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A REVOLUTION IS NOT A JIHAD: A SALAFIST VIEW OF THE ARAB SPRING

Mao Zedong once famously said “A revolution is not a dinner party.” Now, according to a Jordanian Salafi-Jihadist ideologue, “A revolution for a loaf of bread is not a jihad.” Ahmad Bawadi, a frequent contributor to jihadi internet forums, made this the central point of his analysis of the revolutions of the “Arab Spring” in an essay that appeared on jihadi websites entitled “Revolutions Are No Substitute for Jihad” (ansar1.info, September 17).

Bawadi insists that the concepts of freedom and democracy inhibit the realization of a Shari’a state, as do improper motivations; only devoting their revolutionary banners to the “Deen [religion] of Allah” will bring the revolutionaries the security they desire: “The state of Islam will not be established by a revolution for a loaf of bread, if that revolution was not undertaken for the sake of the Deen and Shari’a of Allah.”

According to Bawadi, revolutions carried out in the name of economic or political reforms are insufficient to promote the social and moral transformation required by the true jihad:

No one should think that a revolution over unemployment will close the wine shops and nightclubs. They will not prevent women from going outside wearing make-up and unveiled and will not prevent them from showing their nakedness at pools and on the beaches. The networks of singing, dancing, prostitution and shamelessness will not be shut down by these revolutions, if they are not indeed a catalyst and motivator for

these sins, when freedom and democracy become the religion and constitution of the people and are an alternative to Jihad.

Bawadi warns that states established on the principles other than those found in the Shari'a "would be like the Buyid state and require new Seljuqs to deal with them." The reference is to the Buyid Empire, a Shi'a Persian dynasty that ruled Iraq and Iran in the 10th and 11th centuries, but which drew heavily upon the symbolism and rituals of the pre-Islamic Sassanid Empire before falling to the Seljuq Turks in the mid-11th century.

Addressing those who have overthrown the regimes of Tunisia and Egypt, and those who appear to be on the brink of doing the same in Libya, Bawadi reminds them that overthrowing a tyrant does not give them the right to become a regent themselves or to fashion constitutions "that accord with [their] whims and desires."

The apparent irrelevance of al-Qaeda and other Salafi-Jihadist movements to the momentous political shifts in the Arab world is something of a sore point for ideologues such as Bawadi; even though the revolution in Egypt has inspired a reappraisal of Egypt's relationship with Israel in a way no number of lectures from Ayman al-Zawahiri could achieve, Bawadi nevertheless warns that: "These revolutions and their people will not recover Palestine, nor will they take the place of jihad and the mujahideen and expel the invaders and conspirators from Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia."

Bawadi urges scholars and preachers to advise the *ummah* [Islamic community] that they have a duty to "raise the banner of Islam in these revolutions." Preachers should avoid becoming sidetracked by becoming occupied with disputes or issuing Shari'a rulings, noting that injustice and oppression have led to the people "acting spontaneously" without waiting for a Shari'a ruling. In Bawadi's view, "the courses of these revolutions must be diverted" onto the path of jihad and the Muslim scholars and preachers must remember "it is they who are the leaders of the *ummah*."

LIBYAN MILITARY JUDGE SHEDS LIGHT ON THE MYSTERIES OF QADDAFI'S REGIME

Muhammad Bashir al-Khaddar, a senior military judge in the Qaddafi regime for 25 years, has provided inside details of the workings of the regime in an interview with a pan-Arab daily (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, September 17). Al-Khaddar's revelations appear to be an attempt to rehabilitate his image in advance of running as a candidate in the elections expected to follow the consolidation of the rebel victory in Libya.

Among the issues discussed by al-Khaddar was the infamous 1996 two-day massacre of Islamist prisoners at Tripoli's Abu Salim Prison, run by Libya's Internal Security Agency (Libyan Jamahiriya Broadcasting Corporation, July 26, 2008; see also *Terrorism Focus* Brief, July 29, 2008). It was protests over the Libyan regime's continued failure to provide details of exactly what happened at Abu Salim that sparked the ongoing revolution in February.

