



# Terrorism Monitor

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Thousands of President Mursi's supporters gather in Central Cairo June 21

## POLITICAL AND SECTARIAN POLARIZATION MAY SPARK A NEW PHASE OF THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

Andrew McGregor

One year into the presidency of Muslim Brother Muhammad al-Mursi, Egypt finds itself consumed by economic deterioration, severe energy shortages, labor unrest, domestic insecurity, sectarian divisions and rumors of imminent coup attempts. The nation's political crisis threatens to come to a head on June 30, when massive demonstrations are scheduled to call for Mursi's resignation and an end to rule by Egypt's powerful Muslim Brotherhood. Leading members of the Brotherhood, including the president, have been observed moving out of their homes to temporary residences before the demonstrations begin (*al-Tahrir* [Cairo], June 19).

In a June 26 televised speech intended to deter the massive demonstrations planned for June 30, the president admitted making mistakes, but remained consistent in blaming Egypt's troubles on "enemies of Egypt":

There are many reasons for what we are suffering now. We should admit that. As a president, I have exerted painstaking efforts, sometimes I did it and sometimes I made mistakes and mistakes can happen, but rectifying these mistakes is a must... The enemies of Egypt have left no stone unturned in sabotaging the democratic experience in Egypt. There are some people who have illusions that the state of corruption, oppression and injustice will come back" (MENA, June 27).

The military responded to the impending demonstrations and possible violence

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with a statement issued on June 23 by Minister of Defense and Military Production and Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Abd-al-Fattah al-Sisi, who insisted the army would “not accept, approve of or allow Egypt’s entry into a dark tunnel of conflict, clashes, civil war, distrust, sectarian strife or the collapse of state institutions” (*al-Abram* [Cairo], June 24; June 25). Al-Sisi called on all parties to work towards conciliation in the few days remaining before the June 30 anti-Mursi protests. The statement was closely examined by political analysts in Egypt, who searched it for clues as to whether the military was ready to retake power despite recent signs that it was prepared to remain on the sidelines of the political dispute so long as its privileges were guaranteed. In the meantime, Egyptian military forces are reinforcing bases near major Egyptian cities with armor and additional troops in anticipation of the June 30 protests. Interior Minister Muhammad Ibrahim has said Egypt’s police would not favor any political trend in the streets on June 30, but would take measures to prevent attacks on public property or police stations (*al-Jumhuriyah* [Cairo], June 20; MENA, June 24). Some 200,000 police are expected to be available to provide security on June 30.

The broad aim of the opposition, which includes liberals, Coptic Christians, leftists and others, is to call for Mursi’s resignation, the appointment of the Supreme Court president as an interim president, the creation of a national salvation government to guide Egypt into new elections and the formation of an assembly to draft a new constitution (*al-Masri al-Youm* [Cairo], June 21).

Most of the Salafist fronts do not seek a change in leadership at the moment despite their significant differences with the Muslim Brotherhood politicians. In general, they have also adopted the language of democracy (which they rejected as un-Islamic before discovering it offered a pathway to government) in asserting Mursi’s right to continue as president as mandated by Egypt’s voters. The Salafist Nur Party (Egypt’s largest Salafist political party) has announced its intention to sit out both the pro-government demonstrations and the anti-government protests, saying it rejects the current political polarization (MENA [Cairo], June 25).

However, in a recent interview with a Cairo daily, Muhammad Abu Samrah, the secretary general of the political wing of Egyptian Islamic Jihad, declared that party members would not support President Mursi or the Muslim Brotherhood in the streets on June 30, but rather warned that if any attempt is made to storm the presidential palace or proclaim a new president, the movement’s “hundreds of thousands” of jihadists would interpret this as the “zero hour”:

If President Mursi falls, we shall immediately declare the launching of the Islamic Revolution. We have our justifications, the most important being that we accepted democracy as a system for the rule, even though many of the jihadists reject it. Since we have accepted it everybody must respect it. But toppling Mursi means that they have rejected democracy and even stomped on it with their shoes. Here any legitimacy collapses, in which case we shall declare our Islamic Revolution and will call on the people to take to the streets to support us... If the Republican Palace is stormed and a President other than Mursi is declared, as some are circulating, that will be the zero hour. We shall immediately go out on the streets. But this does not mean that we approve of Mursi or the Muslim Brotherhood... The first ones that the Islamic Revolution will be directed against are the Muslim Brothers, for they have not enforced Shari’a as they pledged and have reneged on all their promises (*al-Akhbar* [Cairo], June 11).

For this purpose, the movement has postponed the departure of jihadists to Syria until after June 30. With Salafist groups giving their approval for Egyptian jihadists to travel to Syria, the first batch of fighters had been scheduled to leave this month (*al-Masri al-Youm* [Cairo], June 18). If Mursi is forced from office, Abu Samrah suggests that the choice of the Salafists would be Shaykh Hazem Salah Abu Ismail, a populist Islamist politician who was forced from the presidential race due to his mother’s dual Egyptian-American citizenship (see Terrorism Monitor Brief, January 25).

Members of the Egyptian opposition believe Mursi’s supporters have adopted a façade of democratic adherence only to allow Mursi enough time to entrench members of the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist movements in Egypt’s power structure. A recent round of gubernatorial appointments saw regional demonstrations against the appointment of Islamists, most notably in the Luxor region, where Adel Muhammad al-Khayat, a member of the Gama’at al-Islamiya organization that killed 58 tourists there in 1997, was inexplicably appointed governor and charged with a mandate of increasing tourism. The bizarre choice of governor for Luxor, home of ancient Egypt’s Valley of the Kings, resulted in the immediate resignation of Tourism Minister Hisham Zazou (though his resignation was not accepted). The regional and national outrage over the appointment, which seemed designed to discourage rather than encourage international tourism in a country heavily reliant on tourism as a means of income and source of foreign currency, resulted in the new governor’s resignation only a few days after his appointment.

The Brotherhood has been organizing what it calls “million-man marches” in support of Mursi using the slogan “No to Violence, Yes to Legitimacy” (Amal al-Ummah [Alexandria], June 21; Egyptwindow [Cairo], June 21; MENA, June 21). Pro and anti-Mursi demonstrators have increasingly come to blows across Egypt in recent weeks, raising the possibility of widespread violence on June 30. Following major clashes between opposition forces and Muslim Brotherhood supporters in the Sharqiyah, Fayyum, Minufiya Gharbiya and Kafr al-Shaykh governorates, Brotherhood media outlets have blamed the violence on the Tamarud (“Rebels”) movement, the Dustur Party of Muhammad al-Baradei, the Popular Current (a political coalition led by Neo-Nasserist Hamdin Sabahi), the Black Bloc, Christians and assorted “hooligans and dangerous criminals” (Amal al-Ummah [Alexandria], June 19; Egyptwindow, June 19; *al-Jumhuriyah* [Cairo], June 19; Ikhwan Online [Cairo], June 20).

