Syria Cases, 1970-2012
Last Updated: 24 December 2017

torg	gname	onset	min	max
T567	PFLP - EO		0	0
T550	SYRIAN MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD	16-Jun-79	1928	1992
T1405	ISLAMIC ACTION ORGANIZATION		1961	1984
T32	AL SAIQA		1966	0
T362	JABHAT AL-KIFAH AL-SHA'BI		1967	0
T378	POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE		1967	2012
T379	POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE- GENERAL COMMAND (PFLP-GC)		1970	2010
T70	ARAB COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION (ACO)		1974	1975
T263	PEOPLES CONGRESS OF KURDISTAN		1974	2012
T3	ABU NIDAL ORGANIZATION		1974	1998
T185	FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF LEBANON FROM FOREIGNERS (FLLF)		1977	1983
T31	JERUSALEM BATTALIONS		1978	0
T480	SYRIAN SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY		1979	2008
T292	MAY 15 ORGANIZATION FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE		1979	1984
T361	PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD (PIJ)		1979	2012
T871	AL-SADR BRIGADES		1980	1984
T35	AL-ZULFIKAR		1981	1992
T566	ISLAMIC MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE		1995	1996

T918	SOLDIERS OF GREATER SYRIA		1998	2005
T346	ABDULLAH AZZAM BRIGADES		2004	2012
T1424	MILITARY WING OF THE GREATER SYRIAN ARMY		2005	0
T1707	FREE SYRIAN ARMY (FSA)	2011	2011	2012
T2622	JABHAT AL-NUSRA		2012	2012
T2636	DIRAA AL-SHAHBAA REBEL BRIGADE		2012	2012
T2635	DEMOCRATIC UNION PARTY (PYD)		2012	2012
T2676	GATHERING OF THE SUPPORTERS OF ISLAM		2012	2012
T2690	GHURABA AL-SHAM		2012	2012
T2651	LIWA AL-ISLAM	2011	2012	2012
T2675	SYRIAN REVOLUTIONARIES - ALEPPO PROVINCE		2012	2012

I. PFLP - EO
    Torg ID: 567
    Min. Group Date: 0
    Max. Group Date: 0
    Onset: NA

Aliases: Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine - Special Operations, Pflp - Eo, Pflp - Sg, Pflp - Sog, Pflp - Special Operations, Pflp - Special Operations Group, Pflp-Eo, Pflp-Sg, Pflp-Sog, Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine - Eo, Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine - External Operations, Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine - Sg, Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine - Sog, Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine - Special Operations Group

Part 1. Bibliography

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: This is a faction of PFLP.

Group Formation: This is a faction of PFLP.

Group End: This is a faction of PFLP.

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

This is a faction of PFLP.

Geography

This is a faction of PFLP.

Organizational Structure

This is a faction of PFLP.

External Ties

This is a faction of PFLP.

Group Outcome

This is a faction of PFLP.

II.   SYRIAN MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD
       Torg ID: 550
       Min. Group Date: 1928
       Max. Group Date: 1992
       Onset: 1979

       Aliases: None

       Part 1. Bibliography
  - Liad Porat. "The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and the Asad Regime." Middle East Brief. Crown Center for Middle East Studies. No. 47. 2010. https://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB47.pdf
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- Kristian Gleditsch, David Cunningham, and Idean Salehyan. "Syria vs Muslim Brotherhood." Non-State Actor Dataset Narratives. 2013. Pp. 330-331. http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/data/NSAEX_casedesc.pdf
- GTD Perpetrator 482. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified June 2017. http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=482

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, SMB, Ikhwan, al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, "Combatant Vanguard of the Muslim Brotherhood" ("Fighting Vanguard", "Al-Tali'a al-Muqatila"), Islamic Front in Syria

Group Formation: 1945

Group End: Active (2013)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood was founded as a parallel to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in 1945 by Mustafa as-Sibai, who had spent time in Egypt with Hassan al-Banna, founder of the Egyptian movement of the same name (Porat 2010, 2; Talhamy 2012; Rassas 2014). The SMB was originally involved in a violent insurgency against the French mandate, but became a normalized part of the Syrian political system after the departure of the French (Porat 2010, 2). In the early years (late 1940s-1960s), the SMB accepted pan-Arabism, a left-leaning social agenda, and political moderation (Rassas 2014). After the ascension of the Ba'athists in 1963, the SMB has intermittently engaged in violent attacks against the regime in the hope of overthrowing it and installing either an entirely Islamist government or a government with representation for Islamists (Porat 2010, 2). There were internal disagreements regarding the ideal form of government and the role of violence in the movement (Lia 2016; Porat 2010, 2). The group organized as a political party after the French mandate, but later turned violent. In 1964, the SMB assassinated regime officials and carried out bombings targeted both at the government and the Ba'ath party itself (Carnegie 2012). The SMB tried to assassinate Baath Party officials and clashed with other security forces (Talhemy 2012; Carnegie 2012; Lia 2016, 544). The SMB was banned and one of its leaders, Isam al-Attar, a relatively moderate voice within the movement, was exiled in 1964 (Carnegie 2012; Lia 2016; Talhamy 2012).

In 1976, anti-regime violence increased; although it was not clear at the time whether the SMB was involved, recent evidence indicates that the "Combatant Vanguard", an outgrowth of the most radical elements in the SMB, was one of the primary instigators of this new wave of violence (Lia 2016). Some SMB members were also part of the Combatant Vanguard (Lia 2016). The CV started a more formal campaign in 1976 (Lia 2016, 545-546). Neither the SMB nor the Combatant Vanguard took responsibility for the fighting until June 1979, when the Combatant Vanguard killed 83 Alawite trainees at the Military Artillery School in Aleppo in an attempt to radicalize the SMB as a whole (Carnegie 2012; Lia 2016). Shortly thereafter, the SMB declared jihad against the regime (Lia 2016), and allegedly attempted to assassinate the president of Syria in 1980 (Talhamy 2012).

Geography

The SMB has been active throughout Syria, but has conducted most of its attacks in Aleppo (GTD 2017). The group has also used violence in Damascus, Latakia, Homs, and Matafiyah (GTD 2017; Porat 2010, 3). Factions of the SMB were based in Damascus, Aleppo, and Hama (Lia 2016; Porat 2010, 2). The SMB was also active in

the Damascus-area towns of Barzeh, Daraya, al-Tall, Mineen, Zamalka, Yabrud, and Nabak, along with Deir el-Zour, and towns on the Mediterranean including al-Haffa and Banias (Rassas 2014).

Prior to 1970, it appears that members of the "Combatant Vanguard" faction trained at Palestinian camps in Jordan (Lia 2016).

Organizational Structure

The SMB has gone through multiple transformations over the years. Originally, it brought together Islamist organizations from across the country under the leadership of a handful of figures: Comptroller General Sheikh Mustafa al-Siba'i, based in Homs; Sheikh Mohammad al-Shaqfeh and Sheikh Mohammed Hamed, based in Hama; Omar Baha al-Amiri, based in Aleppo (Rassas 2014). After al-Siba'i fell ill in the early 1960s, 'Isam al-'Attar took leadership, guiding from abroad after his exile in 1964 (Porat 2010, 2; Rassas 2014). While al-'Attar was opposed to violence until his formal ouster in 1972, other factions took control and favored using violence. One was led by 'Abd al-Fatah Abu-Ghuda in Aleppo and another by Marwan Hadid, an extremist within SMB (Lia 2016; Porat 2010, 2). Hadid led the SMB's violent actions in 1964 in Hama and founded the so-called "Combatant Vanguard of the Muslim Brotherhood" ("Fighting Vanguard", "Al-Tali'a al-Muqatila"). He died in prison in 1976 (Lia 2016; Porat 2010, 3; Rassas 2014). After the SMB's defeat at Hama in 1982, the organization has operated outside Syria with relatively few members and, according to GTD, its last attack in Syria was in 1986 (GTD 2017). No information could be found about the group's funding or size. The political wing is the SMB, but the group organized an armed faction known as the Combatant Vanguard in 1979 (Lia 2016).

External Ties

The SMB grew out of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (Porat 2010, 2; Talhamy 2012). The groups maintained relations, but had different ideologies: the SMB was more radical (Rassas 2014). The SMB also received support from foreign governments.

The Egyptian government is rumored to have trained Syrian rebels in 1981 (Lia 2016). Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq provided significant material and technical support in both training and propaganda efforts, particularly in the 1980s (Lia 2016).

The Assad regime claimed Iraq and Jordan provided military support for the SMB and sheltered SMB leaders prior to the 1979 uprising, but this is unconfirmed (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 331).

The SMB is also rumored to have received aid from private actors in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf, and Iran, along with arms from Lebanon and support from al Fatah of the

Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) (Gleditsch 2013, 330). Prior to 1970, it appears that members of the "Combatant Vanguard" faction trained at Palestinian camps in Jordan (Lia 2016). Iraq and Jordan allegedly provided sanctuary and weapons to the SMB (Gleditsch et al 2013, 331).

In 1982, when the SMB was driven out of Syria after massive losses in Hama, the SMB-Iraqi cooperation was formalized in the "National Alliance for the liberation of Syria," which was rebranded in 1990 as the National Front for the Liberation of Syria (Porat 2010, 4; Rassas 2014). From 1986 to 1996, part of the SMB operated out of Baghdad (the more radical branch once based in Hama) and part of it was based in Riyadh (the less radical branch once based in Aleppo) (Rassas 2014). Between 2006 and 2009, the SMB was part of a broad coalition with 15 anti-Assad groups and former Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam (Porat 2010, 4). In 2011, the SMB began gathering influence in the Syrian National Coalition (SNC), an anti-Assad grouping of organizations (Hassan 2013).

Group Outcome

While the SMB's political power grew between Syrian independence in 1946 and the Ba'athist takeover in 1963, the Ba'ath party quickly cracked down on the SMB after gaining power. The SMB was banned in 1964 and an uprising in the SMB base of Hama was violently put down by the Ba'athist government (Talhamy 2012). Although the group subsequently adopted a more conciliatory stance, it became more radical again and led the Islamist Uprising ("Islamic Revolution") against the Assad regime between 1976 (the violence increased significantly in 1979) and 1982 (Lia 2016; Porat 2010, 3).

The SMB and the "Combatant Vanguard" began working directly together in 1978 , and the SMB declared a jihad against the regime in 1979 after Combatant Vanguards killed 83 at the Military School in Aleppo (Lia 2016).

In 1980, the Assad regime put into place Law No. 49, which made membership in the SMB punishable by death (Porat 2010, 3). In 1982, the Syrian government virtually wiped the SMB out when it killed more than 10,000 (some estimates reach 40,000) in Hama (AFP 2012; Carnegie 2012; Sly 2012). The SMB was largely regarded as defunct until it began to exert influence on the course of a new Islamist uprising in Syria in 2011-2012 (Hassan 2013; Sly 2012).

Notes for Iris:
-SMB part of French military occupation resistance (see book sources)
-1963 and 1979 are key turning points in Syrian history; 1963-try to launch an uprising, but they're quickly put down. This uprising is before the Combatant Vanguard, but there is a radical faction

-originally organized into different factions (interesting dynamics in Damascus, Aleppo, Hama)
-Combatant Vanguard is originally a faction of the Hama SMB that goes 'rogue'
-early 1970s this faction starts to get violent, timeline is a little fuzzy between early 70s and in 76 Hadid died. His death is a catalyst for them to escalate - they co opt the larger SMB.
-Hadid's violence in 1964 leads to the creation of the Combatant Vanguard
-Syrian government bans the leaders of the factions in Damascus and Aleppo (in 1964) which allows Hadid to take control of the SMB. He goes underground to avoid detection (whether he is in Syria or not is a little fuzzy). The other leader of the SMB gets kicked out in 1972 and Hadid takes control until his death in 1976. (unclear organizational structure between 76-79)
-tentative alliance in 78 and in 79 they start armed uprising. Leads Syrian govt to crackdown.
-this group is much more organized, no ex-military, Syrian government doesn't have divided attention against multiple adversaries, there's no sanctuary for them to organize, and there's internal divisions within the SMB

III.   ISLAMIC ACTION ORGANIZATION
Torg ID: 1405
Min. Group Date: 1961
Max. Group Date: 1984
Onset: NA

Aliases: Islamic Action Organization, Islamic Action Organization (Iao), Islamic Task Organization

Part 1. Bibliography
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- "Islamic Task Organization," Global Security, n.d., http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/ito.htm
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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Munazzamat al-'Amal al-Islami

Group Formation: 1961

Group End (Outcome): 2005 (merger)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

IAO was formed in 1961 by Muhsin al-Husanyi as a Shia political party to fight for the creation of an Islamic state in Iraq and later overthrow the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein (Global Security n.d.; MIPT 2008). The group ascribed to an Islamic ideology and was primarily Shia (MIPT 2008). It came to attention in 1980 for an assassination attempt (Global Security n.d.)

