

Morocco Cases
Last Updated: 11 April 2018

torg	gname	onset	min	max
T376	POLISARIO	1975	1973	1989
T1360	AQIM		1996	2014
T1600	Al-Adl Wal Ihsane		1991	1996
T952	Salafia Jihadia		2003	2003
T303	Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM)		1990	2004
T1979	Assirat Al Mustaqim (The Right Path)		2002	2012
T2145	Righteous Path		2003	2012
T481	Takfir Wa'l Hijra		1966	2011
T9047	Patriotic Moroccan Front		1979	1979

I. POLISARIO

Min. Group Date: 1974
 Max. Group Date: 1987
 Onset: 1975

Aliases: Polisario Front, Frente Popular Para La Liberacion De Saguia El Hamra Y Rio De Oro

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: The Popular Front for the Liberation of the Saguia al-Hamra and Rio de Oro (Strachan 2014; Boukhars 2012; Robins, Jill, and Campoy Cubillo 2015)
Sahrawi People’s Liberation Army (Miller 2014)

Group Formation: 1973 (Strachan 2014)

Group End: Active as of 2016 (BBC 2016)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

In 1970, Spanish police cracked down on a peaceful protest at El Aaiun, creating the seeds for a Polisario movement to contest Spanish control (CIA 1983, 13). In 1973, Polisario formed. The group’s first violent incident was on May 20, 1973 (Glade 2014). In 1974, the Carnation Revolution in Portugal led the country to declare it would decolonize its territories in sub-Saharan Africa. In response, Spain announced it would hold a referendum in its principal territory, the Spanish Sahara, to consider the question of self-determination (CIA 1983, 13). Morocco and Mauritania maintained they had territorial rights to the Spanish Sahara and planned to seize the territory. After Morocco amassed troops in anticipation of invading the territory, Algeria negotiated a peace agreement between Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania known as the Madrid Agreement in 1975. In February

1976, Spain formally withdrew from the territory. Algeria increased its external support for Polisario after the agreement was signed, enabling Polisario to increase its attacks after the Spanish withdrawal.

Polisario established a political wing known as the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, SADR, in 1976 (Strachan 2014; Boukhars 2012; BBC 2016). The ethno-nationalist separatist group has been fighting for independence, from Spanish colonialism initially, of the Western Sahara, and sought to end the fight over the Western Sahara between Morocco and Mauritania (Boukhars 2012; Robins, Jill, and Campoy Cubillo 2015; Ottaway 2013; CIA 1983).

The group also opposed Moroccan forces (Boukhars 2012). The group sought control over natural resource extraction in the Western Sahara (Miller 2014).

Geography

The group formed in Ain Bentili, Mauritania in 1973 (Lippert 1992, 638). The group operates out of Western Sahara and Tindouf, Algeria. The group established itself as a government in exile (SADR) based in Tindouf, Algeria, though the group has some (fluctuating) control over areas of in the Western Sahara.

The group initially operated in Algeria (Boukhars 2012; Miller 2014). The group's government-in-exile was based in Tindouf, Algeria starting in 1976 (Ottaway 2013). The group had partial control of Morocco, as well as control of areas of the Western Sahara (Boukhars 2012; Strachan 2014). The group had camps in Southwest Algeria, in which drug trafficking and circulation of weapons occurred (Boukhars 2012). After 1976, it conducted several attacks in Spain, Mauritania, Western Sahara, and Morocco (GTD 2017).

Organizational Structure

The original founders of the group were students (Lippert 1992). The group members are ethnically Sahrawi (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 457; Strachan 2014). The group earned money allegedly through drug trafficking and extortion through kidnapping (Boukhars 2012; Strachan 2014). The group was led by Mohamed Abdilaziz (Boukhars 2012). Hakim Ould Mohamed M'barek, a.k.a Houdheifa, is a prominent figure in the group (Boukhars 2012). The group had 3,000 fighters in 1986 (Schmid and Jongman 1988, 694; Miller 2014). In 1989, the group allegedly had 5,000 to 10,000 fighters (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 457).