Tamarud has also been the target of attacks, with Molotov cocktails being thrown at the movement’s offices in Cairo on June 7. Tamarud (“Rebels”) is trying to collect 15 million signatures on a petition to force an early presidential election and claim to have 10 million signatures so far (Xinhua, June 7).

President Mursi’s speech appears to have had little impact on the mounting tensions in Egypt, where inflammatory Islamist rhetoric is matched only by the determination of the opposition to bring enough people out into the streets to force the president’s resignation. With elements of both groups believing provocations could force intervention by security or military forces on their side, there is a serious risk the June 30 demonstrations could mark the beginning of a new and more violent phase of the unfinished Egyptian revolution.

## SUDANESE PRESIDENT DECLARES SOUTH SUDAN’S OIL WILL NEVER PASS THROUGH SUDAN AGAIN

*Andrew McGregor*

Only three months after a long and bitter dispute over South Sudanese oil flows through Sudan was resolved, the pipeline from the South is in danger of being cut off once again, to the mutual disadvantage of both states. The earlier dispute, which saw oil flows from South Sudan suspended for 16 months, was based on a dispute over pipeline fees. Now political considerations have come to the fore, with Khartoum

demanding that South Sudan stop its alleged support of forces belonging to the rebel Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) in the Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile regions. Khartoum’s decision comes at a time when it has been unsettled by rebel advances in North Kordofan province that could eventually open the road to a strike on the capital itself.

Bashir announced at a June 8 rally in Khartoum that he had told his oil minister to “direct oil pipelines to close the pipeline and after that, let [South Sudan] take [the oil] via Kenya or Djibouti or wherever they want to take it... The oil of South Sudan will not pass through Sudan ever again” (Sudan Tribune, June 17). The Sudanese government has said the pipeline must be shut down in a gradual 60-day process and that all oil within the pipeline are already in Port Sudan will be shipped out as usual (Sudan Tribune, June 15). The affected oil shipments belong to the China National Petroleum Corporation, India’s ONGC Videsh and Malaysia’s Petronas.

Even if the current dispute was resolved quickly (which looks unlikely), it will still have the result of encouraging plans to develop a new pipeline to carry South Sudan’s oil to Djibouti or Kenya’s Lamu Port instead of Port Sudan. The planned pipeline to Lamu Port would be joined by another new line from Uganda, which has been determined to have a commercially viable three billion drums of oil (*Daily Nation* [Nairobi], June 18).

However, for the pipeline to Lamu Port to become a reality, new oil discoveries are needed in South Sudan. Most of these hopes are centered on potential discoveries in the massive but promising Jonglei B Bloc that was formerly a concession of French oil firm Total. The B Bloc has now been divided into three parts, with Total joining in a partnership with U.S. Exxon Mobil and Kuwait’s Kufpec in at least two of these blocs (Reuters, June 4). Unfortunately, eastern Jonglei is the home of the Yau Yau rebellion, an obstinate challenge to South Sudan’s success that Juba believes is supplied and organized by Khartoum (for rebellion leader David Yau Yau, see *Militant Leadership Monitor*, May 2013). South Sudan president Salva Kiir Mayardit is reported to have discussed construction of the new pipeline with the Toyota Corporation of Japan during a visit to that country (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 20).

The previous dispute over oil transfers was solved by a Cooperation Agreement signed in September, 2012 and implemented in March that covered oil and other issues, such as border security, citizenship, trade, banking and even the creation of a buffer zone between the two nations. Following Khartoum’s decision to suspend the Cooperation

Agreement with South Sudan, Washington postponed an already controversial visit to the U.S. capital from Sudanese presidential adviser Nafi Ali Nafi, one of the most powerful men in the regime and a possible future presidential candidate, but also a figure many believe should be charged by the International Criminal Court for his role in various human rights abuses (*al-Sanafah* [Khartoum], June 19).

Efforts to reconcile the two Sudans have been led by former South African president Thabo Mbeki, currently chairman of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel. China, which stands to lose a major source of oil over the tensions between Khartoum and Juba, has joined the AU in seeking a resolution to the dispute. Khartoum has indicated its acceptance of an African Union proposal that would see the reimplementation of the cooperation agreement once the South Sudanese army was removed from the demilitarized zone between the two nations, but with both Khartoum and Juba still accusing the other of maintaining proxy forces within their respective territories, there are still important issues to be resolved if South Sudanese oil is to continue being pumped to Port Sudan after the two-month warning period ends in early August. South Sudan vice-president Riek Machar has been assigned to visit Khartoum to discuss means of resolving this latest crisis, but a date for the visit has yet to be set (*al-Sahafah* [Khartoum], June 16; *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 20).

South Sudan's Foreign Minister, Nhial Deng Nhial, insists that his government is ready to fully implement all the conditions of the Cooperation Agreement: "The Republic of South Sudan does not support rebels fighting Khartoum. It is in our interest not to destabilize the government of Sudan" (Sudan Tribune, June 23). Deng Alor, minister of cabinet affairs of South Sudan, remarked: "We do not want to enter into a military confrontation with Khartoum; not owing to weakness, but in order to maintain peace and its achievements... However, this does not prevent us from exercising our right to self-defense" (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 20).

On June 20, the Khartoum government announced sweeping changes to the military leadership, including the top positions in the army, air force, navy and intelligence service. The new chief-of-staff is Lieutenant General Mustafa Osman Obeid Salim, who succeeds Colonel General Ismat Abd al-Rahman. While government sources described the replacement of 15 senior officers as routine, it is widely believed the broad changes in the command structure reflected a lack of confidence in the existing commanders, who were unable to prevent the Sudanese Revolutionary Front from taking the town of Abu Kershola in South Kordofan and attacking the

North Kordofan town of Um Rawaba in a lightly-resisted spring offensive that embarrassed government leaders. The SRF even fired four shells on a military airbase outside the North Kordofan capital of Kadugli on June 14, though the shells actually fell on part of the facility used by the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), killing one Ethiopian peacekeeper and wounding two others (Sudan Tribune, June 14; *Akhir Lahzah* [Khartoum], June 18).