Geography

The group launched attacks in and around Baghdad (Middle East Contemporary Center 1986, 171). It was founded in Karbala and has an external base of operations in Iran (Global Security n.d.). It maintains headquarters in Karbala (Global Security n.d.)

Organizational Structure

IAO was led by Ridha Jawad Taqi and Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Taqi al-Mudarissi. IAO membership was diverse and included "Iraqis, Iranians, Bahrainis, Afghans, and North Africans" (Middle East Contemporary Center 1986, 171). The group's primary tactic was suicide bombings (Middle East Contemporary Center 1986, 171). There are no estimates about the group's size.

External Ties

The IAO coordinated with the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (Middle East Contemporary Center 1986, 171). It also aligned itself with the Islamic Dawa Party which supported similar goals (MIPT 2008). It receives external funding from Iran and Syria (Global Security n.d.).

Group Outcome

The group splintered in the 1990s into two factions (MIPT 2008). Muhsin al-Husanyi was assassinated in 1980 (Global Security n.d.). The U.S. military arrested al-Mudarissi in

2003 (Global Security n.d.). The group later merged with other Shia groups to form the United Iraqi Alliance in 2005 (MIPT 2008).

IV. AL SAIQA
     Torg ID: 32
     Min. Group Date: 1966
     Max. Group Date: 0
     Onset: NA

     Aliases: Al-Saiqa, Al Saiqa
     Part 1. Bibliography
- "al-Saiqa." Global Security. N.D.
  http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/al-saiqa.htm
- Jonas Kauffeldt. "al-Saiqa." The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Ed. Spencer C. Tucker, Priscilla Roberts. CLIO Press. 2008. P. 78.
  https://books.google.com/books?id=YAd8efHdVzIC&pg=PA78&lpg=PA78&dq=al+saiqa+lebanon&source=bl&ots=OT-razqcbN&sig=-4H0JN1ETVRp2fjkp-IesA6qFfk&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiG_puB99zUAhXGzFQKHUV6BewQ6AEINTAC#v=onepage&q=al%20saiqa%20lebanon&f=false

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: al-Sa'iqa Organization, Organization of the Vanguards of the Popular Liberation War, Thunderbolt

Group Formation: 1966

Group End: 2005 (repression)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

Al-Saiqa formed in 1966 to assist the Palestinian guerrilla movement fight for an independent state and uphold Syrian interests (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). It was formed by Syrian Baathist members (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). It came to attention for its first violent attack in 1968 when it attacked Israeli military forces (Global Security n.d.).

Geography

The group was primarily active in the Golan Heights and Beirut, Lebanon (Global Security n.d.; Kauffeldt 2008, 78).

Organizational Structure

The group had 5,000 members during the "early 1970s" (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). The group was heavily controlled by the Syrian government and exerted little autonomy (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). The group's original leader was Salah Jadid, but he was purged in 1971 after Assad's rise to power (Global Security n.d.). Its second leader was Zuhayr Muhsin who controlled the group until his assassination in 1979 (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). The group funded itself through external support from the Syrian government (Global Security n.d.; Kauffeldt 2008, 78).

External Ties

The group allied with the PLO in 1969 (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). The group received support from the Syrian government (Global Security n.d.; Kauffeldt 2008, 78). The group also received weapons and training from the Soviet Union (Kauffeldt 2008, 78).

Group Outcome

In 1971, Hafez al-Assad, the new leader of the Syrian government, expelled most of al-Saiqa's leadership and replaced them with Zuhayr Muhsin (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). In 1979, Muhsin was assassinated by either Israelis or the Arab Liberation Front (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). In 1982, the group was forced to leave Beirut along with the PLO following the Israeli invasion (Kauffeldt 2008, 78). In 2005, the group's leader was arrested by Lebanese forces following the Syrian military's withdrawal (Kauffeldt 2005, 78). "In the absence of Syrian military protection, the group has been exposed as rather defenseless" (Kauffeldt 2008, 78).

V.   JABHAT AL-KIFAH AL-SHA'BI
       Torg ID: 362
       Min. Group Date: 1967
       Max. Group Date: 0
       Onset: NA

       Aliases: Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (Psf), Jabhat Al Kifah Al-Shabi, Jabhat Al-Kifah Al-Shabi, Jabhat Al-Kifah Al-Sha'bi, Popular Struggle, Popular Struggle Front

       Part 1. Bibliography
● "Popular Struggle Front." FAS. 1998. https://fas.org/irp/world/para/psf.htm
● "Palestine Popular Struggle Front." Global Security. N.D. http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/ppsf.htm
● Michael Fischbach. "Palestinian Popular Struggle Front." Encyclopedia of the Palestinians. Infobase Publishing. 2005. P. 385.

https://books.google.com/books?id=GkbzYoZtaJMC&dq=PALESTINIAN+POPULAR+ST
RUGGLE+FRONT&source=gbs_navlinks_s

- Ami Ayalon. Middle East Contemporary Survey. Vol XVI. 1992. P. 270-271.
https://books.google.com/books?id=87hLBZJNkhUC&pg=PA270&lpg=PA270&dq=PALE
STINIAN+POPULAR+STRUGGLE+FRONT&source=bl&ots=YD0-_zIOvm&sig=wA4OUd
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mDb44ChDoAQhOMAg#v=onepage&q=PALESTINIAN%20POPULAR%20STRUGGLE
%20FRONT&f=false

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: PPSF

Group Formation: 1967 or 1968

Group End: 1993 (merger/disarm after Oslo Accord)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The PPSF formed in 1967 or 1968 to fight for an independent Palestinian state when it splintered from Fatah (Fischbach 2005, 385; Global Security n.d.). The group's goals are ethno-nationalist because it fights on behalf of the Palestinian population (Fischbach 2005, 385).

Geography

The group's headquarters were in Damascus, Syria (Global Security n.d.). It conducted attacks in Israel as well (FAS 1998).

Organizational Structure

The group's founders were Bahjat Abu Gharbiyya and Fayiz Hamdan (Fischbach 2005, 385). The group's leader was Samir Ghawsha from 1974-1992 after which he was replaced by Khalid Abd al-Majid (Fishbach 2005, 385). It had fewer than 300 members, most of whom were from Syria or Lebanon (FAS 1998; Global Security n.d.).

External Ties

The group allegedly received external support from Syria although it is unclear exactly what this entailed (Fischbach 2005, 385). The group may have also received assistance from the PLO (FAS 1998).

The group splintered from Fatah in 1967, merged with in 1971, and then splintered again in 1974 (Global Security n.d.). The group was often a part of the PLO umbrella group and later the Rejection Front and Palestinian National Salvation Front (Fischbach 2005, 385). In 1988, the group returned to the PLO and its leader joined the PLO's executive committee (Ayalon 1992, 270).

Group Outcome

The group suffered infighting and divisions in the early 1990s (Ayalon 1992, 270; Fischbach 2005, 385). Al-Majid replaced Ghawsha (Ayalon 1992, 270; Fischbach 2005, 385). The PPSF supported the PLO's participation in the Oslo Accords and merged with the National Democratic and Islamic Front in 1993 (Fischbach 2005, 385).

VI.   POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE
Torg ID: 378
Min. Group Date: 1967
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine (Pflp), Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, Abu-Ali Mustafa Brigades, Al-Jabha Ash-Sha'abiya Li-Tahrir Falastin, Al-Jabna Al-Shabiyya Li-Tahrir Filastin, Martyr Abu-Ali Mustafa Brigades, Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine, Red Eagles

Part 1. Bibliography

- "Profile: Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)," BBC, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-30099510
- "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine," Para-States, Global Security, n.d., http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/pflp.htm
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- Julia Glum, "What Is The Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine?," International Business Times, 2014, http://www.ibtimes.com/what-popular-front-liberation-palestine-what-know-about-organization-behind-jerusalem-1725550
- "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine," McKenzie Institute, 2016, http://mackenzieinstitute.com/popular-front-liberation-palestine-pflp/
- "PFLP Commemorates 46 years in Turkey," PFLP, 2013, http://pflp.ps/english/2013/12/18/pflp-commemorates-46th-anniversary-in-turkey/
- "PFLP, DFLP, PFLP-GC, Palestinian Leftists." Backgrounder. Council on Foreign Relations. 2005. http://www.cfr.org/israel/pflp-dflp-pflp-gc-palestinian-leftists/p9128

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Halhul Gang, Halhul Squad, Palestinian Popular Resistance Forces, PPRF (Mackenzie Institute)

Group Formation: 1967

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (Active)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The PFLP was formed in 1967 by George Habash to fight and destroy Israel after the latter began to occupy parts of the West Bank (BBC 2014). It formed as a merger between two unnamed left-wing factions (IB Times 2014). The group came to attention in 1968 with a series of prominent airplane hijackings and were the first group to employ this tactic (BBC 2014). It was primarily secular, but Habash argued the group was founded on Marxist-Lenininst ideals (Global Security n.d., BBC 2014).

Geography

Today, the group primarily operates from the Gaza Strip, attacking Israeli communities in the southern part of the country. It has also had prominent attacks in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Entebbe, Geha junction, Itamar, Ramallah, and Karnei Shomron (Global Security n.d., BBC 2014). Its headquarters were in Damascus (Global Security n.d.)

It's unclear exactly what the ties to Turkey are, but there is a bastion of support in Istanbul according to the PFLP official website (PFLP 2013).

Organizational Structure

The PFLP is a faction of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) (BBC 2014). It was originally created by George Habash - a Christian doctor - and merged with the PLO in 1968 (Global Security n.d.) Habash stepped down in 2000 and was replaced by Abu Ali Mustafa. It has an armed wing known as the Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades which was particularly active during the Second Intifada (BBC 2014). The armed wing was led - at some point - by Abu Ali Mustafa and later Ahmed Sadaa (BBC 2014).

The group has an estimated 800 members with potentially more support throughout the West Bank and Gaza (Global Security n.d.) It is currently led by Ahmed Jibril who was formerly head of the PFLP-General Command (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The group funds itself from local supporters as well as external sources in Libya and Syria.

The representative of the PFLP in Turkey is Hassan Tahrawi (PFLP 2013).

External Ties

The PFLP has a vast network of alliances including the German Baader-Meinhof organization and Japanese Red Army (BBC 2014). It fought against Hamas early on (BBC 2014). The group received external support from Syria, Libya, USSR, and China in the form of financial support, training, and an external base of operations.

The Turkish branch of the PFLP claims to have an alliance with Kurdish forces and parties in the country (PFLP 2013).

Group Outcome

After the fall of the Soviet Union and fighting by more Islamist groups during the First Intifada (Hamas, PIJ), the PFLP was weakened and lost nearly all of its power and influence in the West Bank by 2000 (ADL n.d., IB Times 2014).

The US designated the group a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 1995 (Global Security n.d). The group became partially involved in politics in the 1990s when it sought to become a part of Arafat's government.

Israel killed Mustafa in 2001 and arrested Sadat in 2002 (Global Security n.d.). Today, the group continues to fight Israel and Saadat claims the group will not enter negotiations with the Israeli government (BBC 2014).