The Saharan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) was the group's military division (Miller 2014). Brahim Ghali was elected leader of the group in July 2016 after the death of the previous president, Mohamed Abdelaziz Ezzedine (BBC 2016). The group had a radio station (BBC 2016).

The group's government-in-exile was based in Tindouf, Algeria starting in 1976 (Ottaway 2013).

External Ties

The group received unspecified support from at least 36 countries (Schmid and Jongman 1988, 694). The group has been backed logistically and financially by Algeria (Boukhars 2012; Robins, Jill, and Campoy Cubillo 2015). The group had strong ties to Cuba (Miller 2014). The group also received unspecified support from Libya and the Soviet Union (Schmid and Jongman 1988, 694). The group is supposedly tied to AQIM (Boukhars 2012). Members of Al-Qaeda have allegedly been seen in Polisario camps (Boukhars 2012).

Group Outcome

The most notable violent attacks are all part of the 16-year-long guerilla war waged between the Moroccan government and Polisario (also known as the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic or SADR) between 1975 and 1991. The Moroccan government has taken a number of steps to respond to Polisario: directly fighting them during the guerilla war, creating mined walls around Morocco-controlled cities in the Western Saharan region, and negotiating with the rebels through the UN (though the Moroccan government promised to hold a referendum about self-governance in the region, they have yet to try).

In 1979, Mauritania withdrew from the Western Sahara after reaching a peace agreement with Polisario forces (Schmid and Jongman 1988, 694). The group engaged with the Moroccan forces in military combat until 1991, when a cease-fire, arranged by the UN, was signed (Boukhars 2012; Strachan 2014; Ottaway 2013; BBC 2016). The Moroccan government agreed to hold a referendum in the territory as part of the terms of the agreement, but it was not held (BBC 2016). The group kidnapped three foreign visitors that were in the vicinity of their camps in October of 2011 (Boukhars 2012). The group has been tied to drug trafficking in the area of Mali (Boukhars 2012). The group allegedly kidnapped two French nationals in November of 2011 (Boukhars 2012). Mali forces condemned the group for its practices of extortion and drug trafficking in 2011 (Boukhars 2012). The government financed high ranking members of the group and provided government job positions if they left the group (Boukhars 2012). The group fought for independence in European courts, and the European Court of Justice nullified a trade pact with Morocco in 2012, which allowed the group to defend the area as its own territory (Robins, Jill, and Campoy Cubillo 2015). The group also fought to have an additional population in Morocco to be added in the voting census (Strachan 2014). There has been diplomatic engagement between the group and the Moroccan government (Strachan 2014). SADR, the group's diplomatic division, was at one point recognized by 80 countries, and 14 of which had SADR embassies (Miller 2014). In 2016, the Polisario leader Mohamed Abdelaziz Ezzedine died (BBC 2016).

Notes for Iris:

- Spain colonized Western Sahara initially, but Sahwari people wanted to install local government
- POLISARIO launches attacks against Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania
- massive external base in Algeria; lots of refugee flows

II. AQIM

Min. Group Date: 1991

Max. Group Date: 2014

Onset:

Aliases: Al-Qa`ida In The Lands Of The Islamic Maghreb (Aqlim), Al-Qaeda Committee In The Islamic Maghreb, Al-Qaeda Committee In The Islamic Maghreb (Aqim), Al-Qaeda Organization In The Islamic Maghreb

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb; Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb; Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat; GSPC; Groupe salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat

Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Armed Islamic Group (GIA), Gruppo Islamico Armato (GIA), Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM), Le Groupe Salafiste Pour La Predication Et Le Combat (GSPC), Organization of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Salafist Group for Call and Combat, Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, and Tanzim al-Qa'ida fi Bilad al-Maghrib al-Islamiya (Counter Extremism Center N.d.)