Military developments in North Kordofan have clearly alarmed the regime in Khartoum, which has set up 27 checkpoints at entrance points to the capital to prevent the infiltration of SRF fighters (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 20). Nafi Ali Nafi made an unusual public criticism of the army afterwards, saying its low combat capability meant it was struggling to deal with the rebels and was in need of new recruits. His remarks were taken poorly by the Army, whose spokesman Colonel al-Sawarmi Khalid Sa'ad proclaimed that "if it wasn't for the Sudanese Army... these [rebel] movements would have now seized the city of Khartoum and the regime would have totally collapsed" (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 20; Sudan Tribune, June 20). Nonetheless, the president's adviser appears to have come out on top in this struggle – most of the officers newly appointed to command positions are believed to be Nafi loyalists. The widespread changes to Sudan's military leadership also appear to have weeded out some senior officers whose loyalty was suspect after being charged and then pardoned by the president in connection with an alleged coup attempt last November. [1] Only a few of those detained remain behind bars, including Major General Salah Ahmed Abdalla and Lieutenant General Salah Abdallah Abu Digin (a.k.a. Salah Gosh), a former head of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) known for his political rivalry with Nafi Ali Nafi and his close cooperation with the CIA in counterterrorism matters.

#### Note

1. For the coup, see Andrew McGregor, "Sudanese Regime Begins to Unravel after Coup Reports and Rumors of Military Ties to Iran," Aberfoyle International Security Special Report, January 7, 2012, <http://www.aberfoylesecurity.com/?p=141>.

## Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Makes Inroads in Southern Yemen but Reveals Limits to Its Operational Capabilities

Ludovico Carlino

The recent operations carried out by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and allied Ansar al-Shari'a militants seem to confirm that South Yemen has finally become the battleground on which both groups are testing the Yemeni Army's ability to contain the insurgents' ambitions. While AQAP has not thus far shown an operational capability to mount sophisticated attacks as it did in the past, jihadi militants have, however, been able to sustain a more circumscribed and incisive campaign against security and military forces. Although insurgent attempts to strike more resonating targets remain constant, as suggested by the thwarted May plot to detonate a seven kilogram C4-type IED in a Sana'a street where President Hadi's convoy was due to drive, it is in the south where AQAP and Ansar al-Shari'a have extended their reach and resumed regular attacks on the army (Yemencom.net, May 12; *Yemen Post*, May 18). In addition to AQAP's presence in Hadramawt governorate, which remains a key corridor for AQAP members and weapons due to its porous border on the north and the presence of al-Shihr and al-Mukalla ports in the south, the group's militants have reportedly managed to enter the Ibb governorate in the last months, especially in the al-Odain, al-Sadda and al-Nadera districts of Lahj and al-Bayda governorates, while strengthen their grasp on the al-Mahfald and Mudiyah districts of Abyan governorate (Marib Press, May 6; *Yemen Times*, May 24; June 9; June 10).

Several factors can explain these geographic inroads:

- AQAP and Ansar al-Shari'a are managing to partially exploit the overall security deterioration in the South. The latter is, to a certain extent, the result of the increasing anti-Government stance embraced by factions of the Herak secessionist movement, with the most militant factions located within a broad and heterogeneous secessionist spectrum that has started to target security forces with a certain consistency in the last two months (*Yemen Times*, May 24; *Aden Tribune*, May 15; May 31). The military overhaul decreed by President Hadi last April has also played a significant role in deepening the perception of increasing insecurity in some areas of the country, especially in Ma'rib and in the South, where over 40 military camps have reportedly rebelled against their commanders, leaving certain districts unguarded (*Yemen Times*, May 13; Barakish.net, 6 June).
- On the other side, the insurgents' stretch across the southern governorates has been probably enabled by

the groups' ability to maintain a stronghold in northern Abyan, despite the massive offensive launched by the Army in the governorate in July 2012 (*Yemen Times*, June 3).

- Additionally, militant movements across the southern governorates have been facilitated by their theft of cars bearing government licence plates, which, according to security sources, has allowed operatives to pass freely through inter-provincial security checkpoints (*Yemen Times*, June 6). The July 2012 military push effectively forced AQAP militants to adopt a more defensive stance in the following months, with the group resorting to hit-and-run operations and more classic insurgent tactics while launching a sustained campaign of almost 100 assassinations of security and military personnel beginning in January, 2013 (*Yemen Fox*, June 2). This phase has possibly allowed AQAP and Ansar al-Shari'a militants to gradually reorganize their ranks ahead of their planned southern offensive.

At the beginning of May, residents of al-Hawta, provincial capital of Lahij, told the local press that AQAP and Ansar al-Shari'a militants were distributing leaflets warning about their upcoming offensive in the governorates of Hadramawt, al-Baydah and Lahij just a few days before suspected AQAP militants killed three Yemeni Air Force pilots on their way to al-Anad military airbase in al-Hawta (al-Masdar Online, May 8; *Yemen Post*, May 10, May 26). The largest airbase in Yemen, al-Anad, the base for U.S. drone operations since 2012, was targeted on May 6 by suspected AQAP militants, who set on fire three gas tanks containing 6,000 liters of fuel, causing a massive explosion but no casualties (Marib Press, May 6; *Yemen Times*, May 9).

The insurgent push moved a few days later to Abyan, where three days of open fighting between the army and Ansar al-Shari'a left 11 militants and five soldiers dead in Wadi Marjan and al-Murakasha. In al-Baydah, AQAP gunmen attacked military positions near Tha'alib Mountain, killing two soldiers (Yemencom.net, May 14, *Yemen Post*, May 24). In this scheme falls also AQAP's June 2 attempt to target the infrastructure of the Yemen Liquefied Natural Gas Company in Shabwa governorate, the biggest project of its kind in the country. Two attacks on the gas pipeline linking Marib to the Balhaf liquefied natural gas facilities in the Gulf of Aden were successfully repelled by security forces 80 kilometers north of Balhaf (Saba News, June 2). After a few hours, AQAP militants again attempted to target the Balhaf gas export terminal with two car bombs, but Yemeni soldiers foiled the attack, detonating the explosives in one vehicle with gunfire and forcing the second vehicle to flee (Saba News, June 2, *Yemen Times*, June 3). Although the army claimed that only three soldiers were injured, local media reported that at least five soldiers were killed in the blast along with the attacker (Marib Press, June 2).

