

**Azerbaijan**  
**Last Updated: 19 December 2016**

| torg  | gname   | onset | min  | max  |
|-------|---|-------|------|------|
| T2122 | REPUBLIC OF ARTSAKH                               | 1991  | 1991 | 2012 |
| T228  | ISLAMIC INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING BRIGADE (IIPB) |       | 1998 | 2002 |
| T2309 | FOREST BROTHERS                                   |       | 1993 | 2009 |
| T28   | AL-QA'IDA   |       | 1989 | 2012 |

- I. REPUBLIC OF ARTSAKH  
Min. Group Date: 1991  
Max. Group Date: 2012 (active?)  
Onset: 1991

Aliases: Republic Of Nagorno-Karabakh, Artsakh Republic, Arts'akhi Hanrapetut'yun, Lernayin Gharabaghi Hanrapetut'yun, Nagorno-Karabakh, Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, Republic Of Artsakh

**Part 1. Bibliography**

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## **Part 2. Narrative**

### **Group Formation**

While its conflict first began as a series of riots by Armenian separatists in 1988, the group did not gain attention as a violent proto-state organization until 1991 (BBC 2016; Global Security n.d.). The Republic of Artsakh intensified their violence in the spring of 1991, following the USSR’s Operation Ring (Melander 68). Their initial goals were to secede from Azerbaijan by either creating their own country or joining Armenia. They ascribed to an ethnonationalist ideology, promoting the rights and welfare of the Armenian people (Global Security n.d.)

### **Geography**

The Republic of Artsakh was centered in the city of Stepanakert (Melander 53). After the dissolution of the USSR, their main focus was to regain control of their land, as well as surrounding cities and towns such as Khojaly. They then began to move towards taking over the Lachin corridor, including key cities like Shusha. In their wake, they left a string of completely devastated Azeri towns (MacFarlane, Neil, Minear 16). In 1993, they scored a huge victory by capturing the hydroelectric facilities on the Sarsang Reservoir (MacFarlane, Neil, and Minear 17). Following a coup in Azerbaijan, the Republic of Artsakh became bolder and successfully attacked Agdam.

### **Organizational Structure**

The Republic of Artsakh was composed of Armenian paramilitary groups as well as ex-Soviet soldiers. Their governmental structure was a semi-presidential democracy, however in its early years power often shifted. For example, when negotiations to end the conflict were underway, a more radical “party” took control of the government and escalated the violence, halting the negotiations. At the turn of the century they received millions of dollars in investments by the Armenians diaspora, most notably, in the US, Russia, France, and the Middle East. No information was found regarding their leader. They had an estimated 160,000 members (Gleditsch et al. p 606).

### **External Ties**

The Republic of Artsakh was formally and strongly backed by the Armenian people, government, and military. During the Azerbaijani offensives in 1993-1994, busloads of Armenian soldiers could be seen crossing the Lachin corridor (MacFarlane, Neil, and Minear 28). Iran seemed to be inclined towards Armenia, meaning that they supported the Republic of Artsakh (MacFarlane, Neil, and Minear 27). The US seemed to favor Armenia, and unsuccessfully tried to engage in peace talks.

### **Group Outcome**

Pressured by other countries, including Russia, the group signed a ceasefire in 1994 (Melander 84). The Republic of Artsakh kept the borders intact in the ceasefire, and their violent attacks have decreased since their becoming sovereign. This frozen conflict did not grant Nagorno-Karabakh de jure sovereignty despite its limited legal recognition. As such, violence erupted again in 2009 and in 2016 in violation of the ceasefire (BBC 2016). The group is still active but, for the most part, non-violent. However, because the conflict was never fully resolved (Economist 2014; BBC 2016).

### **Part 3. Proposed Changes**

Aliases: None

Group Formation: None

Group End (Outcome): 1994 (The ceasefire that gave them their boundaries was signed, making them their own country)

- II. ISLAMIC INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING BRIGADE (IIPB)  
Min. Group Date: 1998  
Max. Group Date: 2002  
Onset: NA

Aliases: Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB), IIPB, International Islamic Battalion, International Islamic Brigade

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## **Part 2. Narrative**

### **Group Formation**

The Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB) was partnered with the Chechen separatist movement. It formed in 1998 with an initial goal to break away from Russia and create their own Chechen republic, and rid it of all non-Chechens. It ascribed to Wahhabi ideology (Crenshaw 2014). Its first violent incident was in 1999 (Crenshaw 2014).

### **Geography**

The IIPB attacks were mainly conducted in Russia, most notably, the Moscow theater hostage crisis in 2002, with a death count of 129 hostages. It was also active in Dagestan. It had bases of operations in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey (FAS 2004; US State Department 2006).

### **Organizational Structure**

The IIPB has a chain of command under a singular leader, much like Al-Qaeda.