Group Formation: 1998

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (active)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The group originally splintered from the GIA in 1998 after the resolution of the Algerian Civil War (Crenshaw 2016; Thurston and Lebovich 2013). Its first violent incident was also in 1998 (Crenshaw 2016). The group subscribes to a global Salafi jihadist ideology (Laub and Masters 2015; Thornberry and Levy 2011; Crenshaw 2016; Global Security N.d.; Strachan 2014; Filiu 2009). The group was originally known as the GSPC, but changed its name in 2007 to AQIM (Laub and

Masters 2015; Counter Extremism Center N.d.; Harmon 2010). The group sought to get rid of Western influence in the region, as well as install fundamentalist sharia governments (Laub and Masters 2015; Counter Extremism Center N.d.).

Geography

The group originally formed and operated in Algeria (Crenshaw 2016). The group was active near the Mediterranean and Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Libya, Mauritania, Tunisia (Laub and Masters 2015; Counter Extremism Center N.d.). Some AQIM members traveled to Iraq to join AQI as foreign fighters during the Iraq insurgency (Laub and Masters 2015). The group was allegedly active in Nigeria's Boko Haram, Somalia's al-Shabab, and Yemen's AQAP, with arms and funds flowing among them (Laub and Masters). The group had training camps in northern Mali (Global Security N.d.).

Organizational Structure

The group was founded by Abdelmalek Droukdel, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, Hassan Hattab, and Sofiane El-Fassila (Counter Extremism Center N.d.; Chivvis and Liepman N.d.; Crenshaw 2016; Harmon 2010). They were originally "generals" in the GIA (Crenshaw 2016). Members were originally ex-militants from the GIA and had extensive combat experience (Crenshaw 2016). The group's members were allegedly ethnically Arab (Laub and Masters 2015). The group worked in individual cells, or katibas (Laub and Masters 2015). The group has been led by Abdelmalek Droukdel since 2004 (Laub and Masters 2015; Counter Extremism Center N.d.; Harmon 2010). The group resorted to guerrilla fighting, assassinations, and suicide bombings (Laub and Masters 2015; Counter Extremism Center N.d.; Global Security N.d.; Thurston and Lebovich 2013; White 2015). The group funded itself through extortion, kidnapping for ransom, as well as trafficking drugs and arms, tobacco, and people (Laub and Masters 2015; Thornberry and Levy 2011; Strachan 2014). The group had splinters - Ansar al-Dine and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, as well as the Tuaregs (Laub and Masters 2015). On March 2, 2017, AQIM's Sahara branch merged with local Salafist groups Ansar al-Dine and al-Mourabitoun to form Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM), led by Iyad Ag Ghali (Counter Extremism Center N.d.) Al-Qaeda financially and materially supported the group (Counter Extremism Center N.d.)

The group's size estimate ranged from 30 to 2,000 at an unknown date (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 641). Other estimates say the group had "several hundred" members in 2002, 800 fighters in 2006, "several hundred" in 2007 and 2010, and 1,000+ members in 2015 (Crenshaw 2016).

External Ties

There is no evidence AQIM received external support from other state actors. The group was allegedly tied to Libyan militants as well as al-Qaeda (Laub and Masters; Counter Extremism Center N.d.; Thornberry and Levy 2011).

The group had splinters - Ansar al-Dine and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, as well as the Tuaregs (Laub and Masters 2015). On March 2, 2017, AQIM's Sahara branch merged with local Salafist groups Ansar al-Dine and al-Mourabitoun to form Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen (JNIM), led by Iyad Ag Ghali (Counter Extremism Center N.d.) Al-Qaeda financially and materially supported the group (Counter Extremism Center N.d.)

Group Outcome

After 9/11, President Bush launched the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership to counter extremism in the area (Laub and Masters 2015). The group was responsible for several suicide bombing attacks, which peaked in 2007, including attacks on the regional UN headquarters (Laub and Masters 2015; Crenshaw 2016). The group claimed responsibility for the deaths of four policemen in Tunisia, though their connection to the actors in this incident are not clear (Laub and Masters 2015).

The group led an attack and took over Northern Mali during the Tuareg rebellion in 2012 (Laub and Masters 2015). The group's leader along with 24 members were sentenced to death in an Algerian court in 2015 (Laub and Masters 2015). The UN authorized the peacekeeping mission MINUSMA (Laub and Masters 2015). Many peacekeepers were killed by September of 2014 (Laub and Masters 2015). African peacekeeping missions were unsuccessful due to their failure to reach full operational capacity (Laub and Masters 2015). The group was active as of August 14, 2017 (Counter Extremism Center N.d.).