Conflicting reports also surround the events in al-Mukalla

between the last days of May and the beginning of June. On May 23, the Yemeni Interior Ministry stated that AQAP and Ansar al-Shari'a militants had captured areas around the port city and managed to establish Islamic Emirates in al-Shihr and Ghayl Ba Wazir. The ministry then announced the beginning of an army offensive to retake control of the area (*Yemen Post*, May 24; *al-Shorfa*, May 30; *National Yemen*, May 31). Over 10,000 troops backed by tanks and helicopters took part in a week-long operation that ultimately pushed the insurgents away from their positions, killed seven militants and destroyed the groups' hideouts (26September.info, June 5; *Yemen Post*, June 6; *Yemen Times*, June 10). The military and government accounts have, however, been disputed by Yemeni journalist Abdurrazaq al-Jamal, who, quoting sources close to AQAP, stated that only one militant was killed and suggested that the groups did not actually declare Islamic Emirates in the cities (*National Yemen*, June 20). No statement claiming the establishment of the Emirates was published by AQAP or Ansar al-Shari'a in the days following the events in Ghayl Ba Wazir.

The recent AQAP and Ansar al-Shari'a operations indicate an ongoing attempt by militants to extend their reach across southern Yemen. Although the accounts regarding the alleged establishment of Islamic Emirates in Hadramawt remain difficult to confirm at this stage, they point to the strategic priority that the seizure and the control of territory maintains in the current insurgent scheme, whether by means of establishing an Islamic Emirate or a more classic stronghold. The army's ability to repel major attacks, such as the one in Balhaf against the liquefied natural gas facility, and to contain attempts by the militants to establish new bases, as in al-Shihr and Ghayl Ba Wazir, also suggest there are limits to the insurgents' ability to realize their ambitions. This in turn might push AQAP and Ansar al-Shari'a to increase their recourse to hit-and-run operations and assassinations, in which they have proved particularly adept thus far, even replicating these tactics in Yemen's northern governorates.

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## Punjab Government Financing Front Group for Lashkar-e-Taiba Terrorists

*Animesh Roul*

With the change in the political guard in Pakistan following the May 11 general election, apprehensions have grown in India regarding the strategy of the newly-crowned government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to fight Kashmir-centric militant groups, especially the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and its various incarnations. Even though Sharif vowed to curb militant proxies operating against India and promised a thorough probe into the role of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in the attacks against India, these promises seemed to crumble when the Punjab provincial administration, led by Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N), allocated \$620,000 to facilities run by the proscribed charity, Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), the parent body of the notorious Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist group that carried out the November 2008 attacks in Mumbai. The funds were allocated to the JuD/LeT's Markaz-e-Taiba, the group's sprawling headquarters at Muridke (Punjab Province) for the fiscal year 2013-14.

This is not the first time the Punjab government has allocated funds for the banned but still operational JuD charity. In June 2010, the government allocated a grant of \$806,000 for schools, a mosque, hospital and other health facilities inside the Muridke campus and another grant of \$30,000 for JuD's al-Dawa school network across Punjab (AFP, June 17, 2010). To the chagrin of India, the Punjab government came forward with a justification of its new grant to the JuD, led by militant ideologue Hafiz Muhammad Saeed. The Punjab government said that it had already taken administrative control of the JuD's facility in 2008 following the proscription of the JuD and the budgetary allocations are needed to continue services being provided to people through welfare institutions like the dispensaries, hospitals and schools of the Markaz center, which sprawls over 200 acres of land. In reaction, JuD spokesman Yahiya Mujahid noted that the funds were not placed in the JuD's own account and said the Pakistani judiciary has cleared JuD of all past allegations, leaving it free to carry on its work for the Pakistani people. [1] He previously admitted in June, 2010 that JuD office-holders and activists were working in the Markaz (AFP, June 17, 2010).

The Markaz is known for imparting jihadi education to youths in the guise of Daura Suffa', a 21-day indoctrination

course in which students are made to study the Quran, *salat* (prayer) and *dawah* (proselytization). It is believed that Osama bin Laden provided the initial \$100,000 for the construction of a mosque inside the Markaz. Generous donations from Saudi Arabia facilitated the establishment of the campus with a mosque, an Islamic University known as Jamia Al-Dawah and at least three residential colonies, namely, Makkah Colony, Madina Colony and Taiba Colony.

The Punjab government appointed Khaqan Babar as administrator of the Markaz-e-Taiba to manage the center's social, charitable and welfare organizations in 2009 (*The Nation* [Islamabad], January 26, 2009). Even though the government measures were criticized by JuD/LeT officials at that time, they later proved to be part of Islamabad's well-considered policy to prevent a hue and cry over evidence of active collusion between JuD office-holders and Punjab government officials in managing day to day affairs of the Markaz and other institutions. The government takeover was considered to be a face-saving measure for Pakistan, which remains under intense international pressure after the 2008 Mumbai attacks. However, there is little evidence anything has changed on the ground so far as JuD's operations in Pakistan are concerned.

The JuD traces its origin to the Markaz Dawa wal-Irshad (MDI), founded in the mid-1980s by three well-known Islamist figures, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, Zafar Iqbal and the late Abdullah Azzam, with the aim of participating in the Afghan war against the Soviets and subsequently in Kashmir. The JuD has long been known to be a front for the militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which came into existence almost at the same time with Hafiz Muhammad Saeed as its supreme leader. The LeT was responsible for numerous terrorist strikes against India, including the December 2000 Red Fort attack in Delhi and the November 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed more than 160 people. Prior to the ban on the LeT in Pakistan, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed renamed the MDI as Jamaat-ud-Dawa in December 2001 and placed the LeT under Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi as supreme commander and Wahid Kashmiri as head of operations in Kashmir.

The UN Security Council imposed sanctions against the JuD and declared it a terrorist organization in December 2008. Four senior leaders of the JuD/LeT, including founders Saudi financier Bahaziq Mahmoud and founders Hafiz Muhammad Saeed and Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi were designated as terrorists. [2] The LeT was designated by the United States as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in December 2001 and was added to the UN sanctions list in May 2005. The JuD was identified as an alias of the LeT in April 2006 (*Daily Times* [Lahore], April 29, 2006). [3]

Islamabad launched a brief military operation against JuD/LeT hideouts and training camps in the early weeks of December 2008 under pressure from the United States and India, arresting several top operatives, including Saeed, Lakhvi and Zarar Shah. However, Hafiz Saeed was later released from the detention for lack of evidence against him and continues to operate with impunity, while Lakhvi is still in prison awaiting trial.