According to al-Khaddar, he was assigned to investigate the massacre of over 1200 prisoners by acting Defense Minister General Abu Bakr Yunus Jabir following a 2009 court order for the government to release information on missing militants, but al-Khaddar admits that he knew little of the incident at the time, "believing that it was nothing more than a group of prisoners who attempted to escape, with between four and ten prisoners being killed..." (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, September 10, 2009; see also *Terrorism Monitor* Briefs, September 17, 2009). Official documents were "useless" to his investigation and interviews with prison officers unproductive (e.g. "I was eating lunch [when the massacre took place]"), so al-Khaddar changed tack and interviewed the prison officers in their homes, yielding much better results, though his investigations were still hampered by the fact that those responsible for ordering the massacre remained in power.

Al-Khaddar gave a figure of 1,257 dead in the slaughter that followed after Islamists and some "ordinary people" demanded their rights as prisoners and an improvement in conditions. Though the judge was unable to find documentation or conduct interviews directly implicating Libya's leaders in ordering the massacre, al-Khaddar is convinced the orders came from the top: "When you are dealing with Libya you must be aware of one important truth; Mu'ammarr Qaddafi was even aware of when a chicken was slaughtered. Although there is nothing on paper, telephone calls did take place between Qaddafi

and [Qaddafi brother-in-law and then head of Libyan military intelligence] Abdullah Senussi...and this resulted in the order to fire.”

Qaddafi refused to read the report until convinced to do so by General Mustafa al-Kharrubi, a member of the original Libyan Revolution Command Council that seized power in 1969. The Libyan leader was displeased by al-Khaddar's efforts, but the outbreak of the revolution in February spared al-Khaddar from the wrath of Qaddafi, who suddenly had more pressing concerns. General al-Kharubbi was reported to have surrendered to the rebels in late August (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, August 25). However, al-Khaddar says he no longer has a copy of the report since he fled the country in February and urges the rebels to find it and read it. The Libyan judge claims he feared for his life once the revolution broke out: “I was afraid of being assassinated because the Abu Salim [massacre] is at the heart of the 17 February revolution.”

Al-Khaddar says he was also placed in charge of the investigation into the disappearance of Imam Musa al-Sadr as Chief Prosecutor of Tripoli. Musa Sadr, the Iranian-born founder of the Afwaj al-Muqawama al-Lubnaniya (AMAL - Lebanese Resistance Detachments), disappeared along with two companions during a 1978 visit to Tripoli.

Despite the passage of 33 years since the disappearance, there have been constant rumors that the Imam was still alive in a Libyan prison. Only a few months ago, Hezbollah leader Shaykh Hassan Nasrallah expressed his hope that al-Sadr (who would now be 81-years-old) would soon be released after Libyan officers fleeing to Egypt reported he was still alive: “We are looking forward to the day when Sadr can be liberated from this dictatorial tyrant” (*al-Manar*, March 20; *al-Arabiya*, February 23). Libya has long claimed the three men left Libya for Italy in 1978, but Italian officials state the men never entered the country. Sa'if al-Qaddafi admitted in an interview with Iranian TV in February that al-Sadr and his companions had never left Libya (*Press TV*, February 22). Mu'ammarr Qaddafi was indicted in 2008 by a Lebanese judge for kidnapping al-Sadr (Now Lebanon, August 27, 2008; *Press TV*, August 27, 2008).

Al-Khaddar's account would seem to partially confirm details provided earlier by Abd al-Moneim al-Houni, Libya's former ambassador to the Arab League, who claimed in an interview that al-Sadr had been shot and killed by the regime and buried somewhere in southern

Libya (*al-Hayat*, February 23).