Notes for Iris:

-interesting tactical reliance on suicide bombings for this group

III. Al-Adl Wal Ihsane

Min. Group Date: 1991

Max. Group Date: 1996

Onset: NA

Aliases: Adl wal-Ihsan; Justice and Charity; al-Adl wa al-Ihsane; Justice and Spirituality Association; JSA

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1981 (official founding date according to official website and Eur)

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (active though non-violent; last violent attack in 1996)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The group was formed in 1979 or 1981, depending on the source, in order to oppose the Moroccan monarchy (ISS Africa 2008; Laskier 2003). The group's political aim was to remove the monarchy (Mekouar 2010). The group sought religious consciousness by strengthening the religious community and promoting members to be better Muslims (Mekouar 2010). The group allegedly splintered from Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya (ISS Africa 2008). The group's first violent attack was in 1991 when it assassinated members of the Marxist Kaiyidine Movement (GTD 2017).

Geography

The group carried out attacks in Oudja, Fez, and Casablanca (GTD 2017). There is no evidence the group carried out transnational attacks. They don't seem to have a particular base other than wherever the current leader resides.

Organizational Structure

The party operates across Morocco with a wide support base, including in rural areas. The group was formed and led by Abdesslam Yassin (ISS Africa N.d.). After his death, the party members elected a new leader, Mohamed Abbadi (Mekouar 2010). The group was primarily funded by charity (Mekouar 2010). The group has a political wing and primarily operated as a political organization (Mekouar 2010). Many scholars have also commented on the fact that many supporters were students and/or women; this is somewhat surprising in the context of Moroccan politics. It tended to recruit students, working class, and teachers in and around Morocco (ISS Africa 2008).

External Ties

There are no clear ties to other state or non-state actors.

Group Outcome

The Moroccan government banned the group in 1985 (ISS Africa 2008). They also put Yassine under house arrest for seven years for speaking out against the monarchy (Cavatorta 2007, 12). The Moroccan government opposed the movement for three decades, but the group has been willing to engage with the government (ISS Africa N.d.; Mekouar 2010). The group itself was not inherently violent. Its last violent attack was in 1996 (GTD 2017). The group faced internal turmoil between the younger and older members fighting for the fate of how the group would move forward (Mekouar 2010). The group was operating as a nonviolent political party in 2012.

Notes for Iris:

- it originally started as a religious movement that wanted members to be better Muslims
- the group did not really have a reputation for being violent
- there is no large-scale incident; it seems sort of like electoral violence

IV. Salafia Jihadia

Min. Group Date: 2003

Max. Group Date: 2003

Onset: NA

Part 1. Bibliography

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Salafiya Jihadiya

Group Formation: "early 1990s"

Group End (Outcome): 2003

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

There is not much information available about this group. One report suggests it was founded in the early 1990s by veterans returning from the Soviet-Afghanistan War (Defend Democracy n.d.). The group's goal seems to be to create an Islamic state in Morocco and their ideology seems to be solidly Salafist (Buehler 2013). The group was more of a movement than a militant group (Pargeter 2005). The group's first violent attack occurred as late as 2003 (GTD 2017; Buehler 2013).

Geography

Their most notable attack was when, on May 16, 2003, four coordinated suicide bombings attacked Jewish and more Western sites in Casablanca, Morocco (Buehler 2013; GTD 2017). The group seems to operate mostly in Morocco, though they have been linked to bombings in Spain (Buehler 2013).

Organizational Structure

Their base is unknown, as is their leader and most of the group's structure. They do operate in cells. The group is the Maghreb branch of Al-Qaeda (Buehler 2013). The group allegedly had 699 members (Pargeter 2005).

