



Spotlight on Global Jihad (August 6-12, 2015)



Main events of the week

- The battles in Syria this week focused on the rural area north of Aleppo, in light of Turkey's intention **to create a buffer zone free of ISIS** along the Syrian-Turkish border. According to several media reports, the dominant organization operating in this area is the **Islamic Ahrar al-Sham movement**, a framework of Salafist-jihadi organizations that are not affiliated with ISIS or Al-Qaeda. This framework, which is attempting to repel ISIS from the region adjacent to the Syrian-Turkish border, is apparently receiving encouragement (and assistance?) from Turkey and from rebel organizations hostile to ISIS.
- ISIS continues to invest effort and resources in the **battle for hearts and minds**. It recently announced the launch of a new app for the Android operating system **designed for mobile phones**. As part of the media campaign, **ISIS continues to inspire Muslim supporters in Western countries (Germany this week) to attack "infidels" in their countries**, if they are unable to migrate to the Islamic State. **In the ITIC's assessment, such calls are liable to spur jihadists in the West to carry out attacks inspired by ISIS.**

The international campaign against ISIS

US and coalition airstrikes

- This week, the US and coalition forces continued their airstrikes against ISIS targets. During the week, many dozens of airstrikes were carried out in Syria and Iraq by means of fighter planes, attack aircraft and UAVs. **For the first time** since the start of the operation of the coalition forces, the US has carried out an airstrike in northern Syria from Turkish territory, using Incirlik Air Base (Hürriyet, August 6, 2015).¹

¹ According to US media reports, the United States has sent six F-16 aircraft and 300 troops to Turkey in the wake of Turkey's agreement to allow the US Air Force to use Turkish air bases for airstrikes against ISIS (nbcnews, August 9, 2015).

- Following are the main airstrikes (CENTCOM website):
 - **Syria** - the airstrikes were concentrated in the area of Al-Hasakah, Al-Raqqah, Aleppo, Ain Issa, Deir al-Zor and Kobani. The airstrikes targeted ISIS tactical units, bunkers, battle positions, buildings, heavy machinery, buildings and checkpoints, among other things.
 - **Iraq** - the airstrikes were concentrated in Fallujah, Habbaniyah, Hit, Makhmur, Mosul, Ramadi, Sinjar, Tal Afar, Hawija and Baiji. The airstrikes targeted ISIS tactical units, vehicles, heavy machinery, buildings, weapons (including anti-tank weapons) and checkpoints, among other things.

Meeting of representatives of the countries participating in the campaign against ISIS

- **General John Allen**, US President Obama's Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, met in Washington with **senior diplomatic representatives from the 62 countries that are members of the coalition against ISIS**. At the meeting, General Allen reviewed the progress of the combined efforts to defeat ISIS, and ways to strengthen cooperation between the members of the coalition were discussed. This is the fourth meeting of its kind by representatives of member countries in the campaign against ISIS (US Department of State website, August 7, 2015).

Turkey's intentions to create a zone free of ISIS

- **Turkey continues to implement its new policy against ISIS**. As part of this policy, it continued its airstrikes against ISIS positions along the Syrian-Turkish border and has allowed the US to attack targets in Syria from bases in Turkey. Turkey reportedly **intends to deploy the Islamic Ahrar al-Sham movement** in northern Syria to create a **zone free of ISIS in the region north of Aleppo** (and south of the Turkish city of Kilis).
- **The Islamic Ahrar al-Sham movement**, established in 2013, is one of the rebel organizations in Syria. The movement serves as an umbrella organization for a number of Salafist-jihadi organizations that do not belong to Al-Qaeda and are not affiliated with ISIS. According to Arab media reports, **as part of the cooperation with Turkey, the Islamic Ahrar al-Sham movement has been given missions in the region of Aleppo** designed to oust ISIS forces from the area (Al-Arabi Al-Jadeed, July 29, 2015).



The logo of the Islamic Ahrar al-Sham movement

- In light of the above, **at a meeting of rebel organizations in Aleppo, the Al-Nusra Front reportedly undertook to hand over outposts under its control along the Turkish-Syrian border to the Islamic Ahrar al-Sham movement.** The Al-Nusra Front also undertook to dismantle all the outposts that it controls in its fight against ISIS and to hand over all the buildings under its control in the **city of A'zaz** (Al-Arabiya al-Hadath, August 6, 2015). **According to an announcement issued by the Al-Nusra Front,** it is withdrawing from the rural area north of Aleppo because it does not want to interfere in affairs related to ISIS in the region (Aks al-Sir, August 10, 2015).

Main developments in Syria



Map of Syria (Google Maps)

Aleppo province

■ This week the fighting in Syria was concentrated in the **rural area of Aleppo**, in light of **Turkey's intention to create a zone free of the presence of ISIS south of its border** (as described above). **North of Aleppo** battles took place between ISIS and other rebel organizations, the most prominent of which is the **Islamic Ahrar al-Sham movement**, which has apparently received the green light from Turkey (and the rebel organizations?) to repel ISIS from the area. **On the other hand, to the east of Aleppo, ISIS took the initiative** and is now making an effort **to take over the Kuweyres military airbase**, which is being defended by the Syrian Army.

