

COUNTERTERRORISM WEEKLY

FOR AMERICA'S PROTECTORS

13-19 APRIL 2016



(U) This section provides a comprehensive look at a terrorist group(s) or leader(s), and/or CT tools and literature.

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(U//FOUO) ISIL Poses Enduring Threat to Western Hospitality
(U) Homeland Security Committee European Terror Threat Snapshot

(U) This section consists of in-depth counterterrorism press articles including context and background information.

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(U) Assessments are written by seasoned NCTC Directorate of Intelligence Analysts.

(U) Comments are written by NCTC Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team, comprised of law enforcement and first responders.

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(U) Boko Haram Use of Child Bombers Increases Tenfold

(U) This section includes press articles with concise summaries for rapid consumption.

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(U//FOUO) Counterterrorism Weekly is an UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY compilation of open source publicly available press and relevant commentary on issues related to terrorism and counterterrorism over the past seven days. It is produced every Wednesday, excluding holidays. Counterterrorism Weekly is produced by the National Counterterrorism Center and contains situational awareness items detailing ongoing terrorism-related developments which may be of interest to Federal, State, Local and Tribal Law Enforcement, security, military personnel, and first responders. Information contained in the Counterterrorism Weekly is subject to change as a situation further develops. The inclusion of a report in Counterterrorism Weekly is not confirmation of its credibility or accuracy of the information contained therein nor does it imply NCTC's official view or endorsement. Comments and requests for information pertaining to articles featured in Counterterrorism Weekly may be directed to nctcpao@nctc.gov.

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COUNTERTERRORISM

FOR AMERICA'S PROTECTORS

WEEKLY

13-19 APRIL 2016

EXECUTIVES' VIEW

HIGHLIGHTS



- 1** **WORLD:** (U) ISIL released Issue 14 of its English-language magazine, *Dabiq*, with a foreword praising the 22 March Brussels attacks and an article titled “Kill the imams of Kufr [unbelief]” with a list of UK and US politicians. [pg. 6]
- 2** **WORLD:** (U) On 17 April, ISIL released an English-language version of its News App for Android. The file for the app was posted on its blog and Telegram channel. [pg. 16]
- 3** **UK:** (U) Authorities arrested four men and a woman suspected of being linked to the November 2015 Paris and March Brussels attackers. One of the male suspects was released on bail. [pg. 6]
- 4** **BELGIUM:** (U) Khalid Zerkani—who appealed his July 2015 sentence of 12 years for recruiting Belgians to fight in Syria—received an extended sentence of 15 years. [pg. 7]
- 5** **BELGIUM:** (U) A judge ordered Mohamed Abrini and six other suspects—arrested in connection with the November 2015 Paris and March Brussels attacks—to remain in police custody for an additional month. [pg. 7]
- 6** **GERMANY:** (U) On 12 April, prosecutors indicted Sven Lau on charges of supporting Jaysh al-Muhajirin wal Ansar. Lau allegedly provided material support to the group and was the contact for violent extremists wanting to join. [pg. 7]
- 7** **NIGERIA:** (U) Authorities arrested Boko Haram member Bello Danhajiya, known for his leadership, recruitment, and terrorism activities in Nigeria. [pg. 9]
- 8** **LIBYA:** (U) In mid-April, at least 15 security personnel were killed during two days of clashes with ISIL in Benghazi, which included two suicide attacks. [pg. 17]
- 9** **AFGHANISTAN:** (U) On 19 April, the Taliban attacked a government security agency in Kabul, killing at least 64 and wounding at least 347. [pg. 9]
- 10** **PAKISTAN:** (U) As of 16 April, US Embassy Islamabad warned US citizens about an uncorroborated threat against the Marriott hotel in the city. US citizens were advised to avoid the area while the security situation was assessed. [pg. 18]

SPOTLIGHT SUMMARY

(U//FOUO) ISIL POSES ENDURING THREAT TO WESTERN HOSPITALITY: (U//FOUO) FBI assesses the ISIL threat to hospitality and entertainment businesses frequented by US persons and other Westerners abroad likely will endure in 2016. ISIL leadership, official propaganda, and supporter-generated content continue to advocate attacks against Western interests by lone offenders and threaten officially sanctioned ISIL attacks. **(FBI COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE: EXECUTIVE ANALYTICAL REPORT)**

(U) HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE EUROPEAN TERROR THREAT SNAPSHOT: (U) According to the House Homeland Security Committee, Europe is confronting an increasingly dangerous terrorist threat. Over the past year, ISIL-linked attack plots in Europe unfolded at a rate of nearly two every month. **(HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE)**

SPOTLIGHT

(U//FOUO) ISIL Poses Enduring Threat to Western Hospitality

(U//FOUO) FBI assesses the threat posed by ISIL to hospitality and entertainment businesses frequented by US persons and other Westerners abroad likely will endure in 2016, based on a body of open source reporting. ISIL leadership, official propaganda, and supporter-generated content continue to advocate attacks against Western interests by lone offenders and threaten officially sanctioned ISIL attacks. Other supporters of ISIL have, via various social media sites, called for retaliation against the US and Western interests abroad, especially since US-led airstrikes in Iraq and Syria began in August 2014.

- (U//FOUO) At least nine ISIL operatives divided into three teams conducted near-simultaneous attacks on 13 November 2015 targeting a stadium, multiple restaurants, and a concert hall in Paris, France, killing at least 130 and wounding at least 352 in less than an hour. The attackers, some of whom were assessed by European services to have traveled to Syria, were equipped with assault rifles and explosive-laden suicide belts, and operated in a manner indicative of prior training. The selection of targets, including an approximately 80,000-person capacity stadium hosting a soccer match between the French and German national teams, a concert venue featuring a US rock band, and restaurant districts, indicate the attackers may have used their local insight to select targets, as all but two of the operatives were French or Belgian citizens.
- (U//FOUO) A forum participant on 21 September 2014 posted links to an English-language translation of an audio message attributed to Abu-Muhammad al-Adnani, the ISIL spokesman, titled “Indeed Your Lord Is Ever Watchful [Koranic verse, al-Fajr, 89:14].” The message urged lone offenders in the West “in any manner” to kill “soldiers, patrons, and troops...their police, security, and intelligence members.” The message stated potential attackers should “not ask for anyone’s advice” before striking, because such attacks were legitimate.