VII. POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE- GENERAL COMMAND (PFLP-GC)
Torg ID: 379
Min. Group Date: 1970
Max. Group Date: 2010
Onset: NA

Aliases: Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine, Gen Cmd (Pflp-Gc), Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine - General Command (Pflp-Gc), Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine- General Command (Pflp-Gc)

Part 1. Bibliography
● "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - Gen Cmd." Mackenzie Institute. 2016. http://mackenzieinstitute.com/popular-front-liberation-palestine-genera-command-pflp-gc /

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- "PFLP, DFLP, PFLP-GC, Palestinian leftists."Council on Foreign Relations. 2015. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/pflp-dflp-pflp-gc-palestinian-leftists
- GTD Perpetrator 4412. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last Modified June 2016. http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=4413
- Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Syria: Pro-Palestinian group known as the General Command Militia or the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC); its connection to Syrian authorities; relations between Syrian authorities and other pro-Palestinian militant organizations in Syria (2002-2004) , 2 September 2004, SYR42939.E , available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/42df6193a.html

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Al-Jibha Sha'biya lil-Tahrir Filistin-al-Qadiya al-Ama

Group Formation: 1968

Group End: 2016 (Active)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The PFLP-GC formed in 1968 to establish an independent Palestinian state and overthrow the Israeli government (Mackenzie Institute 2016). It adheres to Marxist-Communist ideology (Mackenzie Institute 2016). It first came to attention in 1970 for bombing a Swiss airliner (Mackenzie Institute 2016).

Geography

The group was primarily active in the West Bank and Gaza (Mackenzie Institute 2016). Its headquarters were in Damascus, Syria (Mackenzie Institute 2016). It has conducted attacks in Damascus, Lebanon, West Bank, Israel, and parts of Europe (GTD 2017).

Organizational Structure

The group primarily funds itself through support from the Syrian government (Mackenzie Institute 2016). It is unclear how many members the group has although it is smaller than

the PFLP (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The group's leader was Ahmed Jibril who was a former Syrian military officer (Mackenzie Institute 2016).

External Ties

The Syrian government allegedly provides funding, training, and sanctuary to the PFLP-GC as well as its PFLP affiliates (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The group also allegedly receives support from Iran although it is unclear what this specifically entails (Mackenzie Institute 2016). In 2001, Israeli forces found an unknown sponsor sending rockets and anti-aircraft missiles to the group (CFR 2005). The group trains and equips other militant groups in the Israel-Palestine area like Hamas and PIJ (Mackenzie Institute 2016).

Group Outcome

The group has clashed with Israeli security forces on several occasions although it has not as frequently (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The group has been active in the Syrian Civil War and fighting alongside government forces around Damascus (Mackenzie Institute 2016).

VIII.　ARAB COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION (ACO)
Torg ID: 70
Min. Group Date: 1974
Max. Group Date: 1975
Onset: NA

Aliases: Arab Communist Organization (Aco), Arab Communist Organization

Part 1. Bibliography
- GTD Perpetrator 3807, Global Terrorism Database, Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, Last Modified June 2016, https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=3807
- "Arab Communist Organization." Terrorist Organization Profile No. 3936, MIPT Knowledge Base, 2008, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
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- John K Cooley. 1975. "Arab States Move to Stop Terrorist Extremists." The Christian Science Monitor (1908-Current File), Jul 31, 4. https://search.proquest.com/docview/511783419?accountid=14026.

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: ACO

Group Formation: 1974

Group End: 1977 (arrests)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

It is unknown when the ACO formed, but it first came to attention in mid-1974 when it robbed several banks and attacked a U.S. pavilion (Cooley 1975). The group later attacked several military targets (GTD 2017). The group's goal initially was to oppose "establishments," but later said it wanted to protest a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to the Middle East (MIPT 2008). The group's ideology is described as far-left, but does not appear to be communist (Cooley 1975; MIPT 2008).

Geography

The group conducted transnational attacks in Syria and Lebanon (GTD 2017). Its attacks primarily occurred in Aleppo and Beirut (GTD 2017).

Organizational Structure

There is not much information available about the group's organizational structure. Some members are Palestinian, but it is not known how large the group is (Cooley 1975). Three members, Imad Shiha, Haytham Na'al and Faris Murad, were arrested in 1975 and detained until 2004 (BBC 2004; MIPT 2008).

External Ties

There are no clear external ties to other state or non-state actors. The PLO and Communist parties in Lebanon and Syria denied any association with the group (Cooley 1975).

Group Outcome

In 1975, the Syrian government arrested several members of the ACO and held them in prison for over 30 years (Cooley 1975; BBC 2004). The Syrian government released the prisoners in 2002 and 2004 after allegations arose that the Syrian government had tortured them (MIPT 2008). The group's last known incident was in 1977, but it is unknown what happened to the group after these attacks.

IX.   PEOPLES CONGRESS OF KURDISTAN
Torg ID: 263
Min. Group Date: 1974
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Kurdistan Workers' Party (Pkk), Argk, Arteshen Rizgariya Gelli Kurdistan (Argk), Kadek, Kongra Gele Kurdistan, Kongra-Gel (Kgk), Kongreya Azadi U Demokrasiya Kurdistan, Kurdish Workers' Party (Pkk), Kurdistan Freedom And Defense Congress, Kurdistan Freedom And Democracy Congress, Kurdistan National Liberation Front (Ernk), Kurdistan National Liberty Army, Kurdistan People's Conference, Kurdistan Workers Party, Kurdistan Workers' Party, Kurdistan Worker's Party, Kurdistan Workers Party (Pkk), Kurdistan Worker's Party (Pkk), Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan (Pkk), People' S Liberation Army Of Kurdistan (Argk), Peoples Congress Of Kurdistan, People's Congress Of Kurdistan, Peoples Defense Force, People's Defense Force, Peoples Liberation Army Of Kurdistan, People's Liberation Army Of Kurdistan, Peoples Liberation Army Of Kurdistan (Argk), People's Liberation Army Of Kurdistan (Argk), Pkk/Kongra-Gel, The Peoples Congress Of Kurdistan, The People's Congress Of Kurdistan

Part 1. Bibliography

- Jones, Seth G., and Martin C. Libicki. *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida.* The RAND Corporation, 2008. 153. http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG741-1.pdf
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- "Kurdistan Worker's Party," Terrorism Profiles, Mackenzie Institute, 2016, http://mackenzieinstitute.com/kurdistan-workers-party-pkk/
- International Crisis Group (ICG), Turkey: Ending the PKK Insurgency, 20 September 2011, Europe Report N°213, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/4e7c18d42.html [accessed 2 December 2016]
- Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Turkey: The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), including areas of operation and targets, methods of recruitment and activities; state response, 15 June 2012, TUR104075.E, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/4feadb3e2.html [accessed 2 December 2016]
- Anil Karaca, "An Analysis of the PKK Terrorist Organization," Naval Postgraduate School Thesis, 2010, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a536525.pdf

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: KADEK, Kurdistan Halk Kongresi (KHK)

Group Formation: 1974

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (active)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The PKK was formed in 1974 in Diyarbakir by a group of Kurdish students organized as the National Liberation Army (UKO) (karaca 2010, 38). The UKO was renamed to be the PKK in 1978 by Abdullah Ocalan with a goal to fight for an independent Turkish state (Australian National Security n.d.; Mackenzie Institute 2016). Ocalan was inspired by Marxist ideology (Mackenzie Institute 2016). After the fall of the Soviet Union, the group began to emphasize Kurdish nationalism more than Marxism (Karaca 2010, 37). The group came to attention in 1984 when it launched an armed struggle against the Turkish state (Mackenzie Institute 2016; Australian National Security n.d.).

Geography

The group claims territory in southeastern Turkey as part of Kurdistan, including Hakkari province, Siirt, Adiyaman, Sirnak, and Agriman (Australian National Security n.d.). The PKK bases are located in the "PUK and KDP-controlled regions of the KRG" (Karaca 2010, 76). The HPG operates out of the Qandil mountains (Karaca 2010, 35).

The group primarily operated out of southeastern Turkey until 1991 when it began to move into western Turkey (Karaca 2010, 39).

Organizational Structure

Abdullah Ocalan initially led the PKK. He decided to form the PKK as a university student in the 1970s (Mackenzie Institute 2016). After his arrest, he was replaced by Murat Karayilan (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The PKK has evolved into a very well-organized group. The armed wing is called the People's Defence Forces (HPG) (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The Central Executive Committee oversees everything including the Military Wing (ARGK), External Wing (ERNK), and other subcommittees (Karaca 2010, 33). The ERNK is in charge of propaganda, training, funding, contacts with other armed groups, and intelligence on Turkish security forces (Karaca 2010, 34). Its women's wing is called YAJK.

From 1984-1986, the PKK purposely targeted noncombatants that did not support their movement (Karaca 2010, 38).

It has approximately 7000 members (Mackenzie Institute 2016). It primarily funds itself through donations from supporters throughout Kurdistan as well as a Kurdish diaspora in Europe (Mackenzie Institute 2016). Members are primarily drawn from the Kurdish ethnic group and in rural areas often through personal connections (Australian National Security n.d.).

External Ties

The group primarily fought against other armed groups in the late 1970s (Karaca 2010). It had an alliance with DHKP/C from 1991 to 1998 (Karaca 2010, 39).

The group received external support from Greece including diplomatic, political, and funding, Syria, Russia, Iran, and Armenia (Karaca 2010, 46-51).

Group Outcome

Until 1980, the PKK mainly fought against other armed groups in Turkey as well as Kurdish tribal leaders (Karaca 2010, 38). After the 1980 military coup, the PKK reorganized to create a formal military wing and in 1984 launched its "people's revolution" against the government (Karaca 2010, 38). Turkish counter-terrorism was largely ineffective at destroying the PKK until 1991 when it launched a series of offensives which pushed the PKK out of villages and towards the Qandil mountains (Karaca 2010, 40-41).

Ocalan was arrested by Turkish police in 1999 and sentenced to death, but it was later commuted (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The arrest had little effect on the group's actions. In 2013, the PKK announced a ceasefire with Turkish forces (Mackenzie Institute 2016).

X.   ABU NIDAL ORGANIZATION
Torg ID: 3
Min. Group Date: 1974
Max. Group Date: 1998
Onset: NA

Aliases: Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), ANO, Arab Revolutionary Brigades, Arab Revolutionary Council, Fatah Al-Majlis Al-Thawri, Fatah Al-Qiyadah Al-Thawriyyah, Fatah Revolutionary Council, Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC/ANO), FRC/ANO, Revolutionary Organization Of Socialist Muslims, Revolutionary Council, Revolutionary Council of Fatah, Al-Fatah Revolutionary Council, Fatah-the Revolutionary Council, Black June, Arab Revolutionary Brigades, Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims, Black September, Egyptian Revolution, Arab Fedayeen Cells, Palestine Revolutionary Council, Organization of Jund al Haq, Arab Revolutionary Council.

Part 1. Bibliography

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- "Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), aka Fatah Revolutionary Council, the Arab Revolutionary Brigades, or the Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims," Council on Foreign Relations, 2009, http://www.cfr.org/israel/abu-nidal-organization-ano-aka-fatah-revolutionary-council-arab-revolutionary-brigades-revolutionary-organization-socialist-muslims/p9153
- "Abu Nidal Organization," Global Security, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/abunidal.htm
- "Abu Nidal Organization," FAS, 2004, http://fas.org/irp/world/para/ano.htm
- "Abu Nidal Organization," Country Reports on Terrorism 2010, US State Department, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2010/170264.htm
- "Abu Nidal Organization," Encyclopedia of Terrorism, Ed. Gus Martin, Sage 2011, 5-6

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1974

Group End (Outcome): 2002 (loss of leadership)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

ANO was founded in 1974 by Sabri al Banna as a splinter from the PLO (Martin 2011, 5). The group fought to destroy Israel in order to create a separate Palestinian state (Martin 2011, 5; CFR 2009). It was more extremist than Fatah, which in 1974 announced it would be willing to support a two-state solution (Martin 2011, 5). The group was heavily influenced by the Baathists in Iraq (Martin 2011, 5). It came to attention in 1974 following a hijacking of a TWA airplane (Mackenzie Institute 2015).

Geography

The group operated out of Baghdad, but was involved in attacks throughout Iraq, Israel, and Europe.