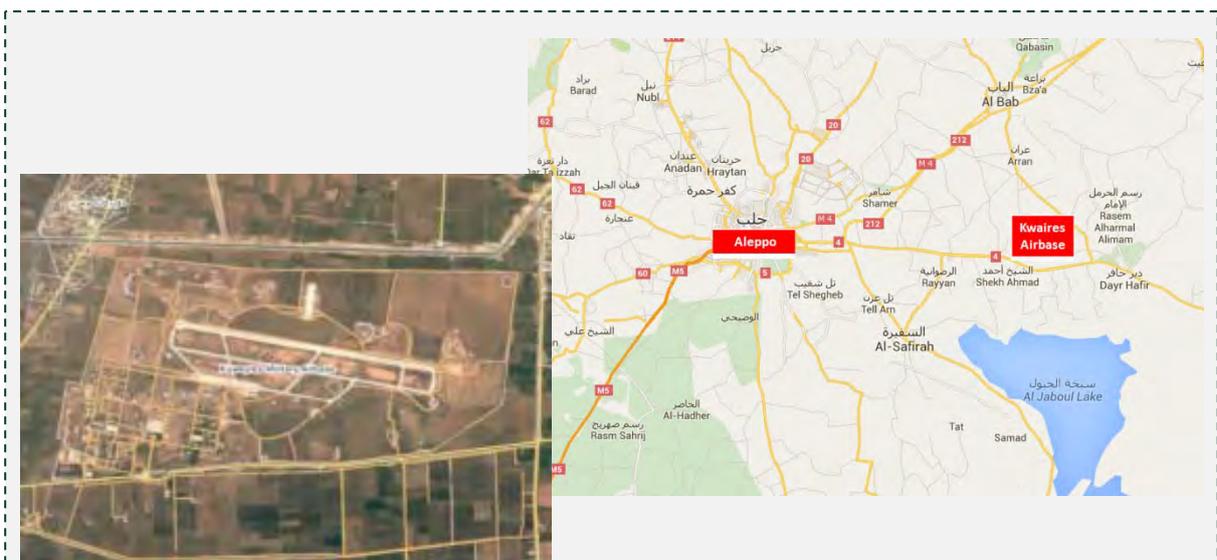
- In the rural area north of Aleppo, there were clashes this week between ISIS and rival rebel organizations. According to a report by one of ISIS's media arms, at least 36 rebel organization operatives were killed in these clashes and dozens were injured (a3maqnews.tumblr.com, August 8, 2015). On August 9, 2015, an ISIS-affiliated Twitter account posted an announcement from ISIS's Aleppo province, claiming that a suicide bomber codenamed Abu Uday al-Ansari had blown himself up in the village of Umm Housh, near the city of A'zaz (about 23 km

north of Aleppo). After the suicide bombing attack, ISIS operatives managed to take over the village (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 9, 2015).



The village of Umm Housh, north of Aleppo (Google Maps)

■ At the same time, ISIS initiated a military action east of Aleppo, possibly in order to relieve the pressure on its forces north of the city. On August 10, 2015, ISIS announced the **start of the raid on the Kuweyres military airbase** (about 33 km east of Aleppo). ISIS detonated a car bomb at the airbase and attacked it from several directions simultaneously (aljazeera.net, August 10, 2015, Abdo Rahman's Twitter page, Al-Arabiya, August 9, 2015). Syrian Army officers and combatants were killed in the attack (Sky Arabic News, August 10, 2015). **So far, ISIS has apparently not yet managed to take over the airbase.**



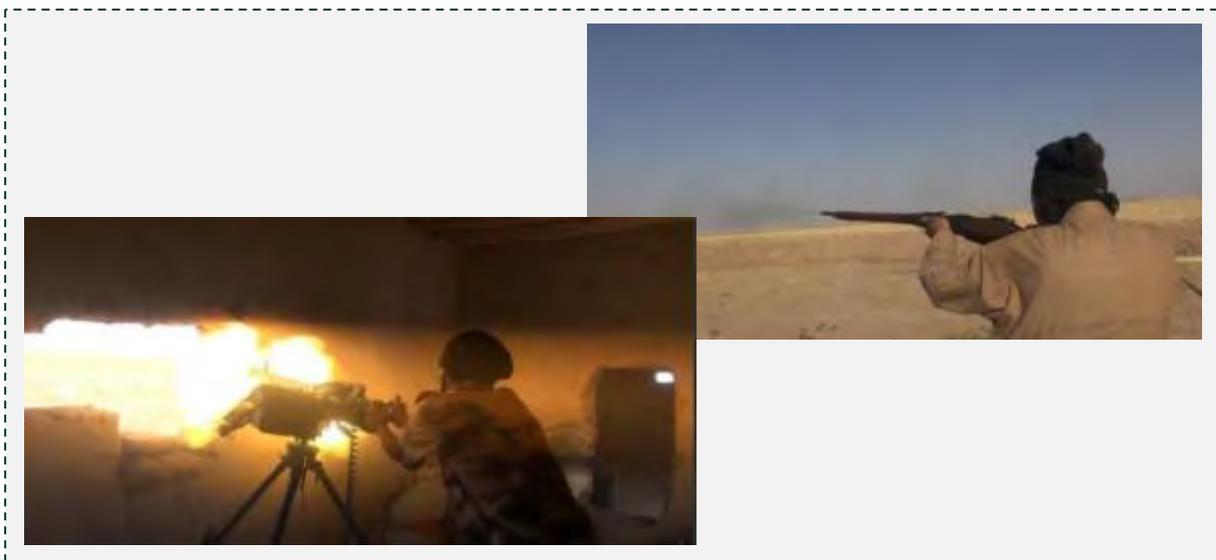
The Kuweyres military airbase, which was attacked by ISIS (Wikimapia; Google Maps)