(U//FOUO) ISIL Threatens Western Hospitality and Entertainment Businesses

(U//FOUO) Despite not having typically targeted US commercial interests previously, ISIL and its supporters are likely to target any Western hospitality or entertainment business found to be operating in or transiting ISIL-controlled or -contested territory. In particular, as in the past, ISIL and its affiliates are likely to target hotels or other facilities housing or associated with US persons. FBI makes this assessment with high confidence on the basis of the variety of targets ISIL has attacked and threatened to date. In November 2005, suicide bombers from ISIL’s forerunner, al-Qa’ida in Iraq, struck three Western-owned hotels in Amman, Jordan, killing 60, including four US persons.

- (U//FOUO) In January 2015, ISIL attacked a hotel frequented by Westerners in Tripoli, Libya, killing ten, including one US citizen. In March 2015, ISIL also attacked a popular museum in Tunis, Tunisia, killing 24, and in June 2015, a beach resort in Sousse, Tunisia, killing 39.
- (U//FOUO) In October 2015 and January 2016, ISIL claimed non-lethal attacks at hotels near the Giza Pyramids outside Cairo, Egypt. ISIL may also have inspired the unclaimed January stabbings of three European tourists at a Red Sea resort in Hurghada, Egypt.
- (U//FOUO) On 14 and 15 February 2015, Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussein, a Danish national of Palestinian descent, attacked the “Art, Blasphemy and Freedom of Expression” event held at the Krudttønden cultural center in Copenhagen, Denmark, as well as a synagogue. El-Hussein first attacked the cultural center, killing one participant and wounding three police officers, and the following night attacked a Jewish synagogue, killing one security guard and wounding two police officers before fleeing the scene. El-Hussein was killed shortly after in a shootout with police, during which another police officer was wounded. Shortly before the attacks, El-Hussein posted a pledge of allegiance to ISIL on social media.

(U//FOUO) Via social media, ISIL supporters expressed their displeasure with the US and US military actions following the announcement the US would conduct airstrikes against strategic ISIL targets on 7 August 2014. The posts, which threatened retaliatory violence against the US and US interests overseas and portrayed US actions as a war on Islam and Muslims, were dominated by graphic photos and hashtags created in response to US actions.

SPOTLIGHT

continued

- (U//FOUO) Beginning in June 2014, ISIL members and supporters disseminated extremist messaging and propaganda via social media. Social media services attempted to remove ISIL-affiliated accounts, citing these accounts as violations of their terms of service. A US-based social media company stated its employees received death threats from likely ISIL members and supporters as a result of these enforcement actions.

(U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) FBI urges vigilance by security officials and Western hospitality and entertainment businesses operating in or through locations with an ISIL presence. The FBI faces an increased challenge in detecting terrorist plots underway by individuals or small groups acting quickly and independently or with only indirect ties to ISIL. Pre-operational indicators are likely to be difficult to detect; private sector partners therefore play a critical role in identifying and reporting suspicious activities and raising the awareness of federal counterterrorism officials. **(FBI COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE: EXECUTIVE ANALYTICAL REPORT)**

NCTC Comment: (U) Terrorists continue to select targets for attack that have large crowds because of the potential to cause mass casualties and likelihood of overwhelming emergency response resources. This reporting serves to remind first responders of the significant challenges mass casualty incidents (MCIs) pose—commonly defined by first responders in the US as those consisting of 10 or more patients. MCIs are generally regarded as among the most difficult incident of management scenarios, especially when accompanied by terrorist event. Incident management of an MCI must be well-defined in response plans and preparations and should be exercised regularly across all first responder disciplines, including jurisdictional, public, and private partners.

(U) The location, physical design, business model, and operational or security protocols of some hotels could potentially create a complex environment for emergency personnel responding to a terrorist incident involving a hotel in the Homeland. Understanding hotel design, infrastructure, and general operations; current terrorist tactics, trends, and procedures (TTPs); and adequate planning and training will improve the effectiveness of an emergency response. **(JCAT PERSPECTIVE)**

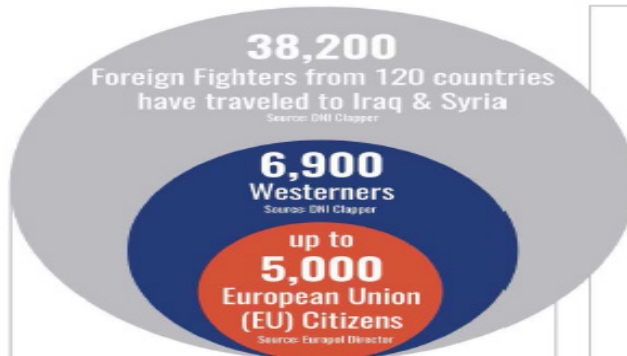
SPOTLIGHT

(U) Homeland Security Committee European Terror Threat Snapshot



**HOMELAND SECURITY
COMMITTEE**

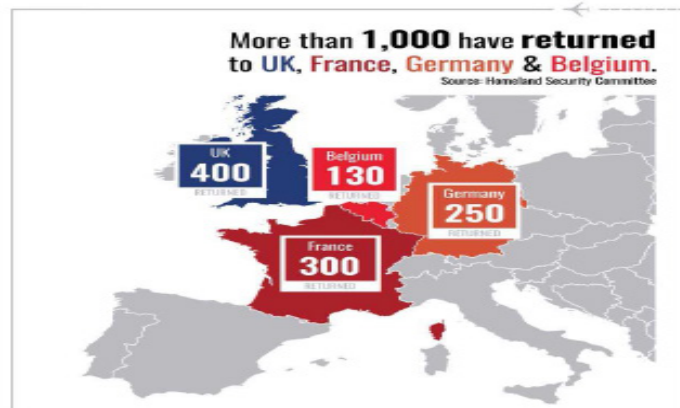
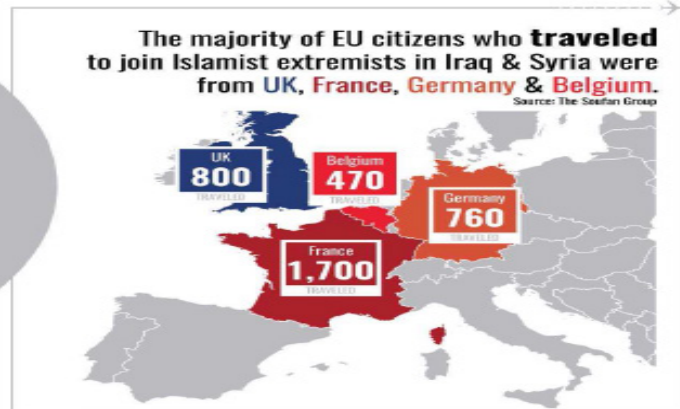
**EUROPEAN
TERROR THREAT SNAPSHOT**
APRIL 2016