Organizational Structure

The group constructed a vast operation of resources in Iraq, Syria, and Libya. It had both a political and a military wing; the former was also responsible for recruitment, propaganda, and financing (Mackenzie Institute 2015). Banna helped the group partially fund itself through the establishment of a trade and investment company in Warsaw, which engaged in arms deals during the Iran-Iraq War (Mackenzie Institute 2015). The group had approximately 500 members and was active in 20 countries across northern Africa, the Middle East, and Europe (Martin 2011, 5). Banna may have "coup-proofed" parts of his organization in 1989 to remove dissidents (Martin 2011, 5).

External Ties

ANO operated out of Baghdad and received external support from Saddam Hussein in exchange (Martin 2011, 5). The group also received external support from Libya and Syria (FAS 2004). The group was expelled from Baghdad in 1983, but was allowed to return after the Iraq-Iran war ended (CFR 2009). In 1999, Egypt and Libya expelled ANO from operating in the country (Mackenzie Institute 2015). Libya did so in order to secure some sanctions relief (CFR 2009). The Jordanian government responded to ANO with threats to kill Banna and his family if he did not cease operations (Martin 2011, 5). Iraqi and Libyan support for the ANO fell after the Cold War and Banna was forced to retrench to Egypt (Martin 2011, 6).

Group Outcome

Banna was killed in 2002 (Martin 2011, 5). The group is thought to be inactive with former leadership hiding in Lebanon (CFR 2009).

Note: Banna seems to have cult of personality here, loss of external support/base is devastating

XI.   FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF LEBANON FROM FOREIGNERS (FLLF)
Torg ID: 185
Min. Group Date: 1977
Max. Group Date: 1983
Onset: NA

Aliases: Front For The Liberation Of Lebanon From Foreigners (Fllf), Front For The Liberation Of Lebanon From Foreigners, FLLF

Part 1. Bibliography
● Ed. Alex Schmid, Glossary and Abbreviations, Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research, 2011, p. 633
https://books.google.com/books?id=MLY5MwXhtDsC&pg=PA633&lpg=PA633&dq=FRO
NT+FOR+THE+LIBERATION+OF+LEBANON+FROM+FOREIGNERS+(FLLF)&source=

bl&ots=HtyRXXBxy2&sig=FhKeN_LVw7F-EV29i-SxCezsfkQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUK
Ewiks8a-4PnQAhUN82MKHRDkCEkQ6AEIOzAG#v=onepage&q=FRONT%20FOR%20
THE%20LIBERATION%20OF%20LEBANON%20FROM%20FOREIGNERS%20(FLLF)&
f=false

● "FLLF," Ed. Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman, Political Terrorism, 1988, p. 605,
https://books.google.com/books?id=NgDks1hUjhMC&pg=PA605&lpg=PA605&dq=FRON
T+FOR+THE+LIBERATION+OF+LEBANON+FROM+FOREIGNERS+(FLLF)&source=bl
&ots=kYGGGGYYIe&sig=3QTVmR8RT6omqydtz-BcQom1B_A&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ah
UKEwiks8a-4PnQAhUN82MKHRDkCEkQ6AEILzAD#v=onepage&q=FRONT%20FOR%
20THE%20LIBERATION%20OF%20LEBANON%20FROM%20FOREIGNERS%20(FLL
F)&f=false

● Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4506, MIPT Knowledge Base, 2008, National
Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism,
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Uqm-5D5tZV-A9O0F5IK_yTd0n7mjfEto-e7J91AH
8pE/edit.

● GTD Perpetrator 2991. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses
to Terrorism. Last modified June 2017.
http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2991

● David Shipler. "48 Israeli Ties to Phalangites Revealed." New York Times, 1983.
http://www.nytimes.com/1983/07/03/world/48-israeli-tie-to-phalangists-revealed.html?mc
ubz=0

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: None

Group End (Outcome): (inactive, (Schmid 2011, 633))

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The organization was formed in 1977 by a group of right-wing Christian Phalangists.
They were against Syrian and Palestinian influence in Lebanon, particularly PLO groups
who used Lebanon as a base to conduct attacks against Israel (MIPT Knowledge Base
2008, No. 4506). The group wanted to rid Lebanon of all foreign ties and influence to be
able to act more independently. The group was active until 1983 (Schmid 2011, 633).
First recorded violent attack occurred in 1980 (GTD 2017).

Geography

Not much can be found about the group. It conducted a few attacks, including two car bombs in Western Beirut, a bomb in Damascus, and a bomb targeting Ministry of Public Information in Damascus (Schmid and Jongman, 1988, 605). The FLLF also reportedly claimed attacks on French interests, "an assassination attempt against the U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon John Gunther Dean, and on the Israeli consulate and a Jewish club in Sydney, Australia" (Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4506, 2008).

Organizational Structure

Members were from the Phalange political party.

External Ties

The FLLF allegedly has ties to to The Lebanese Christian Phalange Party, which also was strongly anti-Syrian and anti-Palestinian Liberation Organization (both were active in Lebanon at the time) (Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4506, 2008). It has also been suggested that FLLF may have been a name claimed by several groups, since the attacks against French and U.S. interests, as well as the attacks against an Israeli consulate and against a Jewish nightclub in Sydney, Australia, do not match the typical aims of the Christian Phalange Party (Ibid.).

Group Outcome

The group's last incident was in 1983 (Schmid 2011, 633). It is unknown what happened to the group after this although the larger Lebanese Civil War and Syrian occupation continued for another seven years.

XII.   JERUSALEM BATTALIONS
        Torg ID: 31
        Min. Group Date: 1978
        Max. Group Date: 0
        Onset: NA

        Aliases: Al-Quds Brigades, Al-Qassam, Al-Quds Battalions, Jerusalem Battalions, Jerusalem Brigades, Saraya Al-Quds, Sayf Al-Islam Brigades

        Part 1. Bibliography

        Part 2. Basic Coding

        Aliases: This is the armed wing of the PIJ

        Group Formation: This is the armed wing of the PIJ

Group End (Outcome): This is the armed wing of the PIJ

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

Note: This is the armed wing of the PIJ

Geography

Note: This is the armed wing of the PIJ

Organizational Structure

Note: This is the armed wing of the PIJ

External Ties

Note: This is the armed wing of the PIJ

Group Outcome

Note: This is the armed wing of the PIJ

XIII.   SYRIAN SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY
Torg ID: 480
Min. Group Date: 1979
Max. Group Date: 2008
Onset: NA

Aliases: Syrian Social Nationalist Party, Al-Hizb A-Suri Al-Qawmi Al-Ijtima'ee

Part 1. Bibliography
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- Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4278, MIPT Knowledge Base, 2008, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
- GTD Perpetrator 2186, Global Terrorism Database, Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, Last Modified June 2017, http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2186

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: early 1930s, banned by Lebanese government in 1936 (Yamak 1964, 5).

Onset: 1949 (first coup attempt, in Lebanon (TOPS no. 4279 2008; Yamak 1964, 294))

Group End (Outcome): 2008 (policing action and infighting)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

Founded by Antun Sa'adeh, a Greek Orthodox Syrian, during the 1930s (TOPS no. 4279 2008). The group's goal reportedly was a "Greater Syria" that would include Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine (including Israel's territory), Iraq, Kuwait, and Cyprus (Boston Globe 1986; TOPS no. 4279 2008). The group also said other goals were the separation of church and state, domestic redistribution of wealth, and the creation of a strong Syrian army to protect "the homeland" (TOPS no. 4279 2008). The group's ideology was secular and nationalist (Ibid.) The SSNP's extreme nationalism was also influenced by mid-twentieth century fascist movements (Ibid.).

The SSNP became well-known as a violent group in 1949, the year it participated in its first coup attempt in Lebanon (TOPS no. 4279 2008; Yamak 1964, 294). The group attempted another coup in 1961 against the Lebanese government (Ibid.). In 1951, the SSNP successfully assassinated Lebanese Prime Minister Riyad al-Sulh after prior attempts to do so had failed (Ibid.).

Geography

The SSNP was founded in Lebanon but moved its headquarters to Damascus, Syria, circa 1950 after the Lebanese government banned the group for a second time (Yamak 1964, 5). However, the group continued to be a player in Lebanese politics and fought in the 1958 Lebanese civil war (Ibid.)

During the 1980s, the group set up a large terrorist ring in Western Europe, which consisted of safe houses, the use of fake IDs, and weapons exchanges (Ehud Ya'ari 1987). The group utilized bombs in Paris in an effort to persuade the French government to release Georges Ibrahim Abdallah (Ehud Ya'ari, 1987). The group put a bomb on a plane near Athens in April 1986, killing american citizens. The group attacked Israel from Lebanon using suicide drivers with bombs (Ehud Ya'ari 1987).

Organizational Structure

The group had a hierarchical structure with formally appointed positions (Yamak 1964, 267). The smallest organizational unit was centered around a geographic area such as an urban neighborhood or village (Ibid.).

One key member was a man named Assad Khardan, who trained bombers. Interestingly, he "earned himself the position of SSNP commissioner of security in part by forcing his predecessor to jump to his death from a third story balcony" (Ehud Ya'ari, 1987).

External Ties

May have ties with PLO and Hezbollah if they help to further the "Syrian cause" (Ehud Ya'ari, 1987). SSNP detonated bombs in solidarity with the founder of LRAF, Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, after his arrest in France (Ya'ari 1987). The SSNP also influenced factions in the Lebanese National Movement and National Resistance Front (Russell 1985).

Group Outcome

The assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Riyad al-Sulh in 1951 led to a policing crackdown against the SSNP, with nearly 3,000 of its members put in prison (TOPS no. 4279 2008). The group seemed to have lost support in the 1950s, but was brought back to life afterwards at around 1969 when many former members were released from prison (Ehud Ya'ari, 1987). The group experienced infighting and splintering (Ibid.). Kamal Jumblatt was assassinated in 1987; afterwards his son, Walid, took over (Russell 1985).

Ya'ari (1987) alleges that documents show that in the 1950s, the CIA aided the SSNP because the group was against pan-Arabist ideology (such as propagated by Egypt's Nasser) and also opposed leftist movements. Ya'ari further alleges that French intelligence services had a longer history than the CIA of collaborating with the SSNP.

The SSNP allegedly fought with pro-Western forces during the 1958 Lebanese civil war (Ya'ari 1987), which conflict the U.S. sent Marines to fight in (Ya'ari 1987).

The Lebanese government banned the SSNP in 1936 and jailed its founders. The government recognized the group in 1944 then banned it at various other times throughout the twentieth century (Yamak 1964, 5). The Syrian government also banned the SSNP (Ibid.) Its last violent attack was in 1990 (GTD 2017). The Syrian government un-banned the group in 2005. It is associated with one attack by "loyalists" in 2008, but this appears to be electoral violence and not sanctioned (GTD 2017).

XIV.   ARAB ORGANIZATION OF MAY 15
Torg ID: 292
Min. Group Date: 1979
Max. Group Date: 1984
Onset: NA

Aliases: May 15 Organization For The Liberation Of Palestine, Arab Organization Of May 15

Part 1. Bibliography
- GTD Perpetrator 297. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified June 2017., https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=297
- "15 May Organization." Intelligence Resource Program. FAS. 1998. https://fas.org/irp/world/para/15_may.htm
- "15 May Organization," Global Security, Para-military Groups Middle East, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/15_may.htm
- "Profile: Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)," BBC, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-30099510

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1979

Group End (Outcome): "mid-1980s"/1984 (GTD)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

15 May Organization was formed in 1979 as a splinter of the PFLP Special Operations Group (FAS 1998). The PFLP supported the destruction of Israel and the creation of a separate Palestinian state (BBC 2014). The group's first attack was in 1980 (GTD 2017).

Geography

The group was active in London, Rome, Istanbul, Athens, Vienna, Rio de Janeiro, Honolulu, and Aleppo (FAS 1998; GTD). It had a base of operations in Baghdad, Iraq (FAS 1998).

Organizational Structure

The group was led by Muhammed al-Umari who was a known bomb expert in the Palestinian Territories. The group had approximately 50-60 members in the early 1980s. Its members were Palestinian, but there is not much evidence about the organizational structure of the group beyond that (FAS 1998).

External Ties

The group allegedly received financial support and training from Iraq until 1984 (FAS 1998). It was never affiliated with the PLO (Global Security n.d.)

