the Syrian Arab Republic. There is uncertainty among some Member States about how all sanctions measures should be implemented in this situation.

120. Within the reporting period there was the first-ever successful listing by a country from Southern, Central and East Africa. This constitutes the only other designation since 2023.

A. Travel ban

121. In the reporting period, there were 19 reports of travel by listed individuals, all relating to travel by Al-Sharaa (QDi.317) and Anas Khattab (QDi.336). Thirteen were subject to travel ban exemption requests, of which nine were submitted less than two days before travel. In seven cases, a formal request was not submitted in line with the guidelines for the Committee for the conduct of its work.

122. No information was received from Member States regarding attempted travel or interdiction of other individuals designated on the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions list.

B. Assets freeze

123. In the reporting period, there were four asset freeze exemption requests, of which two were amendments to existing exemptions.

C. Arms embargo

124. Both ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida rely on smuggled or stolen small arms and light weapons. Member States observed that small arms and light weapons transfers were coordinated between terrorist groups and organized criminal networks. Both

groups also seek unmanned aerial vehicle expertise by recruiting specialists, amid a recent rise in the proliferation of unmanned aerial vehicle, including armed drones.

125. Several Member States expressed concern over the extent of weapons proliferation in the Syrian Arab Republic. After the fall of the former Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, weapons and missiles were distributed to and acquired by ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida elements. These included heavy weaponry, anti-tank systems and mortars. Several Member States reported that ISIL (Da'esh) obtained military equipment and vehicles following the withdrawal of the Syrian Arab Armed Forces, and ISIL and Al-Qaida affiliates subsequently purchased large quantities of weapons through arms dealers. Member States warn that it remains unclear which groups control specific weaponry, with arms now traded indiscriminately as currency.

126. In the Arabian Peninsula, AQAP has enhanced its technical capabilities, shifting from off-the-shelf drones to Houthi-styled models, although not yet used in large-scale attacks. AQAP aimed to develop an in-house drone programme with dedicated personnel and manufacturing. It continues to enhance its military capabilities, recently acquiring unmanned aerial vehicles and 12.7mm anti-materiel rifles used in attacks in Abyan and Shabwah.

127. Several Member States reported unmanned aerial vehicle use by Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates in Africa. Small unmanned aerial vehicles are widely available and affordable, and Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) share technical expertise across their affiliated networks to enable global unmanned aerial vehicle use. In 2024, the Macina Liberation Front of JNIM in West Africa acquired drones for monitoring, command and control, including grenade deployment. In February 2025, JNIM employed first-person view drones in Djibo, Burkina Faso, to drop improvised explosive devices made from plastic bottles onto military positions. DJI drones have improved JNIM intelligence capabilities, in particular for surveillance and attacks on military bases. Unlike Al-Shabaab and ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia, JNIM uses built-in Global Positioning System (GPS) and image stabilization camera drones, including DJI Matrice, Mavic 3 and Mavic 2.

128. The prolific use of improvised explosive devices by ISWAP, combined with advanced reconnaissance drones, has shaped its operational development. This technological lever has led ISWAP to abandon frontal assaults against the Nigerian army's holdings in favour of ambushes and harassment tactics. The highest threat comes from first-person-view drones, which fly at high speed and are used in kamikaze roles. This shift in operational strategy could alter the dynamics of the conflict in favour of terrorist groups.

129. In Somalia, ISIL (Da'esh) smuggles small arms and light weapons and heavier weapons, to support global operations, in coordination with ISIL-Yemen. Member States report that Al-Shabaab's preferred weapons are improvised explosive devices, including directional and remote-controlled improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers.

130. In Central and South Asia, various groups (e.g. TTP, ETIM/TIP) acquired weapons (including North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-standard)) and equipment through cross-border smuggling and black-market trade. Member States reported that some of these groups employed "asymmetric" unmanned aerial vehicle attacks on Pakistani military installations in Sibi, Balochistan Province, and Machi, Punjab Province.

V. Recommendations

The Monitoring Team recommends:

131. Regarding travel ban exemption requests, some Member States are not following the process set out in the Committee guidelines, including submitting exemption requests with 15 working days' notice. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee consider options to strengthen the travel ban exemption regime, both to facilitate implementation and to prevent non-compliance.

132. The Monitoring Team noted questions by Member States regarding the implementation of the asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo measures in relation to developments in the Syrian Arab Republic; information received indicates the potential provision of military training and consultancy services to the Syrian National Army under the HTS-led interim government, as well as potential payments of salaries to government employees. The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee address these questions to avoid the risk of Member States inadvertently benefiting United Nations-designated groups and individuals in the Syrian Arab Republic or foreign terrorist fighters within their ranks.