TERROR CAMPAIGN

There have been at least
**82 ISIS-linked
attack plots**
against the West since 2014...
Source: Homeland Security Committee

**...35 of these plots
have been in Europe.**
Source: Homeland Security Committee



HOMELAND.HOUSE.GOV

(U) KEY POINTS

- (U) Europe is confronting an increasingly dangerous terrorist threat. Over the past year, ISIL-linked attack plots in Europe unfolded at a rate of nearly two every month.
 - (U) Thousands of Europeans who joined violent extremists in Syria and Iraq since 2011, some of whom are trained and intent on committing acts of terror, are filtering back into the continent.
 - (U) European security services identified thousands of potential terror suspects within their borders.
 - (U) The magnitude of the threat in Europe is unprecedented.
 - (U) The European ISIL network remains an active, widespread threat in the wake of the 22 March Brussels attack.
 - (U) ISIL operatives have exploited the largest flow of refugees and migrants since World War II to infiltrate Europe.
 - (U) European violent extremists are also attempting to radicalize and recruit refugees settling in the Continent.
- (HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE)

ON POINT

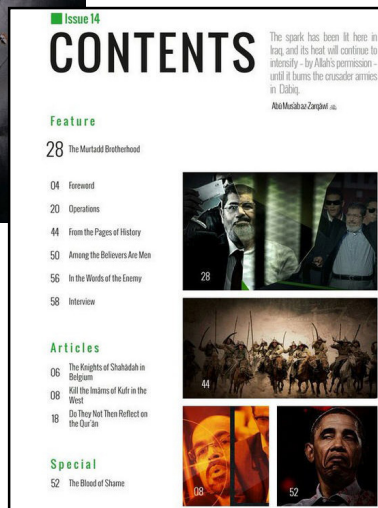
1 WORLD: (U) ISIL Releases 14th Issue of *Dabiq*

(U) On 13 April, a Twitter user posted a link to download Issue 14 of ISIL's English-language magazine, *Dabiq*, published by the Al-Hayat Media Center. The 68-page magazine, headlined "The Murtadd [apostate] Brotherhood," a reference to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, opened with a foreword praising the 22 March Brussels attacks and promised "it will not end there..."

- (U) The magazine also featured an article eulogizing the Brussels attackers and "Muhammad Bilqa'id," who was killed in a gunfight with Belgian police.
- (U) An article purportedly authored by British ISIL captive John Cantlie blamed Western policies for the fate of Western hostages executed by ISIL.
- (U) In addition, articles highlighted prominent ISIL military operations and the promise of "a great reward" for Muslims who endured "afflictions" during jihad.
- (U) An article titled "Kill the imams of Kufr [unbelief] in the West" named UK and US politicians who "directly involve themselves in politics and enforcing the laws of kufr." (BBC, TWITTER)



(U) Images from *Dabiq*.
(TWITTER)



2 CANADA: (U) Brussels-Style ISIL Attack Less Likely in Canada

(U) On 11 April, the head of the Canadian Integrated Threat Assessment Centre (ITAC), Christian Rousseau, told parliamentarians there was less likelihood of a Paris- or Brussels-style ISIL attack in Canada because of geography and security screening of immigrants before they arrive.

- (U) Rousseau told the Senate national security committee there was no evidence ISIL has support networks in Canada but warned it did not mean there was no chance for such an attack to take place. He added the chief factor reducing the likelihood was there were far fewer Canadians traveling to Syria, Iraq, and other overseas areas to fight with groups such as ISIL.
- (U) Rousseau said the US and Australia were also relatively secure, and the practice of screening would-be immigrants before they arrived on Canadian soil significantly mitigated risk.
- (U) Finally, Rousseau stated the most likely terrorist attack scenario in Canada was lone, violent extremists inspired by extremist ideology but acting without explicit direction or even prior knowledge of ISIL or al-Qa'ida. The lone-actor scenario "is especially true of those who have failed to leave Canada for overseas conflict zones, and instead would chose to resort to supporting or committing acts of domestic terror," Rousseau said. (RTL)

3 UNITED KINGDOM: (U) Authorities Arrest Five Linked to Attacks

(U) In mid-April, authorities arrested five people—four men and a woman—suspected of the commission, preparation, or instigation of terrorist attacks. One of the male suspects was released on bail while the investigation continued.

- (U) Four of the suspects were arrested in Birmingham, where British CT officials believed a member of the European terror cell visited before the Paris attacks. The fifth suspect was arrested at Gatwick Airport.
- (U) Authorities believed the suspects were linked to the attackers involved in the November 2015 Paris and March Brussels attacks.

ON POINT continued

- (U) British police said the arrests followed an investigation involving Belgian and French authorities and said there was no information suggesting an attack in the UK was being planned. (GUARDIAN, REUTERS, WEST MIDLANDS POLICE)

NCTC Assessment: (U//FOUO) NCTC judges these arrests were related to the arrest in Belgium of Mohamed Abrini, who was the individual identified as having traveled to Birmingham in summer 2015 and who probably met some of the now-arrested individuals. NCTC concurs these individuals probably were not planning attacks but remains concerned about the intent of ISIL operatives and supporters to conduct attacks in Europe. (NCTC)

4 UNITED KINGDOM: (U) Man Arrested on Suspicion of Terror Offenses

(U) On 16 April, police officers from the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit arrested a man, 18, from Birmingham at Manchester Airport for terrorism offenses related to Syria.

- (U) There was no risk to any passengers at Manchester Airport or to the wider public in relation to the arrest, according to British authorities. (WEST MIDLANDS POLICE)

5 BELGIUM: (U) Terrorist Recruiter Convicted

(U) In mid-April, ISIL recruiter Khalid Zerkani appealed a July 2015 sentence of 12 years for recruiting Belgians to fight in Syria in 2012-2014; however, his prison term was extended to 15 years.

- (U) Zerkani's recruits included now-deceased November 2015 Paris attacks suspects Abdelhamid Abaaoud and Chakib Akrouh. (AP, NAHARNET)

6 BELGIUM: (U) Judge Orders Suspects to be Held Additional Month

(U) On 14 April, prosecutors said a Belgian judge ordered Mohamed Abrini and six other suspects—arrested in connection with the November 2015 Paris and March Brussels attacks—remain in custody for another month.