Saeed and his cohorts have founded various organizations to remain relevant in the face of growing international scrutiny and sanctions against their activities in Pakistan and elsewhere. The JuD has carried out humanitarian operations during natural calamities such as the 2005 Kashmir earthquake and 2010 floods in Pakistan. These activities were carried out in the name of two charitable fronts that were later designated as terrorist organizations by the U.S. Department of State – the Idara Khidmat-e Khalaq (IKK) and 'Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation (FiF). [4] The JuD's humanitarian work is motivated by a desire to garner public and government support, obtain fresh recruits and ensure a continuous flow of funds to carry out jihad training and operations.

The JuD established an Islamist umbrella group known as the Difah Pakistan Council (DPC) that has spearheaded Kashmir-related protests against India and the United States across Pakistan. In early June 2013, Hafiz Saeed said that "unless the Kashmir issue is resolved, there can be no trade, no friendship, no agreements with India" (*Asian News International*, June 4). The JuD remains at the forefront of the Kashmir struggle, exhorting youths to join the militants during its frequent rallies.

Exploiting internet based social media platforms and technology, JuD has reinvented itself as a political pressure group and is attempting to legitimize its actions before the laws of the land in the name of charity and development. It maintains active Facebook and Twitter accounts and a revamped website where it lists three causes for which JuD now stands: national politics, social reform and education. [5]

With government subsidies and financial assistance in place, JuD and its leaders seem unperturbed and do not foresee any interference with their future plans and operations. With its infrastructure remaining intact and under government protection, the JuD and its supreme leader Hafez Muhammad Saeed remain a potent and apparently state-sponsored threat against India and the West.

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#### Notes

1. See: <http://jamatdawa.org/jamat-ud-dawah-does-not-receive-any-funds-from-the-punjab-goverment/#sthash.ZdhhbqhnI.dpuf>.
2. "Security Council al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee Adds Names of Four Individuals to Consolidated List, Amends Entries of Three Entities," UNSC Department of Public Information, SC/9527, December 10, 2008, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/sc9527.doc.htm>.
3. "Addition of Aliases Jamaat-ud-Dawa and Idara Khidmat-e-Khalq to the Specially Designated Global Terrorist Designation of Lashkar-E-Tayyiba," U.S. Department of State Press Release, April 28, 2006, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/65401.htm>.
4. "Secretary of State's Terrorist Designation of Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation," U.S. Department of State Press Release, November 24, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/11/151931.htm>.
5. See: <https://twitter.com/HafizSaeedJUD>, <http://jamatdawa.org/>.

## Shiite Enclaves North of Aleppo Becoming Staging Grounds for Hezbollah's Next Offensive

*Nicholas A. Heras*

The question of Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian civil war has become more intense following the recent capture of the strategic, central-western Syrian border city of al-Qusayr in Homs governorate to Syrian military and Hezbollah forces. After al-Qusayr fell, mass media reports emerged that Hezbollah is set to deploy, or has already deployed, 2,000-4,000 fighters to the northwestern Syrian governorate of Aleppo, at the Aleppo Military Academy of Military Engineering and in the enclave of the large, Shiite Syrian villages of Nubul and al-Zahraa' northeast of the strategic, contested city of Aleppo (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 4).

Nubul and al-Zahraa' are situated northwest of the city of Aleppo on the major highway 214 that runs to the Syrian-Turkish border. The highway approaches important Sunni-majority villages that act as armed opposition staging points

running from southern Turkey into northern Syria in the vicinity of Aleppo. Of special importance is the large village of Azaz, northeast of Nubul and al-Zahraa' and due north of Aleppo, that was seized by the armed opposition in July 2012. It has been a target of several Syrian military airstrikes and is central to a current military operation against the opposition in the area north of Aleppo (al-Jazeera [Doha], August 17, 2012; al-Arabiya [Dubai], June 8). Nubul and al-Zahraa' are also reported to be the staging point for Syrian military and Hezbollah operations seeking control of the important Minagh Military Airport in the vicinity of Azaz (al-Arabiya [Dubai], June 8; al-Jazeera [Doha], June 12).

### Pro-Assad Enclaves Nubul and al-Zahraa'

Nubul and Zahraa' have been receiving significant attention from Hezbollah, which has supported Lebanese and pro-Assad Syrians since late 2012. Nubul and al-Zahraa', with a combined population of approximately 70,000-100,000 people, are located in a contested area near the Turkish-Syrian border between the Kurdish-majority northwestern Afrin sub-region near the Turkish border and several armed-opposition controlled areas and staging points from Turkey into Syria (*al-Mayadeen* [Beirut], October 28, 2012). Tension between the residents of pro and anti-opposition villages in the area has led to communal recriminations and conflict (*al-Mayadeen* [Beirut], October 28, 2012).

The Syrian armed opposition has consistently accused Hezbollah of participating in Syrian military operations staged from the area of Nubul and al-Zahraa'. Colonel Nour Hassoun, a Free Syrian Army (FSA) commander in the south-central city of Homs, asserted that Hezbollah fighters have been moving into the vicinity of Aleppo and Idlib, where they would be used as "infiltration" units to directly attack armed opposition positions already under artillery and aircraft attack by Syrian military (Deir ez Zor Press, April 25). The villages of Nubul and al-Zahraa' in particular have been accused of being staging points for anti-opposition operations. Syrian armed opposition groups have asserted via YouTube video that they have been battling Hezbollah and Iranian Revolutionary Guard fighters in the vicinity of Nubul and al-Zahraa', and Syrian military units and *shabiha* (ghosts) paramilitary militias based in the villages. [1]

Iraqi Shiite fighters of the Abu Fadl al-Abbas Brigade, who normally operate in the southern Damascus suburb Sayyida Zeinab, are also reported by the opposition to be fighting with Hezbollah and the Syrian military in the area around Aleppo (*al-Seyessah* [Kuwait City], June 10). However, pro-government Popular Committee local defense militias in Nubul and al-Zahraa' deny Hezbollah's involvement in



the fighting and state that the rumor of the movement's participation in the fighting in the area is "disinformation" put out by the armed opposition (*al-Akhbar* [Beirut], May 31; for more information on the Popular Committees see *Terrorism Monitor*, March 2).