Group Outcome

The group's last incident was in 1984 (GTD 2017). The group fell apart in the mid-1980s after the defection of several members to Colonel Hawari's Special Operations Group of Fatah (FAS 1998).

XV.   PALESTINIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD (PIJ)
Torg ID: 361
Min. Group Date: 1979
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Palestinian Islamic Jihad (Pij), Harakat Al-Jihad Al-Islami Fi Filastin, Palestinian Islamic Jihad

Part 1. Bibliography
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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami fi Filistin, Saraya Al-Quds (The Jerusalem Brigades), Al-Quds Brigades, Islamic Jihad, Palestine Islamic Jihad-Shaqaqi Faction, Palestinian Islamic Jihad-Shaqaqi, PIJ-Shaqaqi Faction, PIJ-Shallah Faction, Islamic Jihad of Palestine, Islamic Jihad in Palestine, Abu Ghunaym Squad of the Hizballah Bayt Al-Maqdis, Al-Quds Squads, Al-Awdah Brigades, Islamic Jihad Palestine (IJP), Islamic Jihad – Palestine Faction and Islamic Holy War, Abu Ghunaym Squad of the Hizballah Bayt Al-Maqdis, al-Awdah Brigades, al-Quds Brigades, al-Quds Squads, Harakat al-Jihad al-Islami al-Filastini, Islamic Jihad–Palestine Faction, Islamic Jihad in Palestine, Islamic Jihad of Palestine, Islamic Jihad Palestine, Palestine, Islamic Jihad, Palestine Islamic Jihad–Shallah Faction, Palestine Islamic Jihad–Shaqaqi Faction, PIJ–Shallah Faction, PIJ–Shaqaqi Faction, Saraya al-Quds*

Group Formation: 1979

Group End: 2017

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

PIJ formed in 1979 when its leaders, Shqaqi and Awda, thought the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood was not violent enough to achieve its goals (Counter Extremism Project 2017). It is referenced as a splinter of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (Counter Extremism Project 2017). The group's political aim is to establish a Palestinian state and overthrow Israel (Mackenzie Institute 2016). It ascribes to an Islamist ideology and is

thought to have been inspired, in part, by the Iranian Revolution even though it is Sunni (Fletcher 2008; Mackenzie Institute 2016; Counter Extremism Project 2017). Its first violent attack occurs as late as 1987, but may be earlier (Fletcher 2008; Mackenzie Institute 2016).

Geography

The group originally operated in Egypt, but was forced to leave in 1987 (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The group primarily operates out of the Gaza Strip (Mackenzie Institute 2016). Its leader lives in Syria and was active in Syria until about 2012 (Global Security n.d.; Counter Extremism Project 2017).

Organizational Structure

The group's initial leaders were Fathi Shaqaqi and Abd al-Aziz Awda (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The group was founded by students and members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood organization (Mackenzie Institute 2016). Awda was a professor of Islamic law (Counter Extremism 2017). After Shaqaqi died, he was replaced by Ramadan Shallah, a University of Florida Professor (Counter Extremism Project 2017).

The PIJ had approximately 1,000 members in 2011 and 2013 (Counter Extremism Project 2017; Mackenzie Institute 2016). The PIJ claimed it had 8,000 fighters in 2011, but there was no evidence to corroborate this (Counter Extremism Project 2017). Its armed wing was known as the Al-Quds Battalion.

External Ties

The group explicitly received external support from Iran and Syria. This included financial support from Iran (through the IRGC) totaling up to $2-3 million annually and logistical support from Syria (Mackenzie Institute 2016; Counter Extremism Project 2017). Syria provided the group sanctuary until 2012 when the civil war began (Counter Extremism Project 2017). Iran began to cut this support in 2015 when PIJ refused to criticize Saudi Arabia (Counter Extremism Project 2017).

When the group moved from Gaza/Egypt to Lebanon in 1987, the group began receiving resources and training from Hezbollah (Mackenzie Institute 2016; Counter Extremism Project 2017).

The group has no ties with Hamas although it competes for the same resources and pool of supporters (Fletcher 2008).

Group Outcome

The group has signed some partial ceasefires in Palestine, but refuses to negotiate with the Israeli government (Fletcher 2008; Counter Extremism 2017). The group reacted to the Oslo Accords by launching several terrorist attacks (Fletcher 2008). Mossad assassinated Shaqaqi in 1995 (Mackenzie Institute 2016). The group is still active today (Counter Extremism 2017).

XVI.   AL-SADR BRIGADES
Torg ID: 871
Min. Group Date: 1980
Max. Group Date: 1984
Onset: NA

Aliases: Al-Sadr Brigades, Al-Sadr Kata'ib

Note: This may be related to Amal. It is not connected with the Mahdi Army.

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Al-Wiat Al-Sadr (Ignatius 1985)

Group Formation: none

Group End (Outcome): According to available news reports and GTD database, the group end date should be 1985 (disappears). However, Jones and Libicki (2008) say that Al-Sadr Brigades are still active.

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

It is unknown precisely when the group formed, but first came to attention as a violent group because U.S. officials alleged they were involved in training the hijackers of TWA Flight 847 in 1985 (Ignatius 1985). It is also attributed with three different attacks in Beirut 1984 with Government/Diplomatic targets, no reported casualties (GTD 2016).

A Washington Post report, published 1985, described the Al-Sadr Brigades as a splinter group from Amal (cf. Amal profile) (Ignatius 1985). However, the group could also be considered a sister organization with Amal functioning as an umbrella group; the exact timeline for the Al-Sadr Brigades' origin compared to Amal's is not known (Ibid.).

The group is mainly Shiite Muslims (Bernstein 1984; Ignatius 1985). It is believed that the group conducted attacks in protest of the disappearance of the Imam Moussa al-Sadr in 1978 (Bernstein 1984; Ignatius 1985). Some Shiite Muslims accuse the Libyan government of being involved in al-Sadr's disappearance (Bernstein 1984; Financial Express 2015).

Imam Moussa had founded the militia Amal (cf. Amal profile), a prominent group in the 1975 Lebanese civil war that controlled West Beirut in the late 1970s (Ibid.).

Geography

The group is attributed with attacks in Spain and Beirut (Bernstein 1984; START 2016, GTD). The group is also attributed with at least one airplane hijacking, TWA Flight 847, which was hijacked after it took off from Athens, Greece, and then landed in Algiers and ultimately Beirut (Ignatius 1985).

Organizational Structure

In 1985, the group's leader was reportedly a Shiite militant Akel Hamiyeh, nom de guerre Hazmah (Ignatius 1985).

External Ties

A Washington Post report, published 1985, described the Al-Sadr Brigades as a splinter group from Amal (cf. Amal profile) (Ignatius 1985). However, the group could also be considered a sister organization with Amal functioning as an umbrella group; the exact timeline for the Al-Sadr Brigades' origin compared to Amal's is not known (Ibid.).

It is alleged that Al-Sadr Brigades militants may have trained in Algeria, possibly facilitated by their connections with Amal, however this is not certain (Ignatius 1985). Mroue (2005) claims that, similar to Al-Sadr Brigades, Hezbollah also views the imam Al-Sadr's disappearance as a political grievance.

Group Outcome

According to a Washington Post report, U.S. officials attributed the Al-Sadr Brigades with the hijacking of TWA Flight 847 in 1985 (Ignatius 1985). It is believed that Al-Sadr Brigades trained the hijackers (Ibid.). The group allegedly conducted prior plane hijackings as well, to protest the 1978 disappearance of the Imam Musa Sadr (Ibid.).

The group claimed responsibility for the killing of a Libyan diplomat in Spain in 1984 (Bernstein 1984). The Spanish government arrested two Lebanese citizens in Spain in connection with the murder, however Spanish diplomats in West Beirut then received telephone death threats protesting the arrests (Ibid.). The group disappeared after its last incident in 1985.

XVII.   AL-ZULFIKAR
          Torg ID: 35
          Min. Group Date: 1981
          Max. Group Date: 1992
          Onset: NA

          Aliases: Al-Zulfikar, Al Zulfikar

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: AZO

Group Formation: 1979

Group End: 1992 (disappear)

Part 3. Narrative

Al-Zulfikar is a leftist militant group named after Pakistani's Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali-Bhutto, executed in 1979 (Ehrlich 1981). It was formed by PM Bhutto's sons after attempts to stop the execution of their father by Muhammed Zia-ul-Haq failed (Paracha 2010). It is unknown precisely when the group formed between 1979 and 1981, but it came to attention for its first violent attack in 1981 when it hijacked a plane (UPI 1981; GTD 2017). Its aim was to oppose Zia ul-Haq's regime (Paracha 2010).

Geography

Al-Zulfikar has bases in London, Tripoli, Libya, Syria, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan (Ehrlich 1981; UK Home Office 2008). It has launched attacks in airports in Karachi and Syria (Ehrlich 1981). Al-Zulfikar's leader announced that, as of 1992, the group was involved in armed resistance inside Pakistan (Times of India 1992).

Organizational Structure

The group is led by Bhutto's son, Murtaza (Paracha 2010). Its recruits were mainly members of Pakistan's People's Party and the People's Students Federation, fleeing Zia's military regime (Ibid.). However, most members were killed in Al-Zulifkar's first operations in Pakistan (Ibid.). It managed, however, to recover from the losses and recruit new members (Ibid.). A successful plane hijacking of a Singapore Airliner in 1981 increased the group's credibility. The plane was seized between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore by four men, all of whom were killed when Singaporean commandos stormed

the plane (Ottawa Citizen, 1991). Demands were made for the release of Benazir Bhutto's husband from a Karachi prison (Ottawa Citizen, 1991). No passengers were harmed (Ottawa Citizen, 1991).

External Ties

Al-Zulfikar was aided by prominent Muslim leaders such as Colonel Qaddafi in Libya, Haziful Asad in Syria, the PLO's Yasser Arafat, from whom he received weapons and arms (Paracha 2010). Murtaza also called upon KHAD, an Afghan intelligence agency, to help eliminate traitors within the organization (Paracha 2010).

Al Zulfikar received funding from Afghanistan and India, because those countries opposed the Zia regime (refworld 2008).

Group Outcome

Al-Zulfikar reached the peak of its success from 1981 to 1983 (Ottawa Citizen, 1991). Despite the group's success, Murtaza's paranoia and the consequent infighting led to the group's disintegration (Paracha 2010). The infighting culminated in Murtaza asking KHAD to execute one of his most able officials, Tipu (Paracha 2010). Zulfikar's family abandoned the enterprise. However, in 1986, Murtaz returned and turned Al-Zulfikar into a Sindhi nationalist organization (Paracha 2010). At this time, Benazir Bhutto, Zulfikar's daughter, had returned to mainstream politics in Pakistan and was controlling the PPP. (Paracha 2010). In 1991, Murtaza commented that Al-Zulfikar no longer existed (Ottawa Citizen, 1991). Murtaza began his own version of the PPP and ran against Benazir Bhutto's party, and was eventually killed in 1996 by a police ambush (Paracha 2010).

XVIII. ISLAMIC MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE
Torg ID: 566
Min. Group Date: 1995
Max. Group Date: 1996
Onset: NA

Aliases: None

Part 1. Bibliography
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  F.B.I., Seek Blast Clues." New York Times. 1996.
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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: IMC, Al-Haramain Brigades, Movement for Islamic Change, Tigers of the Gulf, Fighting Partisans of God, Al-Ittihad al-Islamiyya, Two Mosques Brigades (TRAC n.d.)

Group Formation: 1995

Group End: 1997 (Splintering according to Jones and Libicki, though it may have been a front for Hezbollah or al-Qaeda (TOPS No. 4074), which are both still active.)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

It is unknown when the group formed. In the spring of 1995, IMC sent faxes to the American Embassy in Riyadh, along with other embassies and news outlets, threatening violence against Westerners criticizing the Saudi government (Sciolino 1995). They first claimed responsibility for the bombing of an American-run military training center in Riyadh on November 13, 1995 (Sciolino 1995; CIA 1995). It is not clear how or if this group has a connection to Syria apart from a transnational attack. The group's stated political aims in Saudi Arabia were to force Americans and American military personnel in particular to leave the country (CIA 1995, 1). The group makes an Islamist reference in its claim of responsibility suggesting the group might possibly ascribe to an Islamist ideology (CIA 1995).