133. The Monitoring Team highlights a significant gap between the number of asset freeze exemption requests submitted to the Committee and the number of listed individuals who may qualify for such exemptions. This discrepancy suggests that the measure is not being implemented effectively and remains underutilized. Since 2022, the Team has received a total of 25 exemption requests from six Member States, concerning 11 listed individuals. To ensure effective implementation of the sanctions measures, the Team recommends a review of current asset freeze exemptions. It further recommends that the Committee write to Member States to underscore the importance of submitting timely asset freeze exemption requests for listed individuals and entities present within their jurisdictions in line with the Committee guidelines and sanctions measures.

VI. Monitoring Team activities and feedback

134. The present report covers the period from 14 December 2024 to 22 June 2025.

135. The Monitoring Team is grateful for Member States' support and engagement in drawing up the present report.

136. The Monitoring Team continues to work closely with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to help build Member State capability. It has collaborated with UNODC to deliver two bilateral workshops and two regional conferences, raising awareness of the sanctions regime and supporting Member States in line with its mandate under Security Council resolution 1267 (1999).

137. The present report is based on Member States' contributions and assessment. Reliable data, for example, regarding the numbers of fighters aligned with specific groups, is difficult to obtain. Where possible, the report reflects either consensus or a range of States' views.

138. The Monitoring Team welcomes feedback at 1267mt@un.org.

Annex I

Propaganda

1. Propaganda output by ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida remained high. It continued to be used as a recruitment and fund-raising tool, but also to communicate strategic priorities.

2. ISIL (Da'esh), through its various media outlets, regularly communicated in multiple languages. It put considerable effort into its weekly publication, al-Naba. It used al-Naba to discuss a range of issues, from foreign affairs to Sharia law. It regularly exhorted readers to carry out lone actor attacks and provided practical guidance on how to do so. During the reporting period, every edition of al-Naba focused on operations in Africa and regularly appealed to fighters to travel there (e.g. to Somalia, Sahel, Sudan). Its propaganda during Eid al-Adha focused exclusively on its African branches.

3. Propaganda disseminated by ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida was promoted through their 'official' media channels. Their output was often co-ordinated around major attacks or ideological messaging campaigns. The outlets include:

- **ISIL (Da'esh) and its affiliates**: Al-Nabaʾ newspaper (produced by ISIL Core), Amaq News Agency (ISIL outlet for claims of attacks and battlefield updates), Al-Aʿzaim Media Foundation (affiliated with ISIL-Khorasan Province), Voice of Khorasan magazine (ISIL-K propaganda in South and Central Asia)
- **Al-Qaida and its affiliates**: As-Sahab Media Foundation (Al-Qaida's central media wing), Al-Malahem Media (affiliated with Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula – AQAP), Al-Kataib Media Foundation (affiliated with Al-Shabaab in East Africa), Al-Andalus Media (linked to Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin – JNIM).

4. 'Official' media were amplified and enhanced by a growing ecosystem of sympathisers and supporters. Member States underscored the significant role played by these unofficial yet sympathetic outlets to amplify extremist narratives and facilitate recruitment. Supporters of ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida actively contributed to the spread and amplification of content released by the groups' official media wings, thereby expanding its reach and influence beyond core networks.

5. Both Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) continued to experiment with different communication platforms to glorify violence and promote an idealized life under their rule. ISIL (Da'esh) tried to exploit TikTok's reach and algorithmic power for radicalization and recruitment, focusing on youth. AQAP continued to try to exploit gaming platforms for recruitment, also focusing on youth. Once an initial contact had been made, potential recruits were directed to encrypted apps (such as Telegram, Element, Discord, Threema, or Zangi), for further indoctrination and tasking.

6. Groups also continued to experiment with artificial intelligence (AI), mostly for radicalization and recruitment, and to amplify or enhance propaganda. For example, Al-Shabaab released a series of messages that were translated into various languages using AI tools. ISIL (Da'esh) previously released guidance on how to use Generative AI tools, including ChatGPT, whilst avoiding detection. There was some reporting to suggest that ISIL (Da'esh) was targeting recruitment of cyber experts to bolster its capabilities in this area.

7. AQ and ISIL continued to distort and misrepresent Member State actions, in particular counter terrorism operations, to support their narratives. It is important to ensure that MS CT activity is seen to adhere to international law, and is sensitive to local concerns, in order not to feed perceived grievances and inadvertently provide fodder for terrorist propaganda.