The powerful Syrian armed opposition group Liwa al-Tawhid (Oneness of God Brigade) recently released a video that it states was taken by one of its fighters who infiltrated a recruiting session of *shabiha* militia in the area of Nubul and al-Zahraa' with senior Syrian military commanders and the Governor of the Aleppo Governorate. The assembled people in the video can be observed chanting Shiite sectarian slogans, and are offered significant financial rewards in exchange for a "cleansing operation" in the area and forgiveness for prior avoidance of mandatory military service (*al-Arabiya* [Dubai], June 4). The video, with Liwa al-Tawhid's logo prominently displayed, was embedded on al-Arabiya's website. The assembled crowd in the video chanted "We follow you, oh Hussein," and Hezbollah slogans popularized by the movement's media during the July War of 2006 against Israel. In response to the crowd, their Syrian military recruiter, referred to by al-Arabiya as Brigadier General Muhammad Kaddour of the Aleppo Security Committee, stated that they "fight under the banner of Hussein." Louay al-Miqdad, one of the most prominent spokesmen of the opposition Free Syrian Army, subsequently accused the Syrian military and Hezbollah of preparing, on the orders of Russia or Iran, a "genocide" against the Syrian opposition in the area of Aleppo (*Okaz* [Jeddah], June 5).

Hezbollah media and Arab media sympathetic to the Assad government have brought special attention to the plight of the residents of Nubul and al-Zahraa'. During the winter of 2013, it was reported that flour, bread, sugar, food, cooking oil and medicine were scarce in the villages as a result of a blockade imposed by the Syrian armed opposition. The blockade was also stated to have prevented the Syrian Red Cross and Red Crescent from accessing the villages' residents. [2] A Hezbollah media outlet stated that the blockade had been imposed by the militant Salafist Jabhat al-Nusra, which it referred to as a "takfiri" group, and was leading to a "humanitarian disaster" in Nubul and al-Zahraa'. [3] Further emphasizing the existential threat of militant Salafist fighters to sectarian minorities such as Shi'a and Alawites, one Lebanese newspaper reported that 30 young men from Nubul and Zahraa' had been beheaded by Jabhat al-Nusra and its "Wahhabist" allies and published a graphic photo of the beheading of two young men that it claimed were from the villages (*al-Khabar Press* [Beirut], April 28).

The existential struggle and trauma of war suffered by the residents of Nubul and Zahraa' is becoming a rallying cry for the pro-Hezbollah Lebanese. As Syrian military and Hezbollah forces approached victory in al-Qusayr, a popular Facebook group sympathetic to Hezbollah declared, "Our Next Mission: After al-Qusayr, Nubul and Zahraa.'" [4]

## Conclusion

Rebel control over large sections of the region of Aleppo provides it with a strategic rear and interior lines of communication from southern Turkey. The disruption of rebel held areas of the northern Aleppo governorate, particularly its logistics route north-to-south from the Turkish border through the contested areas around Nubul and al-Zahraa' to the front-lines of Aleppo, would be a significant blow to the armed opposition.

Control over Nubul and al-Zahraa' provides the Syrian military and its allies with a convenient staging point to apply pressure to the armed opposition in the city of Aleppo and attempt to disrupt and seize key opposition logistical nodes such as Azaz. Combat in Aleppo and its suburbs provides Hezbollah and the Syrian military an opportunity to continue to refine their coordinated counter-insurgency strategy by building the capacity of local Popular Committees to hold loyalist or neutral areas and to conduct offensives against opposition villages and market cities surrounding major contested cities, such as Aleppo and Homs.

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## Notes

1. The armed opposition group Army of Muhammad in the Balad ash-Sham posted a video of a *shabiha* members it claims to have killed from Nubul and al-Zahraa' on its YouTube page on April 24, Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATkIRUImS2k>; The Fatah Battalion in Aleppo released a video on it YouTube page on May 19 that it claims was from the vicinity of Nubul and al-Zahraa', accusing Hezbollah and Iranian Revolutionary Guard fighters of using the villages as staging points. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMuPe4c0G-A>.
2. Pro-Hezbollah Resist Forum thread posted January 18, Available at: <http://forum.qawem.org/showthread.php?84380-100-%C3%E1%DD-%D4%ED%DA%ED-%E3%D8%E6%F8%DE%E6%E4-%DD%ED-%E4%C8%E1-%E6%C7%E1%D2%E5%D1%C7%C1-%E6%C8%D1%C7%CF-%DD%ED-%CE%D8%D1->

%CF%C7%E5%E3.

3. A detailed description of the blockade and humanitarian consequences of the blockade on the people of Nubul and al-Zahraa' was provided by an article on the al-Ahed News website on April 24, Available at: <http://www.alahednews.com.lb/essaydetails.php?eid=74913&cid=76>.

4. "South Lebanon," Facebook Group Status Update posted on June 5, Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=465428926873976&set=a.219467264803478.5578.2.219459841470887&type=1>.

## The Tribal Factor in Syria's Rebellion: A Survey of Armed Tribal Groups in Syria

Carole A. O'Leary and Nicholas A. Heras

Tribalism remains a primary form of communal identity among Arab Sunnis across Syria, regardless of whether they live in rural or urban areas. As a powerful source of socio-political mobilization, Syrian Arab tribalism has shaped the conflict since the first demonstrations against the al-Assad government were led by disaffected tribesmen in the northeastern city of al-Hasakah in February 2011. The popular anger mobilized in Dera'a governorate by inter-tribal activist networks of mainly young and displaced tribesmen over the arrest and murder of two tribal youths fueled a national uprising (for Syrian Arab tribal networks, see *Terrorism Monitor*, June 1, 2012). Currently, Syrian Arab tribal groups are active participants in pro and anti-Assad militias, as soldiers in the Syrian military and as members of tribally-organized militias that are concerned with protecting their tribe and its autonomy from both the Syrian state and the armed opposition.

Of particular concern in the context of Syria's civil war is the possibility of an alliance, however temporary, between Syria's Arab tribes and militant Salafist groups such as the al-Qaeda affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra (Victory Front). In the north-eastern governorates of al-Raqqa, al-Hasakah and Deir al-Zor collectively referred to as al-Jazirah (bordering Turkey to the north and Iraq to the east), the majority Arab Sunni tribal population coexists uneasily with groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra that have a strong presence in the region. A tribal shaykh of a major tribal confederation in the area asserted that, without international support, Syrian tribes would do what they had to do to protect their assets,

including working with militant Salafist groups or even Iran. [1]

### Syrian Arab Tribes and Tribal Organization in the Civil War

Syrian Arab tribes are divided into *qabila* (national and trans-national tribal confederations) and *'ashira* (individual tribes). *'Ashira* are further divided into *fukhud* (clans), *khums* or *ibn 'amm* (lineages) and, at the lowest level, *al-bayt* or *aa'ila* (extended families). Due to the geographically dispersed and localized nature of the Syrian conflict, Syrian tribal armed groups, like other participants in the civil war, generally participate in fighting near their home areas. In spite of the generally localized nature of mobilization of armed groups in the Syrian civil war, there is a clear distinction of scale and group solidarity that differentiates a tribal *'ashira* from a tribal *qabila*, the main units of organization that tribal armed groups have displayed thus far in the conflict.