Al-Khaddar, citing guards who witnessed the event, claims that al-Sadr met with Qaddafi, but their five hour meeting degenerated into a vicious religious argument in which al-Sadr told the Libyan leader he was “an infidel,” while Qaddafi came close to physically assaulting the Imam. On Qaddafi's order al-Sadr was then killed and buried in Sirte, but his body was later transferred to Sabha in the Libyan interior and then moved to another location in the south. Al-Khaddar said a body had been discovered in a freezer in Tripoli on September 16 that might belong to Abbas Badr al-Din, a Lebanese journalist who accompanied al-Sadr to Libya, though al-Khaddar speculates that the body of al-Sadr's other companion, Shaykh Muhammad Yaqub, was likely hidden in a cemetery.

Al-Khaddar also insisted that former Libyan foreign minister Ibrahim al-Bashari and former Libyan justice minister Ibrahim Bakkar were both murdered on Qaddafi's orders. According to the Libyan judge, al-Bashari was killed in al-Khums, a coastal district between Tripoli and Misrata, which al-Khaddar claims was a preferred killing ground for the regime.

Al-Khaddar, who is considering a run at president once elections are held, suggests that long-term officials in the Qaddafi regime should not be overlooked in forming a new government: “Everyone who served in the Qaddafi regime who kept his hands clean and did not seize public money should have a large role in governing Libya. The current method of removing all those who worked with Gaddafi should be avoided.”

Probing the Reasons behind Iran's "Pre-emptive" Military Offensive against Kurdish Rebels

By Alex Vatanka

Iranian military forces began a large-scale and ongoing offensive in the northwestern part of the country in early July. The target of the operation is the militant Kurdish group *Partiya Jiyana Azad a Kurdistanê* (PJAK - Party of Free Life of Iranian Kurdistan), a group that emerged in 2004 and has repeatedly carried out attacks against Iranian security forces and economic infrastructure assets such as gas pipelines in Iran's Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan provinces. PJAK's operational bases have from the outset been located in Iraqi regions that are nominally under the jurisdiction of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), a reality that has always given this Iran-PJAK conflict a significant regional dimension, particularly now when the entire Middle East is experiencing considerable political instability.

Why Has Iran Chosen This Time for a Military Offensive?

Tehran has justified this latest offensive against PJAK by citing general security considerations and referring to the need to "cleanse the region of terrorists," but has otherwise been cryptic about its precise objectives. The main question that needs to be answered relates to the timing of this latest Iranian military offensive against PJAK, given that the group has not changed its strategy in any major way or escalated its attacks from previous years.

Press TV, the Iranian regime's principal English-language outlet, commented that the offensive had been launched in July after PJAK had been given a "one-month grace period to pull its forces out of Iranian territory" but had refused to comply with the ultimatum (Press TV, September 13). Other Iranian sources stated that the "grace-period" came in the middle of the campaign to coincide with the month of Ramadan (1-30 August) when Tehran claimed it would cease military operations in respect of the holy Muslim month (Fars News, September 20).

The head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), Mohammad Ali Jaffari, stated that the forces

under his command had acted in a "pre-emptive" fashion to counter what he called "extensive schemes" against the Islamic Republic (Press TV, September 13). Jaffari did not elaborate on the nature of the alleged plots, but like many other Iranian officials before him, Jaffari alleged that the United States is backing the PJAK militants.

Sadullah Zarei, a prominent political figure close to the IRGC suggested the timing of the anti-PJAK military campaign was tied to the Kurdish group's most recent political maneuverings. Zarei, calling PJAK an entity that was originally "launched to pave the way for the U.S. occupation of Iran," said the group had opted "to turn itself into the Iranian Kurdish peoples' principal voice" last January-February (Gerdab, September 3).