IIPB was founded by Shamil Basayev and Ibn Al-Khattab in 1998 (Crenshaw 2014). IIPB had an estimated 400 members including several foreign fighters, but this has often been questioned (Global Security n.d.; US State Department 2006). It primarily funded

itself through support from Al-Qaeda and other AQ donors (Crenshaw 2014). It is unknown how the group recruited members, or if members were from a particular background. There is no data regarding the number of members or membership.

### **External Ties**

IIPB primarily received a lot of funding and training from Al-Qaeda and the Arabian Peninsula. The group also worked with Riyadus-Salikhin, the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment, and the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria (Crenshaw 2014).

### **Group Outcome**

Following the death of Abu al-Walid, the group's leadership fell into the hands of Abu Hafs al-Urduni who "merged" the IIPB with Al-Qaeda in 2003 (US Department of State).

### **Part 3. Proposed Changes**

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1998

Group End (Outcome): 2003 (merger with al-Qa'ida) (US State Department)

- III. FOREST BROTHERS  
Min. Group Date: 1993  
Max. Group Date: 2009  
Onset: NA

**Note:** This refers to Islamist AZE group and not Soviet rebel group from 1940s.

Aliases:

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## **Part 2. Narrative**

### **Group Formation**

The Forest Brothers is a radical Salafi organization created by Kwase Jaffon that operated in Southern Dagestan and Northern Azerbaijan (Rubin 204). They wanted to bring Sharia Law into the Caucasus. The group was formed in 1993 by a number of Georgian fleeing Abkhazia (SOWI n.d.)

### **Geography**

They attacked multiple mosques, the city of Baku, and unsuccessfully planned attacks on British and United States’ embassies. They operated mainly in the Caucasus region, in countries such as Azerbaijan and Armenia. The group also operates in Kabardino-Balkaria, Ingushetia, northern Ossetia, and southern Dagestan (Rubin 2010, 204). The group originally formed in Sumgait (American Foreign Policy Council 5).

### **Organizational Structure**

The group was founded by Kwase Jaffon, an Arab who had previously fought in the Chechen war (Valiyev 2007). The rest, however, including funding, membership, and training, was unclear.

### **External Ties**

No information found

### **Group Outcome**

The Forest Brothers were victims of a massive crackdown in 2012 (American Foreign Policy Council n.d., 4). Since then, they have been inactive.

## **Part 3. Proposed Changes**

Aliases: None

Group Formation: No change

Group End (Outcome): 2012 (military crackdown) (Middle East Policy Council)

- IV. AL-QA'IDA  
Min. Group Date: 1989  
Max. Group Date: 2012  
Onset: NA

Aliases: Al-Qa'ida, Al Qaeda, Al Qaida, Al-Qa`Ida, Al-Qaeda, Qaidat Al-Jihad, Qa'idat Al-Jihad, The Base

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### Part 2. Narrative

#### Group Formation

The group was founded by Osama Bin Laden in 1988 with the goal of completing removing the influence of Western ideas (Mackenzie Institute). They conducted their first attacks at the US embassy in Africa in 1998. They first came to global attention after 9/11, though they were active prior to that in the region. They are a radical Sunni Muslim group.

## **Geography**

Al-Qa'ida was headed mainly within Peshawar, Pakistan and Afghanistan. They often hid within cities and in hills, particularly mountainous terrain. In the Tora Bora mountains of Afghanistan, they acted as shepherds or farmers. Bin Laden also had a base of operations in Sudan from 1991-1998 (Mackenzie Institute 2016).

## **Organizational Structure**

The group was headed by Osama Bin Laden until 2011. He was originally from Saudi Arabia and had helped fight the Soviets in the Afghanistan war (Crenshaw 2015). He was later replaced by Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2011 after bin Laden was killed during an American raid (Crenshaw 2015). Al-Qa'ida used a complex, cell-based organizational structure, including a system of couriers in which members reported to others who eventually made their way up to the head. They had different councils to deal with different problems concerning the group. For example, they had a "military committee" to deal with "military" matters, and a "consultation council" to plan out terrorist attacks and deal with financial matters (PBS). They have no formal political wing.

Funding came from many places, including donations. For this reason, they can be considered an umbrella group consisting of many other smaller terrorist groups within. Al-Qaeda had an estimated 75 members when it was first formed and up to 18,000 at its peak in 2004. Today, it is thought to have less than 1000 members, but these estimates vary greatly (Crenshaw 2015). No information was available on membership.

## **External Ties**

Saudi Arabia allegedly gave some funding to AQ through drug trafficking and diamonds, though this was never proven (Crenshaw 2015). Iran allegedly trained AQ members in the early 1990s (Crenshaw 2015). Afghanistan and Pakistan allow Al-Qaeda to operate training camps within their borders (Crenshaw 2015).

## **Group Outcome**

After the assassination of their leader Osama Bin Laden in 2011, Al-Qaeda lost its core leadership, and eventually broke apart into multiple different individual terrorist groups, including ISIS. However, it still remains active—to some extent—today.



### **Part 3. Proposed Changes**

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1988 (Mackenzie Institute)

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (active) (Crenshaw 2015)