Annex II

Twenty-five years of counter-terrorism sanctions

Background

1. On 15 October 1999, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1267 (1999) under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. It was the first UN-mandated sanctions regime specifically directed against a non-state actor, legally binding on all UN member states.

2. The initial sanctions measures were related to aviation and finance. An arms embargo was added in December 2000 under resolution 1333 (2000). This resolution also created a Committee of Experts to oversee and support implementation; this was the forerunner of the current Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, which was formally established under resolution 1526 (2004) in 2004.

3. As such, this is the 25th year of the counter-terrorism sanctions oversight mechanism, and the 21st year of operation of the Monitoring Team[1].

4. The Monitoring Team's mandate is fully described in paragraphs 51-52 and the annex of resolution 2255 (2015), and in paragraphs 101-108 and Annex I of resolution 2734 (2024).

5. The counter-terrorism sanctions regime has continued to evolve to meet the changing threat, and it now encompasses a wide range of issues, including ISIL (Da'esh) and its affiliates, foreign terrorist fighters, cryptocurrency, abuse of social media for recruitment, trade in cultural property, kidnapping for ransom, and proceeds of crime including trafficking in persons. There are now over 40 UN Security Council Resolutions that relate to counter-terrorism and, directly or indirectly, to the work of the Monitoring Team.

6. An Ombudsperson mechanism[2] was established by resolution 1904 (2009). Its mandate has been extended by subsequent resolutions, most recently by resolution 2734 (2024). It provides independent review of requests from listed individuals and entities seeking removal of their name from the sanctions list. The Ombudsperson is mandated to gather information and to interact with petitioners, relevant States, the Monitoring Team and other interlocutors. Within an established time frame, the Ombudsperson presents to the 1267 Committee[3] a Comprehensive Report on the petition, including a recommendation as to whether the individual or entity should be retained or delisted; the Committee then decides, in line with the relevant provisions in Annex II to resolution 2734 (2024) which includes a "reverse consensus" procedure. By ensuring respect for due process, the Ombudsperson mechanism enhances the legitimacy and credibility of the 1267 sanctions regime.

7. A humanitarian exemption to the asset freeze provision was established by resolution 2664 (2022), including for an initial period of 2 years for the 1267 sanctions regime. This was extended indefinitely by resolution 2761 (2024).

Implementation

8. The regime aims, broadly, to constrain and complicate the activities of those who are believed to be involved in terrorism related to ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and

[1] Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, established in 2004.

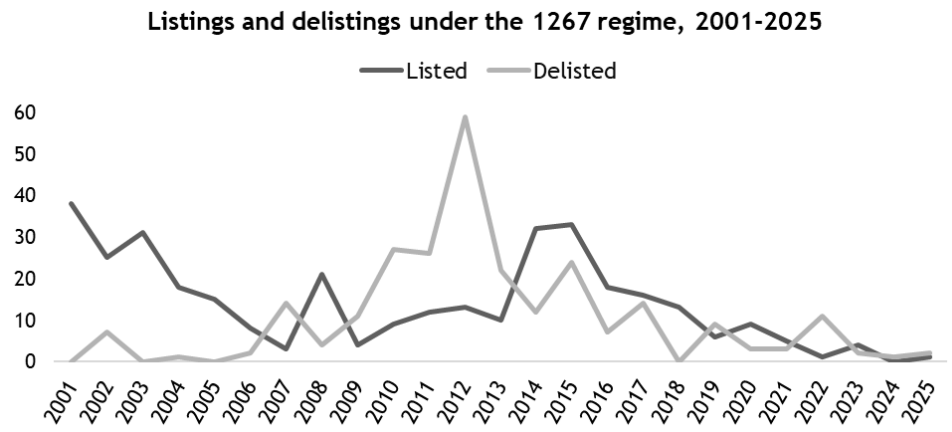
[2] Further details can be found at https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/ombudsperson.

[3] 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.

their affiliates. It also aims to assess and communicate widely the threat posed by these groups, and the evolution in their tactics[4]. Member States are required to subject listed individuals to a travel ban; and listed individuals and entities are also subject to an asset freeze and an arms embargo.

9. Those individuals and entities that are listed under the counter-terrorism sanctions regime are automatically subject to an INTERPOL Special Notice. These contain information that helps identify listed individuals or entities and supports law enforcement in taking appropriate action in line with their national laws. Special Notices are circulated to all INTERPOL member countries through a secure global communications system, and extracts of them are published online.