According to this official line of argument, PJAK chose to change tactics at this time and instead of pursuing an armed rebellion it turned to Tehran with a plea for negotiations in the pursuit of political goals and concessions from the Islamic Republic. Zarei did not refer to any other realities as catalysts for the timing of the IRGC's offensive – such as the onset of the Arab Spring, political volatility across the region or the scheduled U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq by the end of 2011. However, the January-February timeframe which Zarei highlights coincides far more with heightened regional unrest and fears in Tehran about a spill-over into Iran than it does with any shift in PJAK strategy. In fact, PJAK's political overtures toward the authorities in Tehran were evident before early 2011; as early as October, 2010 the group presented a manifesto on its website which argued the shift in policy was designed to jumpstart a process toward political settlement (Pjak.org, October 19, 2010). In this regard, IRGC commander Jaffari's statement about the latest anti-PJAK campaign being one of "pre-emption" driven by evolving regional security conditions appears more plausible than the argument that PJAK was reinventing itself and therefore needed to be neutralized once and for all.

PJAK's Efforts to Secure Political Legitimacy

Iranian officials have escalated the public relations drive to denounce PJAK as a movement comprised of fighters from neighboring countries, primarily Kurds from Turkey, Syria and Iraq. In this context, PJAK is said not to be against "the Islamic Republic, but against Iran" (Gerdab, September, 3). Clearly, the intention here is to mobilize broader Iranian public opinion against PJAK.

Secondly, PJAK's latest calls for a ceasefire have been rejected by Tehran because it views such calls as a ploy by the group to transform itself from an armed group with limited sympathies among Iran's estimated seven million Kurds into the Kurdish community's champion. Evidently, this fear of legitimizing PJAK is the reason behind the decision to ignore the group's ceasefire calls and the promise of its total annihilation by IRGC commanders.

The issue of securing legitimacy within the broader Iranian society is indeed an uphill task for PJAK. There is little sign of public support for PJAK from other anti-regime corners (such as Iran's Green opposition leadership) that are usually critical of most decisions taken by the Iranian government. Opposition websites such as Kaleme and Rah-e sabz (Green Path) are nearly devoid of coverage of the conflict with the exception of situational reports. The Green opposition leadership most likely maintains such an aloof stance toward PJAK for two key reasons:

- None of the Iranian opposition leaders have at any point voiced support for PJAK or any other armed Iranian group such as Jundollah or the Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran (MEK - People's Mujahideen of Iran). While it is true that political figures from the reformist opposition camp have always spoken about the need for increased political freedoms and more rights for the country's minority populations, they have at no point backed calls for a federalist model in Iran as desired by PJAK.
- The beleaguered Green movement is already under intense pressure by the regime in Tehran and chared with sedition and collusion with Western interests. It is hardly surprising that the Green movement keeps a distance from groups such as PJAK, particularly since the Iranian regime has also begun to link PJAK with MEK, the regime's most ardent foe (Habibian, August, 15; Fars News, September 9).

The International Dimension

Iran's latest offensive against PJAK is not limited to Iranian territory. Iraqi Kurdish officials in Baghdad and from the KRG have repeatedly called on Iran to halt its operations inside the Iraqi Kurdish regions (Rooz Online, July 12). Iran, however, maintains that it has no

other course of action since the KRG leadership refuses to disarm PJAK. One anonymous senior Iranian military commander stated that the president of the KRG, Massoud Barzani, had allocated "300,000 hectares of land" to PJAK, in effect implying that PJAK operates with the blessing of the KRG. Nazem Dabbagh, the KRG's representative in Tehran, said "only an illiterate person could suggest such a thing" and moved on to urge the Iranian state to deal with grievances among Iranian Kurds and not seek to blame the KRG for the state of the affairs. Dabbagh accepted that PJAK operates from bases in Iraq but called this a legacy from the Saddam Hussein era and not circumstances that can be attributed to the actions of the KRG leadership (Iranian Diplomacy, 19 July).