External Ties

There's no alleged external support from other countries. The group's ties to other groups are complicated: some claim that Salafia Jihadia is just a GICM subgroup while others call them a branch of AQIM (Buehler 2013). Others, like Pargeter, say that "Salafia Jihadia" doesn't exist – it's just a convenient way for the government to classify random acts of terror. It may also have possible links to Al-Qaeda (Pargeter 2005).

Group Outcome

The government's response has been mostly militaristic and social: arrests and programs instructing imams and other religious leaders to steer individuals away from jihad and Salafism. The group was responsible for an attack in Casablanca in 2003 that resulted in the death of 45 people (Buehler 2013; Defend Democracy N.d.).

Some scholars suggest that Salafia Jihadia is not a real organization, but an umbrella term for Islamist violence in Morocco (Pargeter 2005). The group's last confirmed attack was in 2003.

V. Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM)

Min. Group Date: 1990

Max. Group Date: 2004

Onset: NA

Aliases: Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, Groupe Islamique Combattant Morrocaïn (GICM), Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM)

Part 1. Bibliography

- "GICM." Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4341. MIPT Knowledge Base, 2008, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

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Part 2. Basic Coding Changes

Aliases: Groupe Islamique Combattant Morroccain (GICM), Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, Harakat al-Islamiya al-Maghrebiya al-Mukatila (HASM), HASM

Group Formation: 1993

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (Active)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

HASM formed in 1993 when foreign fighters and mujahideen veterans returned from Afghanistan (Crenshaw 2012). In 1998, Harakat al-Islamiya al-Maghrebiya al-Mukatila (HASM) lost some members and reorganized into the GICM (Jesús 2009; Crenshaw 2012). The group's goal is to overthrow the Moroccan government and replace it with an Islamic state. GICM adheres to a Salafi jihadi ideology (Crenshaw 2012). The group was a Salafi Sunni Islamist religious group (Crenshaw 2012; MIPT 2008). The group sought to overthrow the government (Crenshaw 2012). It is unknown precisely when the group's first violent attack occurred as HASM.

Geography

The group had prominent attacks in Casablanca, Marrakech, Nador, and Fes (Jesús 2009). The group is based in Morocco, but has members in Afghanistan,

Egypt, Belgium, Denmark, France, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom (Crenshaw 2012).

Organizational Structure

The group may have some transnational operations in Europe. It primarily funds itself through illicit activities in other countries as well as potential external support from AQIM (Mapping Militants). Its membership was initially Moroccan veterans with prior military experience. HASM was founded by veterans of the Soviet-Afghanistan war some of whom received Taliban training (Mapping Militants; Global Security). Its initial leaders were Abdelkarim el-Mejjati and Nourredine Nafia (Jesús 2009).

Its most prominent attack involved a train bombing in Casablanca in May 2003. Today, the group appears to operate in cells both in and outside Morocco, but the CTC suggests the group has “suffered a loss of operational control to the extent that it is not even mentioned in analyses on Salafi-jihadi terrorism in Morocco” (Jesús 2009). The group was responsible for counterfeiting money, drug trade and arms trafficking (Crenshaw 2012). The group was led by Hassan Haski, one of the masterminds of the Madrid train bombings, Mohamed al-Guerbouzi, and Abdelkarim el-Mejjati, one of the founding leaders of the group (Crenshaw 2012). The group was one of two factions, the other being Shabiba Islamiya (MIPT 2008; Global Security N.d.).

External Ties

It may have potential external support from AQIM and al-Qaeda (Crenshaw 2012). Salafia Jihadia may have been a splinter of the group or an independent organization (Crenshaw 2012).

Group Outcome

The group has been the target of Western counterterrorism activities including attacks on cells in Europe and sanctioning by the US (Crenshaw 2012; Global Security N.d.). The Moroccan government has responded to attacks through large arrests which have been particularly devastating (Jesús 2009; Global Security N.d.). The US designated GICM a foreign terrorist organization in 2004. The group pledged support for GSPC/AQIM in the early 2000s (Defend Democracy N.d.). The group was partially responsible for the Casablanca suicide bombings in 2003 (Jesús 2009; Defend Democracy N.d.). The group’s last major attack was in March of 2004, and is said to have disbanded in 2008 (Crenshaw 2015).