Geography

IMC claimed responsibility for a November 13, 1995, bombing of an American-run military training complex in Riyadh (Sciolino 1995, CIA 1995), a June 25, 1996, bombing of an apartment complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (Dehl 1996; TOPS No. 4074, 2008),

and the bombing of a bus in Aleppo on December 31, 1996 (GTD 2017). The group is transnational.

Organizational Structure

Very little is known about this group's internal structure. It was relatively small, with fewer than 100 members at an unknown date (Jones and Libicki 2008). Its funding seems to have come from external sources, perhaps including the Iranian government (TOPS No. 4074, 2008).

External Ties

IMC does not seem to have been a viable organization on its own; instead, it seems that it was acting as a front for either al-Qaeda, which has been deemed responsible for the 1995 bombing claimed by IMC, or Hezbollah, which has been declared responsible for the June 25, 1996, apartment complex bombing (TOPS No. 4074, 2008). IMC has, according to rumors, been supported by the Iranian government and drew its membership from Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (TOPS No. 4074, 2008; TRAC n.d.). It once claimed that a known member of Hezbollah was one of its own members (TOPS No. 4074, 2008).

Group Outcome

It is unclear whether IMC directly targeted the Syrian or Saudi governments. After the bombing in Aleppo at the end of 1996, IMC was not active for a period of several years (MIPT 2008). It allegedly ended in 1997 by splintering, but no other sources could corroborate this (Jones and Libicki 2008, 162). A group also known as the Islamic Movement for Change sprung up in Libya to help overthrow Qaddafi in 2003, but this seems to have been a front for Al-Qaeda, and it is not clear that the two are related (TOPS No. 4074).

Notes for Iris:
-it opposes the US - transnational attack in Syria and no political opposition in Syria
-this is probably an alias - name is too generic

XIX.   SOLDIERS OF GREATER SYRIA
        Torg ID: 91800
        Min. Group Date: 1998
        Max. Group Date: 2005
        Onset: NA

Aliases: Organization Of Soldiers Of The Levant, Army Of The Levant, Jund Al-Sham, Soldiers Of Greater Syria, Military Wing of the Greater Syrian Army, Tanzim Jund al-Sham lil-Jihad wal-Tawhid

Part 1. Bibliography

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  http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4368267.stm

Note: lots of groups called Jund al Sham.

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Soldiers of Syria, Jund al-Sham for Tawhid and Jihad

Group Formation: 1999

Group End: 2005 (unknown)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

This seems to be an alias for TWTJ.

Geography

This seems to be an alias for TWTJ.

Organizational Structure

This seems to be an alias for TWTJ.

External Ties

This seems to be an alias for TWTJ.

Group Outcome

This seems to be an alias for TWTJ.

Note: this needs a separate torg id. It is different than the jund al sham in Lebanon

XX. ABDULLAH AZZAM BRIGADES
Torg ID: 346000
Min. Group Date: 2004
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Abdullah Azzam Brigades, Al-Qaeda In The Levant And Egypt, Al-Qaida In Syria And Egypt, Al-Qa'idah Organization - The Land Of Al-Sham And Al-Kananah, Battalion Of The Martyr Abdullah Azzam, Martyr Abdallah Azzam Brigades, Tanzim Al-Qaida Fi Balad Ash-Sham Wa Ard Al-Kinanah

Part 1. Bibliography

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: the Brigades of Abdullah Azzam; the Brigades of the Martyr Abdullah Azzam; the Ziyad al-Jarrah Battalions; the Ziad al-Jarrah Battalion; the Yusuf al-'Uyayri Battalions; the Yusuf al-Ayiri Battalion; the Battalion of Sheikh Yusuf al-'Ayiri; and the Marwan Hadid Brigades.

Group Formation: 2009

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (active)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

AAB was formed in 2009 as a splinter of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (U.S. State Department 2012; Mackenzie Institute 2015). The group is led by Saleh Al-Qari Awi and is considered a continuation of AQI's goals to hit targets in Lebanon, Syria, and parts of the Arabian Peninsula (Mackenzie Institute 2015). It calls for the overthrow of Lebanon's regime, Saudi Arabia's regime, Syria's regime, and war against the West (Mackenzie Institute 2015). It ascribes to a Salafi jihadist ideology (Mackenzie Institute 2015). Its first attack was around 2010 (GTD 2017). There is another group by this name in Egypt that was active earlier.

Geography

The group is responsible for carrying out attacks in northern Israel, Lebanon, and the Arabian Peninsula (U.S. State Department 2012a). It later set up training camps in Iraq and Syria (Mackenzie Institute 2015; Roggio and Weiss 2015).

Organizational Structure

The group is very well-organized and includes four branches. Three are distributed by geography (Lebanese branch, Saudi Arabian branch, and Gaza branch) and one is relegated specifically for propaganda and media (Mackenzie Institute 2015). The group is responsible for carrying out attacks in northern Israel, Lebanon, and the Arabian Peninsula (U.S. State Department 2012a). It is unclear how the group funds itself and whether it receives any external support (U.S. State Department 2012b). In 2012, a new leader - Majid Bin-Muhammad al-Majid - took over after Saudi authorities arrested Awi following a drone strike in Pakistan (BBC 2013). The group opposes Hezbollah and other Shia groups in the Middle East (BBC 2013).

External Ties

The group opposes Hezbollah and other Shia groups in the Middle East (BBC 2013). It is unclear how the group funds itself and whether it receives any external support.

Group Outcome

The group's last attack was in 2016 (GTD 2017). The group remains active.

XXI. MILITARY WING OF THE GREATER SYRIAN ARMY
Torg ID: 1424
Min. Group Date: 2005
Max. Group Date: 0
Onset: NA

Aliases: None

Part 1. Bibliography
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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Soldiers of Greater Syria, Jund al-Sham, Organization Of Soldiers Of The Levant, Army Of The Levant, Tanzim Jund al-Sham lil-Jihad wal-Tawhid

Group Formation: 1989/1990 - This is an alias for Jund al-Sham or the Greater Syrian Soldiers (BBC, 21 March 2005).

Group End: 2015 (active) - This is an alias for Jund al-Sham or the Greater Syrian Soldiers (BBC, 21 March 2005).

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

This is an alias for Jund al-Sham or the Greater Syrian Soldiers (BBC, 21 March 2005).

Geography

This is an alias for Jund al-Sham or the Greater Syrian Soldiers (BBC, 21 March 2005).

Organizational Structure

This is an alias for Jund al-Sham or the Greater Syrian Soldiers (BBC, 21 March 2005).

External Ties

This is an alias for Jund al-Sham or the Greater Syrian Soldiers (BBC, 21 March 2005).

Group Outcome

This is an alias for Jund al-Sham or the Greater Syrian Soldiers (BBC, 21 March 2005).

XXII.   FREE SYRIAN ARMY (FSA)
Torg ID: 1707
Min. Group Date: 2011
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: 2011

Aliases: Free Syrian Army, Free Syrian Army (Fsa)

Part 1. Bibliography

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: FSA, the Supreme Military Command (SMC) of the FSA

Group Formation: July-August 2011 (BBC 2013; Lund 2013)

Group End: 2012 (splinters), 2018 (Active but not as any organized militant group)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

In July 2011, former Syrian Air Force Colonel Riad al-Asaad released a statement from exile in Turkey declaring that he would command a "Free Syrian Army" to topple Assad and stand against the Syrian army, which was escalating a crackdown against dissidents (BBC 2013; Jamestown Foundation 2011; Lister 2016, 3-4; O'Bagy 2013, 9). Syrian soldiers and officers had already begun defecting in response to orders commanding them to wage war against Syrian cities such as Homs (Lister 2016, 4). About 60,000 Syrian soldiers defected by 2012, and many joined the FSA to lead loosely organized civilian militias, or "Armed Opposition Groups" (AOGs) fighting under the umbrella of the FSA (Lister 2016, 5). The group's first formal violent attack was as late as November 2011 (GTD 2017). Violence had been escalating within Syria since spring 2011 and the Arab Spring.

Geography

The FSA initially formed in exile in Turkey in August 2011 (BBC 2013). The FSA is active throughout Syria, though its operations have become increasingly uncoordinated among cells. It has also been linked to incidents (for example, unexploded bombs) in Turkey and Lebanon (GTD 2017). The FSA is also rumored to have set up outfits in refugee camps on the Turkish-Syrian border, as well as in northern Lebanon and Jordan (Zambelis 2011).

Organizational Structure

The group's original leader was Syrian Air Force Colonel Riad al-Asaad (BBC 2013; Jamestown Foundation 2011; Lister 2016, 3-4; O'Bagy 2013, 9). Syrian soldiers and officers had already begun defecting in response to orders commanding them to wage war against Syrian cities such as Homs (Lister 2016, 4).

The FSA is not a centralized group, nor even a single coherent unit. It is, however, how many disparate Syrian militias and rebel groups have styled themselves (O'Bagy 2013, 10; Lister 2016, 3; Lund 2013). For this reason, estimates of troop strength are difficult to gauge properly; the FSA's strength is arguable and fluctuates often (Gleditsch 2013; Lund 2013; Zambelis 2011).

On December 7, 2012, a broad coalition of Syrian insurgents declared that a "Supreme Joint Military Command Council," or "Supreme Military Command" (SMC), would be leading operations against the Assad regime and would be led by Brigadier General Salim Idriss (O'Bagy 2013, 9, 11; Lister 2016, 8). The SMC, composed of 30 individuals, was to cover 5 major fronts in Syria: the north, the east, the south, the west, and the central areas, and had 14 Provincial Military Councils, or PMCs (BBC 2013; O'Bagy 2013, 11). It had a General Command of 5 leading members, and a Coordination Office to make sure the PMCs worked together (O'Bagy 2013, 11). The political wing of the FSA is known as the Syrian National Council (BAAD Narratives 2013).

External Ties

In summer 2012, the US began sending resources to certain FSA organizations through the CIA (Balanche 2017; Lister 2016, 7). Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey also lent unspecified support, though it was less significant (Lister 2016, 8; Lund 2013). These four countries sought to foster a more centralized structure using their contributions as leverage (Lund 2013).

The FSA is also known to have made official connections with the Syrian National Council (SNC), where the Muslim Brotherhood had a large presence in 2011-2012 (Lister 2016 6; Zambelis 2011). 22 FSA member organizations, constituting the majority of the forces, came together to form the Syrian Islamic Liberation Front in September 2012, but did not reject the authority of the SMC once it was created (BBC 2013; Lister 2016, 7). The FSA became even more diffuse in 2012 when additional regional brigades signed onto the project (BBC 2013; O'Bagy 2013).

Group Outcome

Though in December 2012 it seemed that the FSA was in the process of consolidating power, there were internal divisions within the newly constituted SMC, and the SILF and other Islamist groups (for example, the coalition called the Syrian Islamic Front and the Daesh surrogate Jabhat al-Nusrah) were gaining authority and power (BBC 2013, Lister 2016, 8). The CIA and other foreign assistance decreased (Balanche 2017), but not before playing into ever-rising levels of corruption, smuggling, and bribery in the FSA (Sherlock 2013). However, in 2012, the FSA and the SMC were important ways to describe the general landscape of the insurgency in Syria. The FSA is still active in 2018 but is not really a single militant organization. Since 2012, the FSA has become more of an umbrella term. Syrian rebels lost their last stronghold in Aleppo in 2017.