Other Iranian reports, however, suggest that the KRG is open to Iranian pressures. For example, the IRGC-controlled Gerdab website reported that Komalah, an Iranian Kurdish nationalist party with bases in Iraqi Kurdistan, has suddenly been disarmed by KRG forces (Gerdab, September 17). Komalah has a decades-long record of activity dating back to the time of the Shah of Iran, although Gerdab claimed it had been mostly active in northern Iraq since the coming of the Islamic Republic 1979. There has been no independent corroboration that Komalah has been disarmed, but if true it will substantiate the argument that by using force against PJAK, Tehran has forced a rethink of policies in KRG circles.

The recent cooling in relations between Turkey and Iran might also explain the timing behind the anti-PJAK operations. This past summer Turkey carried out attacks against militant Kurds in northern Iraq. Though Iran and Turkey have increasingly collaborated on the issue of Kurdish militancy since the ruling Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP – Justice and Development Party) came to power in 2002, it is far from clear from the present heightened relations between Tehran and Ankara whether the respective Turkish and Iranian offensives are part of a bilateral agreement between the two countries. In fact, some of the commentary in the Iranian media suggests the opposite. For example, in his interview Sadullah Zarei interestingly made a major distinction between PJAK and the Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK – Kurdistan Workers' Party), which tends to focus only on Turkish targets. Zaeri went as far as saying that PJAK is a novice entity whereas PKK has "the backing of Turkey's 15 million Kurds." Perhaps the "pre-emption" that IRGC commander Jaffari spoke about relates to Iran's desire to prevent militant Kurds

fleeing Turkish bombardments from entering Iran. What is certain, however, is that the KRG and groups such as PJAK and PKK will face an entire set of new operational circumstances if the U.S. military withdraws from Iraq by the end of 2011 as currently planned, giving Turkey and Iran a considerably freer hand to pursue their agendas.

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Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb's Operational Revival in Northern Algeria

By *Dario Cristiani*

In the past few months, there has been a rather remarkable operational return of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Algeria. On July 16, a double suicide attack rocked a security compound in the small town of Bordj Menail, 60 km east of Algiers, with two people killed and 14 injured (*Algérie Plus*, Jul 16). A few days later, Algerian security forces in the area of Thénia intercepted an AQIM team alleged to be on its way to carry out an attack in Algiers (*Tout Sur l'Algérie*, Jul 26).

The most important attack occurred in late August, when another double suicide attack hit the military academy of Cherchell, about 100 km west of Algiers, killing 18 people and injuring another 20 (Algerian Press Service, August 27; *El Watan*, August 27). AQIM claimed responsibility for both attacks, blaming also the Algerian government for its support of Muammar Qaddafi (Afrik.com, July 20; AFP, August 20). An AQIM statement described the Cherchell attack as “a small gift to the families of the martyrs, the injured and

the weak and subdued prisoners of Algeria, who have been suffering the worst of atrocities at the hands of France, making them subject, with metal and fire, to a criminal gang of Algerian army generals, transgressing across the land spreading much corruption. In fact, their corruption and crime even reached across the borders to neighboring countries, conspiring against the revolutions of our brothers in Tunisia and Libya” (*al-Andalus Media/al-Fajr Media Center*, August 27).

Following an overall decline in operations since 2008, AQIM's profile remained low in Algeria until April 2011. The causes for this were several:

- The “Sahelization” of AQIM as the geographical center of its activity shifted from Algeria to the Sahel.
- The increasing focus on illegal business activities rather than on terrorist actions.
- The consistent and effective counter-terrorist efforts of Algeria.
- The waning appeal of violence in a country that is still recovering from the psychological burden two decades of violence.
- An internally divided and fragmented leadership, in which power is rather diffused, with its Salehian factions enjoying a strong autonomy and the formal leadership, based in Kabylia, exercising a rather loose control over the various AQIM units.

However, this situation has been changing since April. As well as the major attacks described above, there have also been strikes on individuals of the military, policemen and gendarmes, killing more than 50 people according to official sources (*Jeune Afrique*, August 5). What does this recrudescence mean and what are the reasons behind it?