- (U) The others ordered held in custody by the judge included four more suspects charged in the Brussels attacks and one man accused of helping key Paris attacks suspect Salah Abdesalam escape from France to Belgium. (AP)

7 GERMANY: (U) Authorities Indict Suspect on Terror Charge

(U) On 12 April, German prosecutors said they indicted Sven Lau on charges of supporting a foreign terror group.

- (U) Lau was accused of four counts of supporting the group Jaysh al-Muhajirin wal Ansar (JAMWA), designated as a terrorist organization by the US in 2015. He was allegedly the contact for violent extremists wanting to fight for JAMWA in Syria and provided material support to the group.
- (U) In 2014, Lau made headlines when he attempted to establish a "Sharia police" in the city of Wuppertal to enforce a strict interpretation of Islam. (AP)

8 GERMANY: (U) Three Arrested on Suspicion of Sending Money to ISIL

(U) On 10 April, German authorities said they arrested a German national, 25, and two Turkish citizens, 20 and 25, for allegedly giving money to ISIL members who planned to fight for the group.

- (U) Stuttgart prosecutors said the three were arrested in and around the southern city of Ulm on suspicion of financing terrorism. Authorities already banned the three from leaving Germany to prevent them from training with ISIL. (AP)

ON POINT continued

9 GERMANY: (U) Teen Allegedly Planned Suicide Operation

(U) As of 15 April, prosecutors said a girl, 15—arrested for stabbing a police officer—was being investigated on suspicion of supporting a terrorist organization.

- (U) The girl was already being held on suspicion of attempted murder and serious bodily harm for a 26 February attack on the officer with a kitchen knife at Hannover train station.
- (U) Prosecutors say the girl traveled to Istanbul, Turkey, hoping to reach Syria; however, she was brought back by her mother. While in Turkey, members of ISIL convinced the girl to conduct a martyrdom operation in Germany. (AP)

NCTC Comment: (U) While the investigation continues, it serves to remind first responders—specifically law enforcement personnel—violent extremists continue to exhort sympathizers to conduct lone-offender attacks targeting law enforcement and government officials. These attacks are difficult to disrupt due to the compartmented nature of lone-offender attack planning and are often opportunistic, involving little or no planning. Situational awareness serves as a vital component of officer safety. Tips to mitigate or prevent an attack by a violent extremist include: recognizing suspicious activities, items, or behaviors during the course of performing daily duties; reducing off-duty profile; and partnering while on patrol, especially on foot patrols or standing in a static post. (JCAT PERSPECTIVE)

10 SPAIN: (U) Paris Gunman's Alleged Arms Supplier Arrested

(U) On 13 April, the Spanish Interior Ministry said Antoine Denive, 27, suspected of selling a gun to January 2015 Paris attack suspect Amedy Coulibaly, was arrested.

- (U) The ministry statement said Denive was arrested on a European warrant in the Spanish coastal town of Rincon de la Victoria. Denive allegedly sold a gun to Coulibaly, who opened fire on a kosher supermarket in Paris just days after the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks. Coulibaly killed a policewoman and four other people before being shot and killed by police. (VOA)

11 SPAIN: (U) Police Arrest Couple Linked to ISIL

(U) On 16 April, a Moroccan man and a Spanish woman who supported and recruited ISIL fighters—including individuals who conducted suicide bomb attacks in Syria—were arrested in the southern Spanish port of Algeciras as they were trying to leave for Morocco with their young son.

- (U) According to the Spanish interior ministry, the man's brother recently died in a suicide bomb attack, which caused the couple to attempt travel to Morocco.
- (U) The couple's house in Grenada was searched by Spanish authorities, and the investigation remained open. (REUTERS)

12 ISRAEL: (U) Jerusalem Bus Bomb Injures 21

(U) On 18 April, a bus bomb attack wounded 21 people in Jerusalem. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.

- (U) Authorities said two of the casualties had not been identified and could have been bombers.
- (U) Authorities located a small and possibly rudimentary device at the scene. (REUTERS)

13 MALI: (U) Third Grand Bassam Resort Attack Suspect Arrested

(U) On 16 April, authorities arrested a third man believed to be linked to the 13 March Grand Bassam resort attack in Ivory Coast. Al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility for the attack.

- (U) The man was arrested on suspicion of transporting the attackers, according to press reporting.
- (U) Ivory Coast authorities arrested 15 people in connection to the attack, which they said was led by a man named Kounta Dallah, who was still at large. (REUTERS, TAMBOURA)

ON POINT continued

14 NIGERIA: (U) Authorities Arrest Top Boko Haram Terrorist

(U) On 13 April, Nigeria's secret police, the State Security Service, said it arrested Bello Danhajiya, an associate and second-in-command of Khalid al-Barnawi, an alleged terrorist commander captured in early April.

- (U) Danhajiya was known for his leadership and terrorism activities in Nigeria and his talent-spotting and recruitment of young people into the Ansaru/Boko Haram terrorist groups. **(PREMIUM TIMES)**

15 AFGHANISTAN: (U) Taliban Attacks Government Security Agency

(U) On 19 April, armed militants attacked a key government security agency in Kabul, killing at least 64 and wounding at least 347. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the attack.

- (U) The coordinated attack began when a suicide car bomber struck near the agency compound's gates, then gunmen stormed the compound and engaged government security forces in gunfire.
- (U) The attack targeted an agency similar to the US Secret Service, which provides protection for high-ranking government officials. **(AP, BBC)**



(U) Kabul attack location **(BBC, GUARDIAN, DIGITAL GLOBE)**

ON POINT *continued*

16 AFGHANISTAN: (U) Al-Qa'ida Resurgent

(U) In mid-April, General John Nicholson, commander of international forces in Afghanistan, stated leadership turmoil within the Taliban since the death of the group's founder fueled closer links with foreign groups like al-Qa'ida.