10. Currently, 254 individuals and 89 entities have been determined to meet the listing criteria (including participation in the financing, planning, preparing or carrying out activities on behalf of Al-Qaida or ISIL (Da'esh)). Around one-quarter of those listed are terrorist facilitators or played a facilitation role for groups linked to Al-Qaida or ISIL. The following graph shows the trends in listings and delisting since the regime was established:



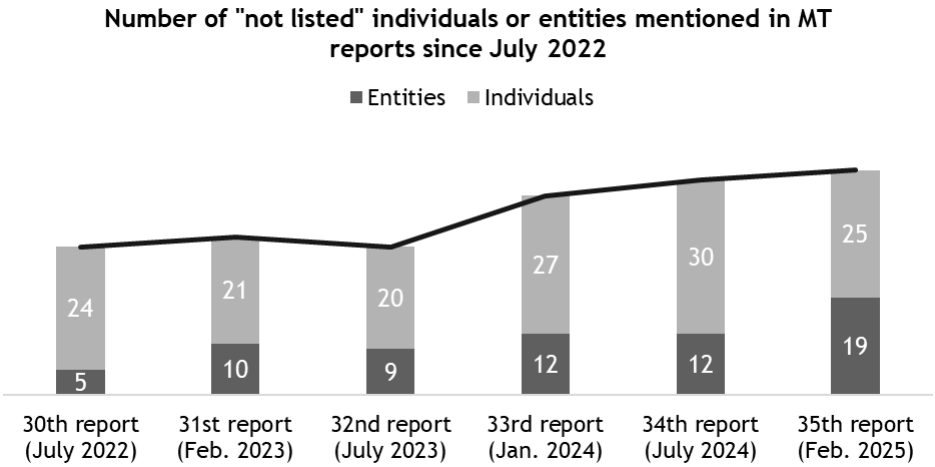
Source: Data provided by the 1267 Secretariat

11. Since the inception of the Ombudsperson mechanism, 112 cases have been accepted by the Ombudsperson (as of 1 May 2025). In the 105 cases fully completed through the Ombudsperson process, 72 requests for delisting have been granted, one entity has been removed as an alias of a listed entity and 33 requests have been denied.

12. The Monitoring Team's 6-monthly reports regularly identify individuals and entities that Member States have assessed to be involved in terrorism, but who are not currently listed. Nearly half of non-listed individuals are linked with South and Central Asia; around one-third are associated with Africa.

13. In the 35th report, 19 entities and 25 individuals of concern were identified but not listed. This included the senior leadership of ISIL (Da'esh), and the heads of ISIL (Da'esh) regional offices. Since the 30th report in 2022, 123 non-listed individuals and entities have been mentioned at least once. Ten non-listed individuals and entities have been referred to in the last five reports.

[4] An archive of Monitoring Team reporting is at https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267/monitoring-team/reports



Source: Annual reports by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team

14. The Monitoring Team engages broadly with various stakeholders to gather information, raise awareness, and to help build capacity. It works closely with parts of the UN counter-terrorism machinery, notably UNOCT and CTED. In particular, the Monitoring Team has drawn on UNODC and its field presence to support Member States to designate persons and entities under the 1267 sanctions regime, implement domestic asset freezing regimes and deliver long-term operational, institutional and legislative changes. This has included supporting countries' effective implementation of the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

15. Engagement was disrupted by Covid-19. However, since January 2020, working across its full mandate, the Monitoring Team has made over 100 international visits to consult bilaterally with national authorities, in virtually every region of the world. Around 60% of meetings with national authorities have been with countries in the Asia-Pacific or Europe. Nearly 16% of meetings with national authorities have been with countries in the Middle East, and less than 13% have been with countries in Africa. The Monitoring Team has also taken part in around 100 international conferences and workshops.

16. Since the Monitoring Team was established in 2004, it has produced over one thousand pages of reporting and assessment on counter-terrorism issues related to its mandate, mapping the evolution of the threat. It has made at least 250 recommendations:

- 40% relate to Committee working methods (including the listing/de-listing processes).
- Just over 20% relate to improving the functioning of core elements of the regime, i.e. asset freeze, arms embargo, travel ban.
- Just under 13% relate to enhancing international co-operation.

17. The remaining 27% cover a wide range of issues. For example, nine recommendations relate to foreign terrorist fighters, six to internet/social media, and one to trafficking of women and children.

18. As we look to the future, the Monitoring Team will consider previous recommendations, and the issues that they aim to address, and assess how effectively they have been implemented. The Monitoring Team will also look to develop more accurate measures of its performance, and the impact of the counter-terrorism sanctions regime, in addressing the threat from Al-Qaida, ISIL, and affiliated groups.