- *Worsening of the Regional Security Picture:* The conflict in Libya has had a negative impact on the security of almost all its neighbors, though it was also overestimated to further national security interests and assist the survival of the political elites. Support for Muammar Qaddafi was equated with preserving regional stability, although this policy proved unsustainable in the long term. Though the regime was wary of the fact that the Algerian

protests might indicate the beginning of a spillover effect from the Libyan conflict, it is clear that protests, strikes and mass rallies are constant elements of the Algerian political and social landscape. Nevertheless, the fear of a spillover effect has strongly influenced the Algerian regime's reaction to the Libyan conflict, and regional security has worsened through the spread of weapons from Libyan arsenals and ineffective control of Algeria's porous borders. The possibility that weapons and explosives have reached the country is high, and a nexus between the rising number of attacks in Algeria and the conflict in Libya can be identified.

- *The National Political Juncture:* Although Algeria's resilience to the Arab Spring has been greater than that of some other Arab countries, the protests in Algeria were still regarded as presenting a menace to the survival of the regime. Moreover, Algeria will likely experience an increase in political tension and divisions over the next few months. The major political personalities are already eyeing the 2014 presidential elections and many of them have begun creating alliances and strategies for this fundamental date (*Algérie* 360, May 20). The major party, the Front de Libération Nationale (FNL), is facing increasing internal fragmentation. Most notable of the factions to spin off from the FNL is the Mouvement de Redressement et de l'Authenticité, which is harshly critical of FNL secretary general Abdelaziz Belkhadem, one of the closest politicians to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika (*Le Journal d'Algérie*, August 15). In narrow security terms, the protests mean a greater focus by the government on maintaining domestic political stability, hence a devotion of greater quantities of financial resources and security forces to control these protests. Subsequently, AQIM could have an interest in seizing the political momentum by exploiting this shift of focus in security on increasing its operational profile prior to destabilizing the state should the overall socio-political picture enter a precipitate decline.
- *External and Internal Symbolic Meanings:* These latest attacks could also have external and internal symbolic meanings. The external meaning encompasses the international dimension as well as a national one. Internationally, the

attacks aim at showing that the group is alive even though its leader, Osama Bin Laden, has been killed. In the national dimension, they show that AQIM still has the capability to attack the most visible elements of state control -- the military installations. The internal meaning of the attacks could be a response to allegations of a decline in influence of the Algerian-based leadership over other factions of the group. Carrying out successful attacks against Algerian military installations could represent a means for AQIM Amir Abdelmalek Droukdel to boost his weakened leadership after the "Sahelization" of the movement entailed a shift in the group's internal balance of power.

Whether this acceleration in AQIM operations in Algeria will be effective in reviving the fortunes of the Algerian militants is unclear. The worsening regional picture and the increasing domestic troubles facing by the Algerian government could represent a major opportunity for AQIM to further increase its operational profile in Algeria. Internal rivalries could also push some factions to act more vigorously to reaffirm their power and influence within the organization. The ability of AQIM to return to its 2007-2008 levels of violence in Algeria remains weak; however, it is undisputable that the strategic context in Algeria has changed slightly in favor of AQIM in the last few months.

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Can Nigeria Exploit the Split in the Boko Haram Movement?

By Jacob Zenn

The Northern Nigerian militant group Boko Haram is showing signs of splitting along the ideological lines that emerged at the time of the July 2009 death of the group's founder, Mallam Ustad Mohammed Yusuf. Whereas the divisions then were an internal matter, their differences are now becoming public. In particular, the Yusufiya Islamic Movement (YIM) is distinguishing itself from more radical elements in Boko Haram. The latter movement has become increasingly notorious for its attacks on civilians and places of worship, as well as high-profile vehicle-borne suicide-bombings such as those on the United Nations Headquarters and the Nigerian Police Headquarters in Abuja (see *Terrorism Monitor* Brief, July 1). [1]