- (U) "You see a more overt cooperation between the Taliban and these designated terrorist organizations," Nicholson said. "Our concern is if the Taliban were to return, that because of their close relationships with these groups, they would offer sanctuary to these groups."
- (U) Nicholson highlighted a "greater linkage" between the Taliban and al-Qa'ida since the death of Taliban founder Mullah Mohammad Omar and his replacement by current leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour, which was prompted by Mansour's push to win support in a leadership battle which broke out after Omar's death was announced in 2015.
- (U) "When Mullah Omar was alive, he maintained a public distance from al-Qa'ida, which his successor Mullah Mansour has not," Nicholson said, adding this may be due to the fact that Mansour lacks the legitimacy of Omar. (REUTERS)

- (U) Instead, Philippine military authorities suggested the attacks occurred while the Army was conducting operations on Basilan to kill or capture Abu Sayyaf leader Isnlon Hapilon. (IB TIMES, REUTERS)

NCTC Assessment: (U//FOUO) This is the first ISIL attack claim NCTC has seen for an operation in the archipelago. Notably, ISIL claimed the attack with the header "Philippines," rather than "Wilayah [Province] Philippines," indicating the group is not labeling the area an official province. ISIL called the allegiance of a number of Philippine groups an "important step" in the 5 January issue of its weekly *Al-Naba* magazine. (NCTC)



(U) ISIL claim of responsibility for the attack. (TERRORMONITOR)

17 PHILIPPINES: (U) ISIL Claims Attack Which Killed 23 Troops

(U) On 13 April, ISIL claimed responsibility for a 9 April attack on Basilan Island, which killed 23 Filipino soldiers, three militants, and injured 53 Filipino troops.

- (U) ISIL militants detonated seven trucks transporting Filipino troops; however, it was not clear if the group used IEDs or suicide bombers to destroy the trucks.
- (U) Basilan Island—south of Manila—has long been a center of violent extremist supporters with two major terrorist groups, Abu Sayyaf and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, both based on the island.

(U) Philippine military authorities stated ISIL claims of responsibility for the attack were propaganda, and its statement contained "many gaps and inconsistencies."

TRENDS, TACTICS, & PROCEDURES

(U) UN Members Need ‘Concrete Steps’ to Counter Terrorism

(U) On 14 April, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon—speaking at an open debate on countering terrorism—called on member states to take more concrete steps to stop terrorism fundraising through the smuggling of oil and gas, the illicit trade of cultural artifacts, kidnapping for ransom, and donations from abroad.

- (U) “We must also curtail the ability to abuse and misuse the Internet and social media to radicalize and recruit young people by identifying global and regional solutions that involve governments, private enterprise, and civil society,” Ban said. “Strategies to counter the threat of online radicalization will also require legislative and law enforcement measures at the national level,” he said, adding that to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, nations should intervene at all stages—from their initial radicalization to their travel and return.
- (U) While recognizing the importance of measures to counter terrorism, Ban said the global community also needs to engage earlier and address the drivers of violent extremism. The Secretary-General’s action plan also calls for the resolution of long-standing conflicts, which would give hope to those enduring oppression and eradicate the breeding grounds of violent extremism and terrorism. **(UN NEWS CENTER)**

(U) Brazil Sees Rising Threat From Violent Extremists

(U) On 14 April, Brazil’s National Intelligence Agency said the threat of attack by violent extremists was on the rise in Brazil as the country prepared to host the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in August.

- (U) The terrorist threat to Brazil increased due to attacks in other countries, along with the number of Brazilian nationals suspected of sympathizing with ISIL militants, according to Counterterrorism Director Luiz Alberto Sallaberry.

- (U) In November 2015, a credible threat to Brazilian state security was made by Maxime Hauchard—a French national identified as an executioner in ISIL propaganda videos—via Twitter saying, “Brazil, you are our next target.” **(REUTERS)**

(U) Olympic organizers planned to deploy approximately 85,000 security personnel for the Olympic games, double the number used in London in 2012. (REUTERS)

NCTC Comment: (U//FOUO) During special event planning, information sharing between intelligence liaisons and state and local first responders, along with tailored threat assessments, provides an accurate operating picture, ensure an understanding of the current threat environment, and allow continuous review—and adaptation, if needed—of security measures and response plans. First responders are in the unique position to play an important role in detecting and preventing attacks because of their frequent interactions with the public, especially during calls for service, which provide an opportunity to identify suspicious activity with a potential nexus to terrorism. The reporting of suspicious activity can further investigations and is crucial to terrorism prevention. To promote situational awareness, 15 DHS/FBI Roll Call Releases (RCRs) on Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) highlight suspicious activities with a potential nexus to terrorism may be found on the Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT) Community of Interest (COI) on Current, the JCAT Special Interest Group (SIG) on FBI’s Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP) formerly known as Law Enforcement Online (LEO), and the JCAT tab on the Emergency Services (ES) and Intelligence COI on Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN). **(JCAT PERSPECTIVE)**

TRENDS, TACTICS, & PROCEDURES continued

(U) Australia's Terror Guidelines Urge Blast Mitigation Measures

(U) On 13 April, new guidelines and recommendations were released for owners and developers—including shopping precincts, shopping malls, and city centers—on dealing with the threat of IEDs.

- (U) Michael Keenan, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counterterrorism, said the updated advice, developed by the Australia-New Zealand Counterterrorism Committee, was not in response to any specific terror threat.
- (U) The guidelines stressed “it is not possible to identify a potential assailant on the basis of appearance, nationality, or language” but recommended employees in businesses and other agencies operating in crowded areas be trained in identifying the behaviors of potential terrorists.
- (U) In addition, the guidelines urged building owners to consider construction methods and materials which performed against an explosion, using the installation of “strategically-placed objects,” such as planter boxes, seats and bollards, on pavements and entrances to buildings, shops, and restaurants fronting public areas. (SYDNEY MORNING HERALD)

NCTC Comment: (U//FOUO) IEDs are among the most challenging weapons to mitigate, as they are capable of causing mass casualties and may be disguised or hidden utilizing constantly evolving concealment techniques. Homeland security stakeholders should factor into their security procedures the assumption terrorists will continue to modify their IED development to exploit perceived gaps in security measures or disguise the appearance of the device to blend into a surrounding environment. As a reminder to first responders, facility security measures—such as interior control points or exterior barriers—may require adjustment of normal protocols and procedures to rapidly react during emergencies and underscore the need for interagency exercises and training incorporating multiple scenarios to account for building security measures likely to be encountered. Rudimentary devices and components may have inherent dangers and should be treated accordingly until rendered safe by subject matter experts.

(JCAT PERSPECTIVE)

(U) Pro-ISIL Group Hacks Websites of Small Australian Businesses

(U) On 15 April, pro-ISIL group United Cyber Caliphate hacked the sites of approximately 20 small Australian businesses—tire and wheel retailers, a Mexican food catering company, and a natural herbalist—by leaving a picture with the message “In the name of Allah, we are United Cyber Caliphate. Obey Islamic State. Your system is fail. Islamic State #rules.”