Notes for Iris:
-this resembles the more spoke-and-wheel decentralized insurgency in Lebanon and Iraq (maybe Contras) vs consolidated movements in South Asia, South America, SSA → what are the implications of different organizational structures on duration? Are center-seeking groups more decentralized? (the group is a movement and NEVER a centralized organization)
-the military leader exaggerates his authority so it's hard to tell if he's actually in command and if in command of what
-military leadership returns to Syria from Turkey to have the SMC-FSA conference → never materialized because there was no incentive to cooperate (smaller stakes/competing ideologies → outbidding??)
-ex-military; size assessment are likely way off
-no internal struggle or communication

-this is a generic opposition movement (captures military defectors, secular, and moderate groups)
-this group is completely decentralized in comparison to Jaish al Islam (can you even code? It's like an umbrella but worse)

XXIII.   JABHAT AL-NUSRA
Torg ID: 2622
Min. Group Date: 2012
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Al-Nusrah Front, Jabhat Al-Nusra, Jabhat Al-Nusra Li Al-Sham (Support Front For The People Of Syria), Jabhat Al-Nusra Li Al-Sham (The Support Front For The People Of Syria), Support Front For The People Of Syria

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Variations on Jabhat al-Nusrah: [Al-Nusrah Front to Protect the Levant, Al-Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant, Al-Nusrah Front in Lebanon, Jabhat al-Nusrah li-Ahl al-Sham, Jabhat al-Nusrah li-Ahl al-Sham Min Mujahideen al-Sham fii Sahat al-Jihad (The Support Front for the People of Syria from the Mujahideen in the Places of Jihad), The Front for the Defense of the Syrian People, Levantine Mujahideen on the Battlefields of Jihad, The Defense Front, and other abbreviations, translations, and transliterations (Counter Extremism 2017)

Subgroups/Parts: The Khorasan Group (al-Qaida militants harbored by ANF) (Crenshaw 2017), al-Manara al-Baida (The White Minaret, ANF's media outlet) (BBC 2013)
July 2016-January 2017: Jabhat Fateh-Al-Sham (Front for the Conquest of Syria, Front for the Conquest of the Levant) (BBC 2017), Levantine Conquest Front (Counter Extremism 2017)

Post-2017: Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (Liberation of the Levant Organization), HTS, The Assembly for the Liberation of Syria (Counter Extremism 2017)
Other alias: Ansar al-Mujahideen Network (Counter Extremism 2017) N.B. This alias is not confirmed elsewhere.

Group Formation: October 2011 (United States Institute for Peace 2016)

Group End: 2018 (Active as Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham) (Crenshaw 2017; Walsh 2018)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

AQI/ISI leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi sent Abu Mohammed al-Jawlani (al-Julani), one of his followers, to bring together jihadis in Syria in December 2011 (USIP 2016; Crenshaw 2017). The group's aim was to overthrow the Assad regime and establishing an Islamic state in Syria (BBC 2013; Counter Terrorism 2017; Crenshaw 2017). The group was violent from the beginning, conducting its first attack on December 23, 2011, in Damascus, leaving 44 dead (Counter Extremism 2017). It splintered from ISI and formally declared itself as an independent organization in 2012. ANF is committed to a Salafist brand of Islam, and to the goal of creating an Islamic state in its areas of control,

where laws would be based on shari'a (Counter Extremism 2017; ICG 2012, 10). It seemed to matter to ANF that their behavior be viewed as positive and honorable by Syrian civilians (BBC 2013).

Geography

In 2012, ANF carried out or claimed responsibility for attacks throughout Syria, primarily in Aleppo and Damascus, but also in Hamah, Al-Midan, Drousha, Harasta, Ziyara, Taftnaz, and other unknown locations (GTD 2017). After 2012, ANF proceeded to carry out attacks in more areas of Syria (Raqqa, Deir al-Zour, Daraa, Idlib, etc.) and some in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley (GTD 2017, Crenshaw 2017).

Organizational Structure

In 2012, ANF was estimated to have between 300 and 400 fighters, though it has grown in size since then (Crenshaw 2017). HTS now has between 5,000 and 10,000 members in 2017 (Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017). In 2011 and 2012, the group was led by Abu Mohammad al-Jawlani. He recently stepped down from overall leadership of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham but remains its military leader (BBC 2013; BBC 2016; Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017; USIP 2016). In 2012, ANF welcomed the Khorasan Group, also known as the "Wolf Unit," made up of al-Qaida fighters, into its ranks to help make the new organization more effective (Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017). Since 2012, groups have been formed out of ANF's more skilled fighters: Jaish al-Nusra and Quwat al-Nukhba now act as elite portions of the ANF (Counter Extremism 2017). Al-Jawlani is now the military leader, but not the overall head, of HTS. That position is held by Hashim al-Sheikh, a.k.a. Abu Jabir (BBC 2017).

External Ties

In 2012, ANF's founders were connected to Al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) (Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017). ANF initially remained affiliated with al-Qaida until 2016 when it cut ties (Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017; United States Department of State 2017). The organization's name has changed twice since 2012. It became Jabhat Fatah al-Sham in 2016 after leaving the al-Qaida umbrella and then Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham after swallowing up several groups, including Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki (Crenshaw 2017).

ANF has had no shortage of funding or resources gained through taxes and other fees imposed on Syrian civilians living in its areas of control. It also benefits from ransom payments, donors in the Gulf, sale of oil from their territory, theft, and smuggling (Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017). By 2016, ANF began attracting large numbers of foreign fighters (USIP 2016). ANF has both fought and worked with the Free Syrian Army, and received a large portion of the munitions meant for the Free Syrian Army (FSA) (Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017; al-Shishani 2012).

Group Outcome

ANF remains active, but under a different name: Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham. The organization's name has changed twice since 2012. It became Jabhat Fatah al-Sham in 2016 after leaving the al-Qaida umbrella, and then Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) after swallowing up several groups, including Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki, Ansar al-Din Front, Jaish al-Sunna, and Liwa al-Haqq (BBC 2017; Crenshaw 2017). Al-Jawlani is now the military leader, but not the overall head, of HTS. That position is held by Hashim al-Sheikh, a.k.a. Abu Jabir (BBC 2017). HTS now has between 5,000 and 10,000 members in 2017 (Counter Extremism 2017; Crenshaw 2017).

Notes for Iris:
-platonic ideal
-most well-defined group in SYR case
-renamed themselves to get out from under the AQ umbrella
-Nusra is very well-organized which explains their strength: what are their sources of strength? Well-supplied, hold territory, exploit resources, SYR govt ignores them. They really exploit the vacuum of a failed state.
-there's a tendency to clump all Islamist groups together so responses specifically against ISIS do not actually affect these groups because they're not affiliated and they're operating in different spheres

XXIV.   DIRAA AL-SHAHBAA REBEL BRIGADE
Torg ID: 2636
Min. Group Date: 2012
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: None

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https://rsf.org/en/news/more-news-providers-killed-regular-army-rebels-or-kurdish-militia

Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Diraa al Shahbaa Rebel Brigade (in Arabic, al-Shahbaa is another name for Aleppo), Aleppo Brigade (?)

Group Formation: 2012

Group End: Unknown (The last recorded attack was in 2012.)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

Very little information is available about the Diraa al-Shahbaa rebel brigade. On November 18, 2012, a citizen journalist named Mohammed al-Khalid was killed by this group (AFP 2012; GTD 2017). This event was reported only by the organization "Reporters sans frontières", which is highly political and committed to freedom of the press (Reporters sans frontières 2018). Given that no mention of the group is readily available in other news media, it may be known by an unknown alias in most reporting.

Geography

The group carried out one attack in Aleppo on November 18, 2012 (AFP 2012; GTD 2017). Other than that, little else is known.

Organizational Structure

Little information is available about this group's organizational structure, other than that it has a subgroup called the "Nimr Battalion," or Tiger battalion (AFP 2012).

External Ties

No information was available about any external ties.

Group Outcome

This group is only mentioned in news reports stemming from the one report from 2012 (AFP 2012; GTD 2017; RSF 2012).

Notes for Iris:
-check this group's activities against Sebastian Aleppo Map
-RSF is not reputable source

XXV.   DEMOCRATIC UNION PARTY (PYD)
        Torg ID: 2635

Min. Group Date: 2012
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Democratic Union Party (Pyd), Democratic Union Party, Hizb Al-Ittihad Al-Dimuqratiy, Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat, Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat (Pyd)

Part 1. Bibliography

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat

Group Formation: 2003 (Carnegie 2012)

Group End: 2018 (active) (Reuters 2018)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

In 2003, the PYD formed as the Syrian branch of the Turkish PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) (Carnegie 2012). Both are Kurdish separatist movements that seek to establish Kurdish rule over parts of northern Syria and southern Turkey, respectively. Between 2003 and 2011, PYD activities were limited by government repression tactics. PKK head Abdullah Ocalan was thrown out of Syria (he was sheltered by the Assad regime in the 1990s), and the Syrian and Turkish governments cooperated against Kurdish separatism (Carnegie 2012; Caves 2012). In 2004, the PYD supported an uprising in Qamishli, in northern Syria (ICD 2014, 4). The activities of the PYD were therefore limited until the Assad regime's grip on power began to weaken in 2011. In 2010, Saleh Muslim Mohammed returned from exile in Iraq to lead the PYD, and they took part in the initial stages of the Syrian civil war in 2011 and 2012 (Carnegie 2012).

Geography

The PYD has been active mostly in the Kurdish-majority regions of Northern Syria, along the Turkish and Iraqi borders. They have been linked to kidnappings, assassinations, and attacks, mostly in the vicinity of Afrin (Aster, Juwayq) (GTD 2017). The PYD was also linked to an attack in Aleppo (Carnegie 2012). The group has also been associated with violence in Erbil (Carnegie 2012) and in Ceylanpınar, Turkey (GTD 2017). In 2013, PYD-associated fighters took the northern Syrian town of Ras al-Ain (Kurdish: Sari Kani) from Jabhat al-Nusra (Al Jazeera 2013; Global Security n.d.). However, the PYD is an organizing force among Syria's Kurdish militias, and many Kurdish communities span the Turkish-Syrian and Iraqi-Syrian borders. This means two things: the PYD can be assumed to be active in the entirety of the Kurdish-majority regions of Northern Syria, regardless of evidence of specific acts of violence; and some spillover of PYD-associated violence into these countries is to be expected (Caves 2012 2-3; Global Security n.d.).

Organizational Structure

Little is known about the PYD between 2003 and 2010 other than that it was small and most of its members were in exile (ICG 2014). In 2010, the current leader of the PYD, Saleh Muslimm Mohammed, came to power (Carnegie 2012). The PYD holds party congresses and has a Central Committee. At the fifth such conference, Asiyah Abdullah became co-chairman of the PYD - the first time such a position had existed - and the Central Committee's membership increased (Carnegie 2012). Organizational members are Kurdish.

Because the PYD exerts operational control over most Kurdish militias, it is often stated that the YPG (People's Defense Units/People's Protection Units) is the violent arm of the

PYD (Calislar 2015; Caves 2012, 4; ICG 2014, i). Not all of the YPG acknowledges PYD control, however (Caves 2012, 4).

External Ties

The PYD's most important external interactions are with the PKK, the Assad regime, the Kurdish National Council (KNC), and other insurgents in Syria. It is unclear how much control the PKK has over the PYD, but it is evident that the leadership of the PYD cooperates with the PKK, even if its fighters do not acknowledge the PKK as a partner (Caves 2012, 6). Regarding the Assad regime, the Syrian National Council (SNC) and the KNC have both alleged links between the PYD and the Ba'athists (Caves 2012, 5). The regime allowed the PYD to take control with little resistance in Kurdish-majority areas in June 2012, and even armed YPG fighters (ICD 2014, 7-8). The KNC, which was created with the backing of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq, shifts the balance of power away from the Turkish PKK (Caves 2012, 1). The KNC maintains a duopoly over the Kurdish separatists with the PYD through an agreement signed in June 2012 (Carnegie 2012). This agreement created a "Kurdish Supreme Council" to share power, but this body had not begun to exert real authority by the end of 2012 (Caves 2012, 4). The PYD was a party to these negotiations through its membership in the People's Council of Western Kurdistan (Carnegie 2012). The PYD and YPG clashed with both FSA-affiliates and Nusrah Front fighters in 2012 as well as with the Islamic State in later years (Calislar 2015; Caves 2012, 12).

Importantly, the PYD consistently styles itself as a non-aligned movement that seeks to support an independent Kurdistan, regardless of the PKK-KRG divide amongst Kurds, and opposes both the Assad regime and Arab insurgents (Caves 2012, 1, 4).