On July 20, 2011, less than two weeks before the start of Ramadan, the YIM distributed flyers in Maidiguri (Borno State), the base of Boko Haram. Though the flyers fail to name the group they target, it is almost certainly Boko Haram that is referred to when the YIM says it is: "concerned that some people with evil motives have infiltrated our genuine struggle with a false Holy War that is outright un-Islamic. We call on this evil group to desist, failing which we shall have no option than to expose and hunt them.... We therefore distance our group from all the bombings targeted at civilians and other establishments and equally condemn them and pray that Allah exposes those who perpetrated them and attributed them to us... This is necessary in the light of genuine concern by individuals and groups to the mass suffering of innocent citizens caught in the crossfire between our members and the Nigerian troops" (*The Nation* [Maidiguri], July 7).

The YIM also resolved to "temporarily halt our fight against the assassination of our leaders in compliance with the prohibition of fighting in the holy month of Ramadan" (*The Nation* [Maidiguri], July 7, 2011)." The UN Headquarters attack on August 26 occurred five days before the end of Ramadan and was claimed by one of Boko Haram's spokesmen, Abu Kakah, in a mobile phone interview. He said that Boko Haram considered the United States, the UN and the Nigerian government as common enemies and would continue to attack them because they are infringing on the rights of the Muslims (*Vanguard*, August 28, 2011). A video showing the

suicide bomber's preparations also contained the voice of Boko Haram leader Abu Bakr Shekau calling the UN "the forum of all the global evil" (*Vanguard*, September 18, 2011).

The YIM issued no condemnation of the UN attack and has been silent since the release of the flyers on July 20. The authenticity of the flyers and even of the group's existence cannot be corroborated. However, the message in the flyers is consistent with the views held by an older generation of Mohammed Yusuf's followers who could be trying to cleanse the movement's image by advocating a change in the movement's tactics to avoid targeting civilians or places of worship.

The YIM did not use the flyers to renounce violence altogether or reject Mohammed Yusuf and the founding doctrines of Boko Haram; they even state that the authors "fight for the blood of our founder, Mohammed Yusuf, and other leaders who were slain in cold blood." The YIM only disagrees with the direction Boko Haram has taken since Yusuf's death in 2009, probably because Yusuf's successor, Abu Bakr Shekau, has steered the group in a much more radical and violent direction than Yusuf did when he was leader (see *Terrorism Monitor* Brief, July 22, 2010). Shekau's focus is on jihad, while Yusuf rose to demagogue status because of his charisma and the initially peaceful religious doctrine he preached (*Daily Trust*, September 1).

The older generation of Yusuf's followers shared Yusuf's extreme views on religion, including the infamous ban on "Boko," which means "Western education" in Hausa, but they also respected Yusuf's systematic approach to dealing with the Nigerian government and the propagation of their brand of Islam (*Sun News*, July 24, 2011). In contrast to Yusuf, they feel Abu Shekau, whose support base came from the younger generation of 20-30 year-olds, is too extreme (*Daily Trust*, August 15, 2009).

Abu Shekau was more aggressive than Yusuf in employing violence. For example, Shekau insisted on attacking Nigerian security forces before Ramadan in 2009 while Yusuf tried to pacify Boko Haram members and delay the attack for at least two more months until the end of Ramadan (*Sun News*, July 24, 2011). The pre-Ramadan attack proved to be poorly planned and resulted in a four-day battle in which as many as 800 Boko Haram members were killed, including Yusuf, who was captured and executed by Nigerian security forces while in their custody (see *Terrorism Monitor*,

March 26, 2010).