- (U) The group was planning the attack for several weeks. It was discussed in Telegram ISIL chat groups and began when three hacking groups—the Caliphate Cyber Army, Sons Caliphate Army, and the Kalashnikov Team—merged to become the United Cyber Caliphate.
- (U) In posts following the hacking attack, the group warned Australia to get ready for the next attack, which would happen soon. (AUSTRALIA BROADCASTING CORPORATION)



(U) United Cyber Caliphate hacking image (TERRORMONITOR)

TRENDS, TACTICS, & PROCEDURES continued

(U) European Union (EU) to Collect and Share Airline Passenger Data

(U) On 14 April, the EU approved a Continent-wide system to collect and share information on airline passengers, primarily traveling in and out of the EU, beginning within the next two years.

- (U) To take effect, the law must obtain final approval of a majority of the EU's member governments, which is expected to be a formality when interior ministers meet on 21 April.
- (U) The measure will make it mandatory for all airlines to provide information about passengers traveling to and from the EU to national authorities in Europe. "Passenger Information Units" in each European country could then share the information on a case-by-case basis. Data collection will involve mainly names, travel dates, itineraries, and payment details which must be kept for five years. (NY TIMES)

NCTC Comment: (U) While this article deals specifically with aviation travel data, it underscores the importance of information sharing between federal, state, local, and private sector partners. Information sharing will promote a common understanding of the current threat environment and allow for the recognition of suspicious activities indicative of terrorist plotting by providing context to suspicious activity, which otherwise might go unnoticed. It will also allow for the timely implementation of security measures and strategies, which may assist in early detection and disruption of potential attack plots. Increased coordination between federal, state, and local entities increases the likelihood of the discovery of suspicious activity as well as adequate and unified emergency response in the event of an incident.

(JCAT PERSPECTIVE)

(U) Returning European Militants Could Help Combat ISIL

(U) On 16 April, Gilles de Kerchove, the EU's senior counterterrorism official, said fighters returning to their home countries from Syria and Iraq should be recruited to talk publicly about their experiences.

- (U) Kerchove said in cases where they were not considered a threat, such people could be used by governments to reveal details of the conditions within ISIL or other terrorist groups.
- (U) He said a blanket criminalization of all individuals returning from Syria and Iraq was unproductive and urged countries to develop more sophisticated strategies to deal with those returning home. (GUARDIAN)

(U) UK Establishes Campaign to Fight ISIL Propaganda Online

(U) As of mid-April, British CT officials planned to introduce a campaign to fight ISIL's online efforts to spread propaganda targeting potential recruits and supporters. The new campaign will encourage Internet users to report any violent extremist material they come across.

- (U) On 15 April, new figures released by police indicated a rise in violent extremist material online since the rise of ISIL.
- (U) The Counterterrorism Internet Referral Unit removed 100,000 items, with 26,000 pieces of the Internet content removed in the first quarter of 2016, including footage of beheadings, bombmaking instructions, and speeches urging violence. Officials know what they find is likely a fraction of what is available on the web. Police say many of their leads come from the public.
- (U) Deputy assistant commissioner Helen Ball, the senior national coordinator for CT policing, said, "The Internet and social media provide many opportunities for those with extreme views to target young or vulnerable people, and their methods are constantly evolving, from using new phone apps to hijacking popular hashtags in order to reach wide audiences." (GUARDIAN)

TRENDS, TACTICS, & PROCEDURES continued

(U) UK Police Say Commuters Could Fail to Identify Suspicious Behavior

(U) As of 16 April, Paul Crowther, Chief Constable of the British Transport Police (BTP), increased the number of undercover police on public transport amid fears Brits may be suffering from “vigilance fatigue.”

- (U) Crowther said, “The eyes and ears of five million passengers who travel on the network every day and the staff that work in the environment are a very rich resource for us. They often do the same journey every day and so they know what is normal and what stands out as different.” (DAILY STAR)

NCTC Comment: (U//FOUO) While highlighting a concern on “vigilance fatigue,” training the public to assist with counterterrorism awareness acts as a force multiplier. The “See Something, Say Something” campaign for suspicious activity reporting highlights public-private campaigns which strengthen efforts to disrupt plots prior to an attack. Suspicious activity indicative of terrorism is not limited to surveillance, acquisition of explosive precursors, weapons, or tactical equipment; prior to an attack, terrorists may attempt to gain specialized skills and knowledge necessary to plan and execute attacks. This specialized training may be in security concepts, military weapons or tactics, or other capabilities which would arouse suspicion in a reasonable person. Partnerships with private-sector businesses allows for recognition of and coordinated reporting on suspicious activities for further investigation, potentially disrupting a plot prior to an attack. (JCAT PERSPECTIVE)

(U) French Terror Police Stage Euro 2016 Terrorist Attack Drill

(U) On 16 April, French terror police and emergency services staged a simulation of a chemical attack at a Euro 2016 stadium.

- (U) The drill—staged at Toulouse’s Stadium Municipal, which will host four Euro 2016 games—consisted of scenarios including response to bombs, small-arms attacks against spectators, a simulated sarin gas attack, and a possible chemical attack.

- (U) More than 1,200 volunteers took part in the latest drill, which was based on a scenario of more than 200 people being killed or injured.
- (U) Extra security checks were placed at stadiums across Europe and will become even more stringent when the tournament begins on 10 June. (MIRROR)

NCTC Comment: (U//FOUO) Interagency coordination and joint training can help ensure recognition and a more unified response to a terrorist attack, including identification of chemicals, limiting unauthorized access, rendering safe procedures, coordinating life-saving actions, performing security sweeps for additional explosives, and taking precautionary measures to protect against potential secondary attacks, while preserving the scene for investigation. Standard Operating Procedures and policies should take into account terrorists may use secondary IEDs to target first responders arriving at the scene of an initial attack, to increase casualties and complicate the response. (JCAT PERSPECTIVE)

(U) Petrol Bomb Attack Kills Police Officer in Bahrain

(U) On 16 April, Bahrain’s interior ministry said attackers threw Molotov cocktails at a police patrol north of Bahrain’s capital, killing one officer and injuring two others.