Although they may occasionally be referred to as *qabila* and include fellow tribesmen from Syria's neighboring countries, *'ashira* are usually present and powerful only in a particular region within Syria. Such *'ashira* include al-Haddadine in the northwestern Aleppo and Idlib governorates, al-Muwali in Idlib governorate, al-Damaakhla in Idlib, Hama, Aleppo, and Raqqa governorates, the Bani Khalid in the central-western Homs and Hama governorates and al-Zoubi in the southern Dera'a governorate and across the border into northern Jordan.

The Bani Khalid and al-Muwali *'ashira* have active fighters in the armed opposition and exemplify the role of a local *'ashira* in the fighting in western Syria. Several battalions of Bani Khalid fighters who are aligned with the armed opposition's umbrella group, the Free Syrian Army (FSA), continue to participate in the fighting for the city of Homs and its suburbs. [2] The 'Shield Brigade' of the Bani Khalid in Hama governorate is also a constituent fighting force of the western Syrian umbrella armed opposition group, the Front of Syrian Revolutionaries. [3] Al-Muwali tribesmen are fighting against the Syrian military in the vicinity of the large town of Ma'rat Numan, south of the city of Idlib, where the tribe is present in large numbers. They are active in the fight for the control of the town and the nearby Syrian military base of Wadi al-Dayf. [4]

Three armed opposition battalions that claim to be tribal but are without a specifically stated tribal affiliation have been active in western Syria. One of these groups is called the Battalion of the Free Tribes, which, like the al-Muwali

and the al-Damaakhla, is active around the town of Mar'at Numan, participating in the fight for control of Wadi al-Dayf. This group is also associated with the Syrian nationalist, Sunni Islamist umbrella armed opposition group, Alwiya Ahfaad al-Rasul (Descendants of the Prophet). [5] Another tribal battalion, the Free Tribes of al-Sham, was organized in Dera'a in February and claims to have been formed by defecting Syrian soldier tribesmen from Dera'a, Aleppo, al-Raqqa, al-Haskah and Deir al-Zor governorates. The Free Tribes of al-Sham are a battalion of the al-Omari Brigades, an Alwiya Ahfaad al-Rasul affiliate in Dera'a. [6] Another coalition of tribal militias composed of many Syrian army defectors, calling itself the Front of the Syrian Tribes, was formed in Aleppo in April. [7]

### Syrian Tribal Qabila in the Civil War

The largest *qabila* in Syria, particularly the Ougaidat, Baggara and Shammar, are transnational tribal confederations that have constituent clans throughout the country. These *qabila* are, however, present in the greatest numbers in the Jazirah region. Some qabila in Syria, such as the 'Anaza of Homs governorate, the Ta'ie of al-Hasakah governorate, and the Na'im are present in Syria in smaller numbers than in neighboring states. Of these smaller *qabila*, al-Na'im is the largest and some al-Na'im tribesmen have raised an opposition brigade in the Damascus countryside. [8]

The *qabila* of the Ougaidat is emerging as one of the most active tribally organized, armed anti-Assad coalitions. Ougaidat fighting groups, organized on the local level, are part of a national tribal coalition that calls itself the Ougaidat Tribe Brigades. These brigades are very active in Homs governorate in and around the small city of al-Rastan north of Homs and in Deir al-Zor governorate, where they have particular strength inside and south of the city of Deir al-Zor in a belt of communities that includes the towns of Mayadin and Abu Kamal on the Iraqi border. Ougaidat brigades also participate in the fighting around the northwestern city of Idlib near the Turkish border. [9]

The Ougaidat have also been active participants in an opposition exile group, the Council of the Arab Tribes in Syria. Several prominent members of the Syrian opposition are Ougaidat tribesmen, including Shaykh Nawaf al-Faris, the former Syrian Ambassador to Iraq; Syria's first astronaut, Major General Muhammad Faris; the Chairman of the FSA Military Council of Aleppo, Colonel Abd al-Jabbar al-'Aqeedi; and the former Chairman of the Latakia Political Security Branch, General Nabil al-Fahad al-Dundal. [10]

There are also challenges that confront effective intra-tribal

coordination and unity in Syria that are caused by geographic dispersal inside the country and internal divisions created by local power realities in a particular governorate. Our research indicates that the most pronounced example of intra-tribal divisions in the conflict occurs within the Baggara tribal confederation. Baggara tribesmen participate in armed activities both in support of and against the opposition. The Baggara were particularly hard-hit by the Syrian Ba'ath Party's policy of undermining tribal autonomy and the economic deprivation caused by the decade-long drought that devastated Syria's rural, agriculture-dependent regions.

Baggara tribesmen are also religiously divided by the conversion to Shi'ism of a reported quarter of the Baggara confederation in villages south of Aleppo as a result of Iranian-funded proselytization (see Terrorism Monitor, June 1, 2012; September 15, 2011). Tribal leaders from the Shammar and Ougaidat confederations offered a cultural explanation for the Baggara's lack of internal tribal coherence and Sunni to Shiite conversions by suggesting they were the result of the Baggara's roots as a sheep or goat-herding tribe and not a "noble" camel-herding tribe. [11] In Aleppo, Baggara fighters are reported to work with the Syrian military to attack opposition controlled neighborhoods in the city, and Syrian opposition fighters also claim to have fought Baggara tribesmen supporting the Syrian military during a battle fought to free prisoners held at the Aleppo Central Prison. [12]

Overall leadership of the Baggara was at one point claimed by Shaykh Nawaf Raghbi al-Bashir, the son of the now deceased former paramount Shaykh of the Baggara. Shaykh al-Bashir, who was one of the prominent opposition figures who signed the 2005 reformist Damascus Declaration, was jailed by the Syrian government in 2011 and reportedly forced to issue a statement in support of President Bashar al-Assad (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, January 18, 2012). Following his defection to Turkey, Shaykh al-Bashir became a prominent leader within the Council of the Arab Tribes in Syria and the leader of the Jazirah and Euphrates Front to Liberate Syria (*al-Safir* [Beirut], February 21).