Boko Haram's reaction in the week after the dissemination of the flyers shows that the flyers caught the movement's attention. Boko Haram released a five-minute video of Abu Shekau on July 25 and made a post on its blog on July 23 to address issues related to the flyers. The blog post was entitled "A Call to Service" and said: "the brotherhood remains one indivisible entity. There is no split and there is no splinter group. Stories of [a] split are tissues of lies by the state security service to discredit us..." [2]

In a five-minute video Abu Shekau assured civilians that Boko Haram will not harm them, arguing that their target is the government, its security forces and anybody the group regards as a collaborator: "We are just fighting those who are fighting us, soldiers and police and the rest; and anybody, even if he is a learned Muslim teacher, if we confirm that he exposes us to the government, his children will become orphans and his wife will become a widow, God willing. That is our way." He also denied that Boko Haram targeted civilians in the bombing of a Maiduguri beer parlor in June 2011 that killed 25 people, saying: "You people should know that we do not kill those who drink alcohol.... We had heard that it was purely soldiers who gathered there to drink, and we confirmed it, that was why we went there and killed them. It's mere propaganda that we attacked a beer joint so that people would accuse us of killing innocent people."

The Abu Shekau video shows that civilian deaths as a result of Boko Haram's attacks are becoming a concern for the group, at least from a public relations standpoint. This could mean that Abu Shekau and his followers will focus more on targeting government institutions, like the police headquarters attack, and international entities, as in the UN headquarters attack. Other terrorist groups in Africa, like al-Shabbab and al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM), would be more than willing to aid Boko Haram in the internationalization of its jihad against the Nigerian government and the government's foreign allies. However, that could lead to more internal splits in Boko Haram between members who want to focus on Nigeria and those, like Shekau, who want Boko Haram to become part and parcel of the international jihad movement (News 24 [Lagos], August 18, 2011). [3]

Nigeria's best hope is that Boko Haram's loss of internal cohesion will lead to the group's collapse, since so far

the military and government have not found a solution to Boko Haram. President Goodluck Jonathan, who is looking to engage Boko Haram in negotiations, will probably seek out the more rational minds in the Yusufiya Islamic Movement to address the social and economic crises and religious-based violence in northern Nigeria.

In mid-September former President Olusegun Obasanjo and Mohammed Yusuf's brother-in-law, Babakura Fugu, met in Maiduguri in an attempt to establish a dialogue between the government and Boko Haram, but within 72 hours of the meeting Fugu was assassinated. Shortly after the BBC reported that Boko Haram had claimed responsibility for the killing, Boko Haram spokesperson Abu Kakah denied responsibility: "Today, we received with shock [news of] the unfortunate killing of the family member of our leader Sheik Muhammed Yusuf (*Champion* [Lagos], September 19)."

If Shekau's faction tolerated the negotiations, which may have been a means for Yusuf's family to recover compensation from the Nigerian government for Yusuf's killing, then there must be another faction more radical than his that carried out the assassination. One possibility is that followers of Chadian-born Mammam Nur are less concerned about justice for Yusuf's family than Shekau or the YIM and more concerned with breaking up the reconciliation process by assassinating Fugu. Mammam Nur returned to Nigeria this year after training in Somalia and building contacts with al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda. Nur is believed to have masterminded the UN attack and was third-in-command when Shekau was Yusuf's Deputy (*Vanguard*, September 3, 2011).

Nigeria's choice to negotiate with Babakura Fugu gives reason for optimism because even Shekau's faction accepted the talks. However, Nigeria's ultimate challenge may now exist beyond its own borders. With internationally-connected jihadis like Mallam Nur now planted in Nigeria, resolving the Boko Haram crisis may not offset the growing threat to Nigeria from foreign-linked jihadis.

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Notes:

[1] Although a spokesman, Abu Zaid, and the leader, Abu Shekau, have called their movement by the name Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wa'l-Jihad since 2010, Nigerians and the mass media still refer to the group by the name Boko Haram.

[2] The blog believed to be affiliated with Boko Haram can be found at: <http://yusufislamicbrothers.blogspot.com>. For a translated transcript of the five-minute Abu Shekau video see: <http://blueprintng.com/index/2011/07/why-we-will-never-give-up-%E2%80%93-shekau/>

[3] For a link to a statement by Abu Shekau about Boko Haram's international objectives, see this speech posted by Boko Haram on Smukh al-Islam forum: <http://www.ansar1.info/showthread.php?t=35072>.