- (U) Bahrain reported a growing number of attacks using homemade explosives in the past two years and accused Iran and its allies in the Lebanese Hizballah of sponsoring the plots. (REUTERS)

TRENDS, TACTICS, & PROCEDURES continued

NCTC Comment: (U) While fire receives less attention than explosives as a terrorist weapon, a variety of terrorist organizations, their affiliates, and HVEs inspired by terrorist ideology consider fire/incendiary devices a viable component of attack planning. Fire will likely remain a consideration for inclusion in terrorist plots, as its use requires no specialized skills or training, and its precursors are inexpensive, legal, and readily available. Efforts to construct incendiary devices by nonprofessionals often results in self-injury requiring emergency medical treatment. Recognition of suspicious injuries by emergency medical service (EMS) personnel can lead to the discovery of violent extremist activities. Scene size-up, coupled with first responders' knowledge of the mechanisms of injury, can serve as a baseline so, when compared to on-scene statements and surroundings, inconsistencies can be noted—and if suspicious—reported. **(JCAT PERSPECTIVE)**

(U) Water Pipeline in Turkish Southeastern District Bombed

(U) On 17 April, a bomb damaged the main water pipeline in southeastern Mardin province's ancient district of Midyat. The Mardin municipality's water and sewerage authority closed the main water valve following the attack and announced it would repair the pipeline as soon as possible. There was no immediate claim of responsibility; however, authorities believed the Kurdistan Workers Party was to blame. **(ANADOLU NEWS AGENCY)**

(U) Boko Haram Use of Child Bombers Increases Tenfold

(U) On 12 April, UNICEF said the number of child bombers used by Boko Haram increased from four to 44 in a year, resulting in communities now seeing children as threats.

- (U) Seventy-five percent of the children used were girls, a new report said, emphasizing these children—believed to be captives—were “victims, not perpetrators.”
- (U) “As ‘suicide’ attacks involving children become commonplace, some communities are starting to see children as threats,” said Manuel Fontaine, West Africa director of the UN children's agency. **(AP)**

PARTING SHOTS

1 **WORLD:** (U) ISIL Releases Android App

(U) On 17 April, ISIL media wing Amaq News Agency released an English-language version of its News App for Android. Amaq posted the .APK file, identified as version 1.0, on its blog and Telegram channel. **(TWITTER)**



(U) Amaq News Agency's announcement of the new app. **(TWITTER)**

2 **SPAIN:** (U) Authorities Arrest Suspected Violent Extremist

(U) On 19 April, Spanish police arrested an unidentified Moroccan man suspected of having links to violent extremists. The man was accused of recruiting people to fight in Syria and Iraq and of being in charge of commissioning potential attacks in Spain and across Europe. **(REUTERS)**

3 **SWEDEN:** (U) Authorities Arrest Two Suspected Terrorists

(U) On 12 April, Swedish police arrested two suspects—a Turkish man wanted by Germany on suspicion of being a senior Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) Regional Leader, and a man, 25, suspected of planning terror attack abroad—at Arlanda airport near Stockholm. Swedish prosecutors were handling an extradition request for the Turkish suspect, who was accused of being one of the PKK's so-called regional heads in Germany between July 2012 and July 2014. **(AP, REUTERS)**

4 **LEBANON:** (U) Funds Allocated For Beirut Airport Security

(U) On 12 April, Lebanon's Government agreed on funding for new safety equipment for Beirut airport after security gaps caused concern among senior officials. In March, Interior Minister Nohad Machnouk emphasized security gaps at the airport should be addressed. **(REUTERS)**

NCTC Comment: (U) The aviation sector remains a preferred target for violent extremists, and responding to a terrorist attack at an aviation facility can present unique challenges to emergency response personnel. As security measures evolve to counter threats, it underscores the value of coordination efforts to ensure preparedness for such an incident. First responders should work with airport owners and operators, as well as other state, local, and federal partners to ensure interagency cooperation, develop familiarization with the airport grounds and facilities, and implement coordinated security measures and emergency response plans. **(JCAT PERSPECTIVE)**

5 **SAUDI ARABIA:** (U) ISIL Releases 26th Issue of *Al-Naba* Newspaper

(U) On 13 April, ISIL released the 26th issue of its weekly newspaper, *Al-Naba*, featuring an interview with the "security official" for Najd Province—ISIL's affiliate in Saudi Arabia—discussing attacks the group conducted on Shia mosques and Saudi security forces and officials. **(SITE INTEL)**

6 **SAUDI ARABIA:** (U) Yemeni Prisoners Accepted From Guantanamo Bay

(U) On 16 April, the US transferred nine Yemeni men to Saudi Arabia from the military prison at Guantanamo Bay. The prisoners were among a group of lower-level inmates, now numbering 26 and mostly Yemenis, who were cleared for transfer by an interagency task force. **(REUTERS)**

PARTING SHOTS *continued***7 TURKEY:** (U) Forces Kill Eight Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) Militants During Operations

(U) On 16 April, according to a statement by Diyarbakir governorate, Turkish security forces killed eight PKK elements and captured at least 12 others who conducted separate attacks on a number of police targets. A police station, a gendarmerie command post, and a police shuttle in southeastern Turkey were all attacked separately. Nine firearms and five hand-made grenades were seized. (QATAR NEWS AGENCY)

8 YEMEN: (U) Yemeni Forces Retake City From Al-Qa'ida

(U) On 15 April, Yemeni forces—backed by Apache helicopters from a Saudi-led coalition—took back the city of Houta from al-Qa'ida fighters after several hours of airstrikes and heavy combat. The recapture of Houta, regional capital of southern Lahj province, held by the militants since the summer of 2015, is one of the Yemeni Government's most important inroads yet against al-Qa'ida forces. (REUTERS)

9 YEMEN: (U) Police Claim Attacks Were Foiled Before Peace Talks

(U) On 17 April, police at a checkpoint in Aden opened fire at a car traveling at high speed before it exploded. Officers also safely disarmed a booby-trapped car parked on a beach road near the airport in the northeastern part of the city. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the planned attacks, which took place before UN-sponsored peace talks between President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's government and the Huthis movement were scheduled to open in Kuwait on 18 April. (REUTERS)

10 EGYPT: (U) Three Soldiers, Three Civilians Killed in Sinai

(U) On 11 April, three Egyptian soldiers were killed during clashes between the Egyptian army and ISIL-affiliated militants in Sheikh Zuwaïd in North Sinai. The attack followed a security crackdown in the village of al-Falaq, killing three civilians—including two children—after missiles hit two houses. The Egyptian army expanded its security crackdown in the province since 11 April in the cities of al-Arish, Sheikh Zuwaïd, and al-Falaq. (AL ARABY)