The Jazirah and Euphrates Front to Liberate Syria is an opposition organization that, according to Shaykh al-Bashir, consists of approximately 138 armed opposition battalions and brigades in the Jazirah region that coordinate closely with the FSA's Supreme Military Command but are autonomous from the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces and the Syrian National Council (*Zaman al-Wasl* [Homs], March 23). Shaykh al-Bashir is also said to have personal command of approximately 500 to 3,000 armed fighters organized into fighting groups that are reportedly

organized under Alwiya Ahfaad al-Rasul's umbrella in areas of northern al-Raqqa and al-Hasakah governorates. [13]

### Anti-Kurdish Militancy

Shaykh al-Bashir has organized several armed groups that have actively sought to attack Kurds in and around the ethnically mixed city of Ras al-'Ayn in the northeastern area of al-Hasakah governorate along the Turkish border (*National* [Dubai], January 30). Pro-government Baggara fighters, without links to Shaykh al-Bashir, are also stated to have participated in attacks against the Kurdish Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat (PYD - Democratic Union Party) in the ethnically mixed northern Aleppo neighborhood of Shaykh Maqsud (Welati.info, May 11, 2012). The participation of Baggara tribal fighters in attacks against Kurds demonstrates the continually fragile state of Kurdish and Arab tribal relations in ethnically mixed regions such as Aleppo and al-Jazirah (see *Terrorism Monitor*, June 1, 2012).

The cities of al-Hasakah and Qamishli in the northeastern area of the governorate of al-Hasakah near the borders with Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan have emerged as a site of conflict between Arab tribes and Kurds. In Qamishli, members of the Ta'ie tribe have been organized into pro-Assad "Popular Committees" under the command of the Syrian MP and Ta'ie Shaykh Muhammad Fares and are reported to have engaged in several clashes with Kurdish fighters from the PYD [All4Syria, November 30, 2012]. However, local Arab tribal leaders and Kurdish notables who grew up together have formed a joint council in Qamishli to avoid such conflict. The conflict on the Kurdish side is generated by individuals and groups linked to the PYD. [14]

### Conclusion

Tribal identity is used in restive areas of Syria to mobilize and direct the armed activities of tribesmen in support of both the government and the opposition. Further, tribal identity (even where dormant, as is often the case in major cities) will, as occurred in Iraq, assert itself more prominently among Arab Sunnis across Syria as the country further destabilizes, including in the major urban areas of western Syria such as Aleppo and Damascus. Tribalism is a socio-cultural fact throughout Syria, not just in the less developed eastern governorates of the country. It is an important form of traditional civil society that will help determine the success of local or foreign-supported security arrangements, affect good governance and impact the sustainability of long-term stability operations and economic development throughout the country. As anti-Assad states in the international community debate options for implementing potential

post-Assad stability operations, Syrian Arab tribes will be a critical part of this effort.

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### Notes

1. Skype Interview with a Syrian tribal leader. February 21, 2013.
2. "Ugarit Homs: Beni Khalid Tribe Forms a Battalion." Posted on Ugarit News Channel YouTube page. February 14, 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2jYjyQGgsM>
3. "Ugarit Hama: Bani Khalid Shield Brigades Announces the Formation on the Battalion Beni Khaled Shakhso-1/25," January 27, 2012, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stWmKn\\_zVa0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stWmKn_zVa0)
4. "Formation of the Freeman of the al-Muwali Battalion-Ma'rat Numan Countryside." February 16, 2012, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=\\_5A9HT\\_tOEG&feature=endscreen](http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=_5A9HT_tOEG&feature=endscreen); "Idlib - Announcement of the Formation of a Battalion from the al-Muwali Tribe," February 3, 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbSu6cug4K8>;
5. "Alwiya Ahfaad al-Rasul in Idlib: 'Brigade of the Free Tribes.'" Alwiya Ahfaad al-Rasul website, <http://ahfadalarasoul.com/index.php?p=around>; "A Break for Elements of the Brigade of the Free Tribes near Wadi al-Dayf," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZ-ZjRSvZaU>
6. "Assurance of Split: Battalion of the Free Tribes of al-Sham." Posted on the Battalion of the Free Tribes of al-Sham Facebook Page. May 29, 2013. <https://www.facebook.com/Algahfree/posts/130879683782266>; "Formation of the Battalion of the Free Tribes of al-Sham: al-Omari Brigade in Dera'a." Posted on the YouTube page of a user with the screen name TheThawra1, February 26, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qix4ZHPzyPU>
7. "Formation of the Free Tribes of Syria," Ugarit News YouTube page. April 8, 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTgAuJhGfBs>
8. "Formation of the Brigade of the Fighting Na'im Tribe in Syria." Posted on the YouTube page of a user with the screen name golaney. November 13, 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=HCgmnSSPjnY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=HCgmnSSPjnY)
9. "Ougaidat Tribe Revolutionaries in Syria: 'Ayaal al-Abraz.'" A compilation of Ougaidat armed opposition group videos that were posted on the YouTube page of

an Ougaidat tribesman with the screen name “Ogaidy Abraz” on May 15, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbuyVtsDHPc>

10. Ibid.

11. Interviews with Syrian Arab shaykhs and tribal youth from the Shammar, Ougaidat, Ta’ie, and Baggara tribes, conducted between May 2008 and January 2011. While Arab tribes that are recognized by Arabs as legitimate have their origins in pre-Islamic Arabia, Arab tribes differentiate between those that claim noble status based on their camel-herding origins (al-Bedu) versus those of lower status, associated with sheep and goat herding (al-Shwaya). In the case of Syria, the Shammar, ‘Anaza, and Ta’ie fall into the first category, and the Ougaidat, Baggara, and Jabbour fall into the second. The Baggara and Ougaidat are mostly limited to Syria, with smaller numbers in Iraq and even fewer in Jordan and the GCC states. The Shammar, Jabbour, ‘Anaza, and Ta’ie have a significant presence in Iraq and Saudi Arabia and are found in smaller numbers in the GCC states and Jordan. Al-Na’im, a highly decentralized tribal confederation without a clearly defined leadership, is found mainly in Syria with a smaller presence in the GCC states.

12. “Halab: Battle Progress to Free Prisoners from the al-Baggara Division.” April 10, 2013. AENNetwork Aleppo and Idlib, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZGvj-qDBCg>; “Halab: Battle to Free Prisoners-Targeting the al-Baggara Division with Machine Gun.” April 11. Posted on the YouTube page of a user with the screen name ksa4cools, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrOdCjb4S1g>

13. Information based on private communication with Dr. Omar Shaykhmous, independent analyst and former advisor to Iraqi President Jalal al-Talabni, originally from the al-Jazirah region of Syria.

14. Interviews conducted over Skype and email with concerned Arab Sunni tribal leaders and Kurds from the al-Jazirah region, particularly the areas around the cities of al-Hasakah and Qamishli, between June 2012 and June 2013.