VI. Assirat Al Mustaqim (The Right Path)

Min. Group Date: 2002

Max. Group Date: 2012

Onset: NA

Aliases: Assirat Al Mustakim (The Right Path), As Sirat Al-Mustaqim, As Sirat Al-Mustaqim (The Right Path), As Sirat Al-Mustaqim (The Straight Path), Assirat Al Moustaqim, Assirat Al Moustaqim (The Right Path), Assirat Al Moustaqim (The Straight Path), Assirat Al Mustakim, Assirat Al Mustakim (The Straight Path)

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Part 2. Basic Coding Changes

Aliases: The Good and Righteous Path (Botha 2008)

Group Formation: 2002 (CRS N.d.)

Group End (Outcome): 2003 (last violent attack), 2006 (police)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

Assirat al Mustaqim (the Right Path) is a splinter group of Salafia Jihadia (Defend Democracy N.d). It appears to be ideologically similar to Al Takfri wa al-Hijra (Mili 2006). The group's goals are unclear although one report says they were "fuelled by a hatred of Western values" (ISS Africa 2008). Its first violent attack was in 2002 (CRS 2005).

Geography

Its most prominent attack occurred in 2002 when members attacked and murdered locals in Casablanca for drinking alcohol (CRS 2005). The group executed another violent attack in 2003.

Organizational Structure

It is unclear what its organizational structure is, sources of funding, recruitment methods, or membership composition. It appears to be a splinter of Salafia Jihadia (Defend Democracy n.d.).

External Ties

It appears to be a splinter of Salafia Jihadia (Defend Democracy n.d.).

Group Outcome

Morocco arrested several members after 2002 and also put out a death sentence for Youssef Firki who is believed to be the group's leader (CRS N.d.). The group had another pair of suicide bombings in 2003 (Defend Democracy n.d.). Group members were formally charged in 2006 and the Right Path has been quiet ever since (ISS Africa N.d.)

Notes for Iris:

-group aims are unclear. opposed to Western influence as a whole, specifically Western culture and attempts to circumscribe

VII. Righteous Path

Min. Group Date: 2003

Max Group Date: 2012

Onset: NA

Aliases: This group is an alias for Assirat Al-Moustaqim.

VIII. Takfir Wa'l Hijra

Min. Group Date: 1966

Max. Group Date: 2011

Onset: NA

Aliases: Takfir Wal-Hijra (Excommunication And Exodus), Anathema And Exile, Excommunication And Emigration, Martyrs For Morocco, Excommunication And Exodus, Rejection Of Sins And Exodus, Takfir Wa Hijara, Takfir Wal Hijra, Takfir Wa'l Hijra

Part 1. Bibliography

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Part 2. Proposed Changes

Aliases: Jama'at al-Muslimin
 al-Takfir wa al-Hijra (Mili 2006)
 Jama'at al-Muslimin, Takfeer wal-Hegra, Black Flags (TIMEP N.d.)
 Repentance and Holy Flight (Godsel 1981)

Group Formation: "late 1960s"

Group End (Outcome): 2016 (active)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The group was founded in Egypt by Shukri Mustafa either in the late 1960s, or sometime between the 1970's and 1980's, depending on the source; the group resurfaced in 2011 due to the death of Mubarak (Gleis 2005; MIPT 2008). The group was allegedly a splinter of the Muslim Brotherhood (Australia: Refugee Review Tribunal 2010; Godsell 1981). The group rose up again in the aftermath of the Arab Spring (CNN 2011).

Mustafa was heavily influenced by the teachings of Sheikh Ali Ismael; Ismael argued Muslims and Islam were being suppressed by Egyptian President Nasser (Mili 2006). The group does not follow a specific ideology, but rather follows the words of organizational leaders, and punished people by torture who did not follow the way of the group. The group is still theorized to follow a fundamentalist Sunni Islamist ideology, which was then branded as takfiri (Mili 2006; Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2004; Kimyungi N.d.; CNN 2011). Mustafa formed the group to punish apostates and wage jihad (Mili 2006; MIPT 2008). He was anti-modernity and Salafi jihadi. Mustafa and his followers moved to the desert in order to practice Islam and get around what they deemed "illegitimate" Egyptian law. The group's aim was to wage jihad, overthrow the existing governments, and create an Islamic state. The date of the group's first violent attack is unknown.