11 LIBYA: (U) At Least 15 Killed in Benghazi Clashes

(U) As of 16 April, at least 15 security personnel were killed and 40 wounded during two days of clashes in Benghazi. On 15 April, two ISIL suicide bombers staged attacks near a cement factory in the west of the city. ISIL posted a message on social media saying dozens of soldiers were killed by the bombers, but an army spokesman said only one of the bombs caused casualties, and stated six soldiers were killed and 25 were wounded. (REUTERS)



(U) Image of strike. (TWITTER)

12 MALI: (U) Three Red Cross Officials Missing

(U) On 18 April, a Red Cross spokesman said three of the organization's officials went missing on 16 April near the village of Abeibara as they returned to their base in Kidal. The organization's last contact with them indicated they were "accosted by someone on a motorcycle." (REUTERS)

PARTING SHOTS continued

13 MALI: (U) Ansar Al-Dine Claims Attack Which Killed Three French Soldiers

(U) As of 17 April, Ansar Al-Dine claimed responsibility for the 12 April IED attack which killed three French soldiers. The three soldiers were traveling in the lead vehicle of a logistics convoy of 60 vehicles en route to Tessalit. A fourth soldier was slightly injured in the attack. (LE PARISIEN)

14 SOMALIA: (U) US Airstrikes Kill Al-Shabaab Militants

(U) On 11 and 12 April, US airstrikes killed approximately 12 suspected al-Shabaab militants in southern Somalia. An official Pentagon spokesman said the strikes were conducted by unmanned aircraft, and those targeted posed an “imminent threat to US personnel.” (REUTERS)

15 SOMALIA: (U) Security Forces Foil Attack

(U) On 17 April, the Somali National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) foiled a car bomb and gun attack north of Mogadishu. NISA seized the car—full of explosives—small weapons, and pistols during a midnight operation. Mogadishu’s mayor said security would search houses it suspected were hideouts for al-Shabaab attack planning. (SHABELLE MEDIA NETWORK)

16 AFGHANISTAN: (U) Taliban Kill Top Police Official

(U) On 14 April, Taliban insurgents ambushed and killed Qahar Khurm Aabi—a police commander—and seven other people, including three women, in Afghanistan, two days after the insurgents announced the beginning of their spring offensive. Aabi was a highway police commander in the northern provinces of Takhar and Kunduz. He was killed in a Taliban ambush along with four of his guards on his way to work, according to Takhar police spokesman Khalil Aseer. (REUTERS)

17 PAKISTAN: (U) Suicide Attack Wounds Ten

(U) On 19 April, a suicide bomber conducted an attack outside a tax revenue office in Mardan, wounding at least ten people. The attacker fired gunshots before detonating his explosives. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. (AP)

18 PAKISTAN: (U) US Citizens Warned of Threat Against Hotel

(U) As of 16 April, US Embassy Islamabad was aware of a general but uncorroborated threat against the ^{USPER}Marriott hotel in Islamabad. US citizens were advised to avoid the area for the next several days to allow time to assess the situation. Due to the threat, US citizens were reminded official US Mission personnel and visitors were not allowed to use public transportation in Pakistan and were not authorized to stay overnight in hotels in Pakistan. (US EMBASSY ISLAMABAD)

19 INDIA: (U) Court Extends Detention of Four Suspected ISIL Operatives

(U) On 12 April, a district judge extended the detention of Mohd Azeemusan, Mohd Osama, Akhlakur Rehman, and Mohd Mehraz—suspected ISIL operatives—by a month. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) submitted a plea to a Delhi court saying the larger conspiracy of the group in India and abroad, including recruitment of resident and non-resident Indians, was yet to be ascertained. The NIA also informed the court mobile sets, SIM cards, laptops, and micro SD cards, recovered from the suspects during the investigation, were pending forensic analysis. (PRESS TRUST OF INDIA)

PARTING SHOTS continued

20 **INDONESIA:** (U) Convicted Terrorist Released From Prison

(U) As of March, Harry Kuncoro—the terrorist cellmate and personal assistant of Jemaah Islamiyah spiritual leader Abu Bakar Bashir—was released from Nusakambang prison. Kuncoro was jailed for renting the house used by the Bali bombers before and after the 2002 attack and for smuggling firearms for use in terrorist activities in 2011. He was sentenced to six years in prison but was released two years early after receiving remissions for good behavior. **(ABC)**

21 **INDONESIA:** (U) Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) Spiritual Leader Transfers Prisons

(U) On 16 April, JI spiritual leader Abu Bakar Bashir, serving time for funding a JI paramilitary training camp in Aceh, was moved from Nusakambang prison in Cilacap, Central Java, to a smaller state jail in Bogor. The government decided to move Bashir and another cleric, Aman Abdurrahman, from Nusakambang to limit their influence on other inmates and their followers outside of prison. Aman was scheduled to be transferred to a prison in West Kalimantan. **(STRAITS TIMES)**

22 **PHILIPPINES:** (U) Militants set Deadline to Execute Foreign Captives

(U) On 15 April, violent extremists in the Philippines announced a new deadline of 25 April for the execution of three foreign captives and a Filipino, but scaled back their ransom demand in a video posted on social media. The captives—two Canadian men, a Norwegian man, and a Filipino woman—were kidnapped from a beach resort on a southern island in September 2015. They were believed to be held in the jungle on Jolo Island, a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf Group, which is known for bombings, beheadings, and kidnappings. **(REUTERS)**

23 **PHILIPPINES:** (U) Militants Seize Four Indonesians

(U) On 15 April, seven violent extremists in a blue speed boat attacked two Indonesian-flagged tugboats off the Philippines' southernmost island of Sitangkay in Tawi-tawi and took the four crew. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the abductions; however, the military suspected the Abu Sayyaf Group, which operates in the area. The military said the group has been targeting foreign crew of tugboats because they could no longer penetrate resorts and coastal towns in Sabah due to increased security. **(REUTERS)**



NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER (NCTC)

NCTC serves as the primary organization in the US Government for integrating and analyzing all intelligence pertaining to terrorism possessed or acquired by the US Government (except purely domestic terrorism); serves as the central and shared knowledge bank on terrorism information; provides all-source intelligence support to government-wide counterterrorism activities; establishes the information technology (IT) systems and architectures within NCTC and between NCTC and other agencies that enable access to, as well as integration, dissemination, and use of, terrorism information.

NCTC serves as the principal advisor to the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) on intelligence operations and analysis relating to counterterrorism, advising the DNI on how well US intelligence activities, programs, and budget proposals for counterterrorism conform to priorities established by the President.