Group Outcome

The PYD grew in power throughout 2012, as it negotiated power-sharing agreements internally and externally. It had made peace with the KNC, forming a Kurdish Supreme Council meant to allow the PYD and the KNC to fight their common enemies in the Assad regime and other (Islamist, secular Arab) insurgent groups. (Carnegie 2012; Caves 2012, 1-5). This Supreme Council did not subsume the PYD and the KNC, and the PYD continues to act independently today (Caves 2012, 4; Reuters 2018). The PYD came to exert political control over northern Syria in 2013-2014. During this period, they used the Assad regime's institutions, and augmented them with sectarian policies meant to separate identity groups (ICG 2014, 23-24). The group is still very active in 2018 (Reuters 2018).

Notes for Iris:
-PYD originally forms as a branch, but quickly becomes an independent Kurdish separatist group

-it's unclear when their first violent attack is-it's unclear what their involvement with the first uprising is
-PYD activities limited until 2011
-Assad didn't see the PYD as that much of a threat and tacitly lets them operate (lesser of two evils) for a longer period
-PYD fights Nusra, IS, FSA-affiliates; PYD establishes de facto government structure
-inter-group strategic fighting here
-PYD is used to refer to the politico-military organization, but the YPG is the specific armed group
-most of YPG reports to PYD

XXVI.   GATHERING OF THE SUPPORTERS OF ISLAM
Torg ID: 2676
Min. Group Date: 2012
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Tajamo Ansar Al-Islam, Gathering Of The Supporters Of Islam

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Ansar Al-Islam (Syria), Supporters (Partisans) of Islam, FSA?

Group Formation: 2012

Group End: 2012 (disappear - only one incident and may be a faction of FSA) (Spencer 2012)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

This group may fall under the umbrella of the FSA (al-Arabiya 2012), and may simply be a primarily Iraqi group (Al Jazeera n.d.; BBC 2012).

Geography

This group may fall under the umbrella of the FSA (al-Arabiya 2012).

Organizational Structure

This group may fall under the umbrella of the FSA (al-Arabiya 2012).

External Ties

This group may fall under the umbrella of the FSA (al-Arabiya 2012).

Group Outcome

This group may fall under the umbrella of the FSA (al-Arabiya 2012).

XXVII.   GHURABA AL-SHAM
Torg ID: 2690
Min. Group Date: 2012
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: Ghuraba Al-Sham, Foreigners Of Greater Syria, Ghuraba Ash-Sham, Strangers Of Greater Syria

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: Unknown precisely. Founder Dr. Mahmoud al-Aghasi a.k.a. Abu al-Qaqa began his more radical preaching in 2003 (BBC 2007), but the first mention of Ghuraba al-Sham is in 2007 (McGregor 2007).

Group End: Unknown. Active as of 2013 (Drott 2014). There may have been attacks since then.

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The details of the group's formation are not clear. Some suggest the group formed in 2003 and sent foreign fighters into Iraq to fight (UCDP 2017). Others suggest the group did not form until as late as 2007 (McGregor 2007). However, it is clear that Ghuraba al-Sham had some relation to Abu al-Qaqa, a radical preacher with alleged ties to al-Qaida, Syrian intelligence, and American intelligence (BBC 2007; McGregor 2007).

The group joined the Syrian civil war in 2012, and has worked closely with the Nusra Front, along with Ahrar al-Sham, another Salafi jihadist group (Allam 2012; Drott 2014). Little information about the group's ideology is available other than that it is linked to these jihadist groups (Drott 2014). Ghuraba al-Sham was made up mostly of Turks and foreign fighters from Eastern Europe (Al Arabiya 2012; Allam 2012; Reuters 2014).

Geography

Little is known about the exact operational range of Ghuraba al-Sham. However, they retaliated against Abu al-Qaqa's assassin in Aleppo in 2007, and fought Kurdish forces in Ras al-Ain and al-Yarubiya in 2013 (Al Arabiya 2012; Drott 2014; Reuters 2013).

Organizational Structure

No information was available about this group's structure or funding resources. However, it was mostly made up of Turkish and Eastern European foreign fighters, of whom there were only about 100-150 (Al Arabiya 2012; Allam 2012; GBA 2016). Founder Dr. Mahmoud al-Aghasi a.k.a. Abu al-Qaqa began his more radical preaching in 2003 (BBC 2007).

External Ties

Ghuraba al-Sham is almost never mentioned without the Nusra Front, with which it has worked very closely (Al Arabiya 2012; Allam 2012; Drott 2014; Reuters 2013). The group has also worked with Ahrar al-Sham and Ahrar al-Jazeera in 2013 (Drott 2014).

Group Outcome

Other than the fact that it was involved in the Syrian civil war, little is known about this group's outcome. It was active as late as 2013 (Drott 2014). Its most recent uses of violence appear to have been in Ras al-Ain and al-Yarubiya, where they fought Kurdish rebels in 2013 (Drott 2014; Reuters 2013).

Notes for Iris:
-it's really unclear whether this is one group or two different groups
-there are 2 stages to group: (1) 2003-2007 and (2) start of Syrian Civil War
-there is no evidence to prove this group existed between 2007-2011 (date.approx = 1)

XXVIII.   LIWA AL-ISLAM
           Torg ID: 2651
           Min. Group Date: 2012
           Max. Group Date: 2012
           Onset: 2011

           Aliases: Liwa Al-Islam, Islam Brigade

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: transforms into Jaish al-Islam (JAI, Jaysh al-Islam, Army of Islam, post September 29, 2013) (UK Home Office 2016)

Group Formation: 2011 (Crenshaw 2017)

Group End: 2013. Merged with about 50 groups in Damascus to create Jaysh al-Islam (Crenshaw 2017).

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

When Zahran Alloush left prison in 2011, he immediately founded Liwa al-Islam. He was a Salafist, and built the organization on that ideology (Lund 2013). His stated goal was to create an Islamic state in Syria, though not as quickly or as violently as ISIS would (Macdonald 2015).

The group's first major attack was the bombing of the National Security Office in Damascus on July 18, 2012, which was also claimed by the Free Syrian Army (GTD 2017; Lund 2013). The attack killed Deputy Defence Minister Asef Shawkat and Assistant Vice President Hassan Turkman (Macdonald 2015). Liwa al-Islam was originally part of the Free Syrian Army umbrella, but that association did not last (Hassan 2013).

Geography

Liwa al-Islam was based in Damascus, where it carried out attacks on July 18, 2012, and February 21, 2013. It has also been blamed for an attack on Maloula, a Christian city near Damascus (GTD 2017). Liwa al-Islam, as a part of Jaysh al-Islam, remains active in the Ghouta agricultural belt (Crenshaw 2017). Jaysh al-Islam has been active in Homs, Aleppo, Idlib, Hama, Daraa, Quneitra, and conducted attacks in Arsal, Lebanon in 2015 (Crenshaw 2017).

Organizational Structure

When Zahran Alloush left prison in 2011, he immediately founded Liwa al-Islam (UK Home Office 2016; Crenshaw 2017). He was a Salafist, and built the organization on that ideology (Lund 2013).

Little is known about the internal structure of Liwa al-Islam, other than that it was well organized and would go on to form the core of Jaysh al-Islam in 2013 (Crenshaw 2017; Global Security n.d.). It was originally a coalition of about 50 smaller militant groups (Global Security n.d.).

When Liwa al-Islam merged with Jaysh al-Islam, it more than 5,000 fighters (Crenshaw 2017). The group subsequently grew to about 25,000 in 2016 (UK Home Office 2016). In 2013, Liwa al-Islam joined the political group Islamic coalition in 2013 to form a political wing (Crenshaw 2017).

External Ties

Alloush and Liwa al-Islam have been backed by Saudi Arabia from the beginning (Crenshaw 2017; Hassan 2013; Global Security n.d.). Liwa al-Islam was briefly affiliated with the Free Syrian Army (Hassan 2013).

After its foundation in 2013, Jaysh al-Islam received funding from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey, along with alleged support from Pakistan in the form of training (Crenshaw 2017). Jaysh al-Islam has cooperated with Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham, but has been in conflict with the Islamic State (Crenshaw 2017). In 2013, Liwa al-Islam joined the

Islamic coalition, and kept that affiliation after merging to form Jaysh al-Islam (Crenshaw 2017).

Group Outcome

In 2013, Liwa al-Islam joined with about 50 other, smaller Damascus Islamist militant groups and created Jaysh al-Islam (Crenshaw 2017). Between 2013 and 2014, Jaysh al-Islam was a key part of the Islamic Front, and Zahran Alloush was its military commander (Crenshaw 2017; Macdonald 2015).

Notes for Iris:
-incentive to merge = amass capabilities, challenge state (limits of competition)
-easier if similar ideologies

XXIX.   SYRIAN REVOLUTIONARIES - ALEPPO PROVINCE
Torg ID: 2675
Min. Group Date: 2012
Max. Group Date: 2012
Onset: NA

Aliases: None

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Al-Tawhid Brigade (Unity Brigade)

Group Formation: July 18, 2012 (Anjarini 2013)

Group End: 2014 (Merged with Ahrar al-Sham and others to form the Islamic Front; May still operate independently.) (Crenshaw 2016)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

On July 18, 2012, multiple militant groups merged together north of Aleppo at the urging of Turkish officials, who encouraged them to fight within the city (Anjarini 2013). Violent clashes erupted while al-Tawhid was still entering the city in July with other militant groups (Anjarini 2013). The Tawhid Brigade's objective was to depose the Assad government and replace it with an Islamic one based in Sharia but with democratic elections and toleration of minority groups (Crenshaw 2016). The brigade also claimed to protect property and civilians, unlike the Syrian regime and other groups, as well as to implement a single judiciary system across Aleppo (Boling 2012, 6).

Geography

The Tawhid Brigade has only been active within Aleppo province (Anjarini 2013; Boling 2012; Crenshaw 2016). Within Aleppo, the group and its subfactions have been active in the southwest near the Idlib province in the city of Atareb in the Kilis Corridor, as well as in al-Bab, which is located east of Aleppo City (Boling 2012).

Organizational Structure

In 2012, the Tawhid Brigade was made up of 3 smaller brigades, namely the Daret Ezza, Fursan al Jabal, and Ahrar al-Shamal Brigades. These Brigades each have several constituent battalions (Boling 2012, 5). Its original military leader, Abdel Qader Saleh, and Youssef al-Abbas, another important figure, were killed in a November 2013 government airstrike (Crenshaw 2016). Estimates of the group's size in 2012 range from 1,000 (Bolis 2012) to 8,000 (Crenshaw 2016). Between 2012 and 2014, the group grew significantly to between 8,000 and 10,000 fighters (Crenshaw 2016). They also had, in 2013, 10,000 non-combatant members, a Media Foundation, and a Medical Foundation (Anjarini 2013). The Tawhid Brigade has received funding and/or support from Qatar, Turkey, and France (Crenshaw 2016).

External Ties

The Tawhid Brigade has received funding and/or support from Qatar, Turkey, and France (Crenshaw 2016). When it was founded, the group was part of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and pledged allegiance to the Supreme Military Council (SMC), by way of the Syrian Islamic Liberation Front (SILF) (Crenshaw 2016). In 2013, the Tawhid Brigade first joined the Islamic Coalition, then an umbrella group called the Islamic Front, having

left the SMC behind (Crenshaw 2016). In 2014, after the death of Abdel Qader Saleh, the group merged with several other parts of the Islamic Front umbrella group to found an Islamic Front that operates as a unit rather than an umbrella (Crenshaw 2016). The Tawhid Brigade has cooperated with various militant groups in Aleppo, including the Muslim Brotherhood and the al-Nusrah Front (Anjarini 2013).

It has had a difficult but sometimes friendly relationship with the Islamic State, and some of the Tawhid Brigade's fighters have joined the Islamic State (Crenshaw 2016).

Group Outcome

In 2014, after the death of Abdel Qader Saleh, the group merged with several other parts of the Islamic Front umbrella group to found an Islamic Front that operates as a unit rather than an umbrella (Crenshaw 2016). It is unclear whether the Tawhid Brigade still operates on its own, but for the most part, it is currently part of the Islamic Front (Crenshaw 2016).

Notes for Iris
-Jaish al Islam is divisible into smaller coherent brigades whereas FSA never is
-doesn't cost anything to pledge allegiance to one group or not
-originally, secular vs Islamist groups
-mergers result of capabilities amass
-leadership decapitation incentive to merge