Geography

Al-Takfir wa al-Hira is a transnational terrorist group which provides support to different cells across Europe and northern Africa (Mili 2006; MIPT 2008; Australia: Refugee Review Tribunal 2010; GTD 2017). The group originally formed in Egypt. The group has been active in Egypt's Sinai as of 2011, and more specifically Sheikh Zuweid (TIMEP N.d.; Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2004; Australia: Refugee Review Tribunal 2010)

The group conducted attacks in Benghazi, Libya; Rafah, Egypt; Mogadishu, Somalia; Kirkuk, Iraq; and Garaffa, Sudan (GTD 2017). The group re-emerged after the 2011 Egyptian Revolution in the Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid regions of the Sinai Peninsula (Daymon 2013; CNN 2011).

Organizational Structure

The group was originally founded by Shukri Mustafa in Egypt (Gleis 2005; MIPT 2008; TIMEP N.d.; Kimyungi N.d.). Mustafa was heavily influenced by the teachings of sheikh Ali Ismael; Ismael argued Muslims and Islam was being suppressed by Egyptian President Nasser (Mili 2006). Mustafa formed the group

to punish apostates, wage jihad, and create an Islamic caliphate (Mili 2006; CNN 2011). He was anti-modernity and Salafi jihadi.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Takfir cells emerged in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Turkey, Kenya, and Morocco (Mili 2006). The group was composed of Egyptians, Syrians, Palestinians, Lebanese, and other Arabs (MIPT 2008). The group was led by Zakaria Miludi at an unknown time (Botha 2008). The group was more recently led by Abdel-Fattah Hasan Hussein Salem (TIMEP N.d.). The group was allegedly an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood (Australia: Refugee Review Tribunal 2010; Godsell 1981).

External Ties

The group may have influenced the ideology of GIA in Algeria as well as Takfiris in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco (Mili 2006). It may also have had a tacit alliance with the GIA (MIPT 2008). The group was allegedly also linked to as-Sirat al-Mustaqim and Salafia Jihadia (Botha 2008).

Group Outcome

In 1977, Mustafa was executed by Egyptian police after that the group went underground (Mili 2006). The group has periodically engaged in violence. It may have influenced the ideology of GIA in Algeria as well as Takfiris in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco (Mili 2006). The group was attacked by a Lebanese group in 2000 that led to the death of several of its members (MIPT 2008). The group was responsible for five attacks on worshippers that started in 1994 (Mili 2006). The group was also linked to the death of Theo van Gogh in 2004 (MIPT 2008). On December 31, 2000, several Tarkiri groups coordinated an attack (Mili 2006). As late as 2012, the group operated as a set of decentralized cells with little coordinated oversight (Daymon 2013).

The Egyptian government has typically “turned its head the other way” about violent activities in the Sinai and done little to address the concerns of Bedouins living in the Peninsula about economic discrimination (Daymon 2013). The group re-emerged after the 2011 Egyptian Revolution in the Rafah and Sheikh Zuwaid regions of the Sinai Peninsula (Daymon 2013). It came to attention through a set of prominent attacks around El Arish, Egypt (CNN 2011). Egyptian intelligence officials said the group had members from Palestinian factions.

There is some confusion over whether Morocco’s Salafia Jihadia and Assirat al-Mustaqim are different from ATWAH because the ideology is so similar (Maroc Hebdo 2003; Mili 2008). It is also unclear whether Takfir refers to a single armed group or if it insteads describes an ideology (Gleis 2005). Abdel-Fattah Hasan Hussein Salem was arrested in 2013 (TIMEP N.d.). The group was banned in Kazakhstan in 2014 (RFE/RL 2014). The group’s last violent attack was in 2013 in Libya (GTD 2017).

Notes for Iris:

- somewhat similar to Sunni Islam, but their own ideology
- attacks are typically in defense