Al-Hasakah province

■ On August 8, 2015, an ISIS-affiliated Twitter account posted photos documenting battles between ISIS operatives and Kurdish forces in the rural area of Tel Hamees, a city northeast of Al-Hasakah (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 8, 2015). In the ITIC's assessment, **the Kurdish forces are working to purge the entire region of the presence of ISIS, after having managed to take over the central city of Al-Hasakah.**



The city of Tel Hamees and its rural area (Google Maps)



ISIS operatives fighting against the Kurds in the rural area of Tel Hamees (Twitter, August 8, 2015)

The area of Idlib - Latakia

- Jaysh al-Fatah, under the leadership the Al-Nusra Front, **continues to cleanse the rural area south of the city of Jisr al-Shughur, while posing a threat to the city of Latakia, an important stronghold of the Syrian regime.**
- According to Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese media reports, Jaysh al-Fatah forces, led by the Al-Nusra Front, have taken over the last outpost of the Syrian Army in the village of Al-Bahsah, east of the city of Jisr al-Shughur. On August 5, 2015, a Twitter account affiliated with the Al-Nusra Front in Idlib posted photos documenting Syrian soldiers killed by Jaysh al-Fatah **near the village of Al-Bahsah** (Al-Nusra Front-affiliated Twitter account, August 5, 2015).
- On August 10, 2015, Jaysh al-Fatah reported that its forces had taken over the entire area east of the Orontes River in the Ghab Plain. This was followed by reports of the withdrawal of the Syrian Army and Hezbollah forces from the area (aljazeera.net, August 10, 2015).

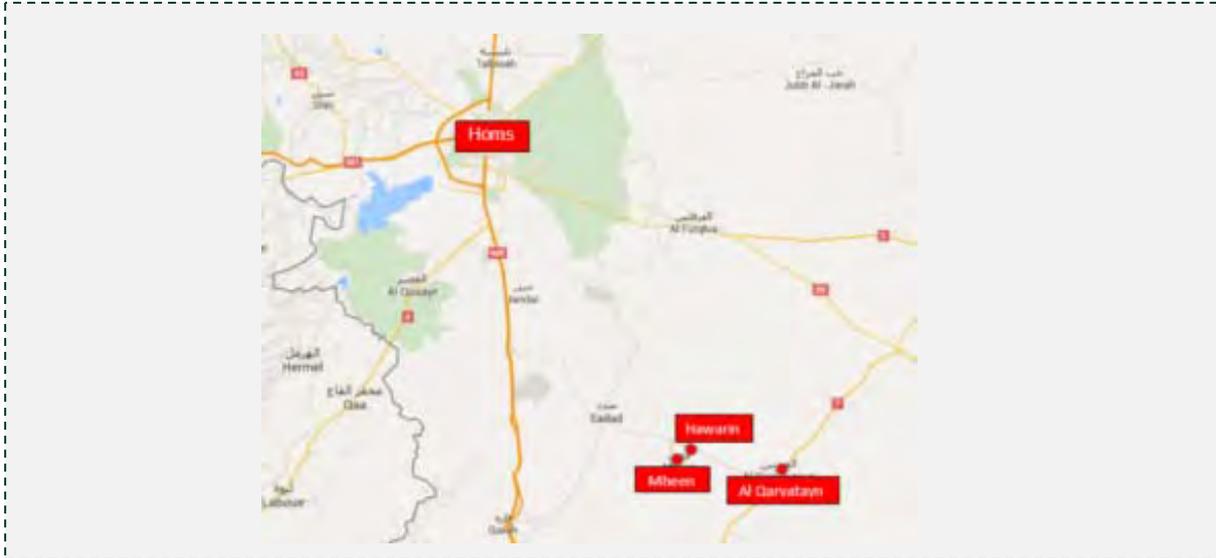


The village of Al-Bahsah and the Ghab Plain, south of the city of Jisr al-Shughur (Wikimapia)

Homs province

- On August 5, 2015, one of ISIS's media arms reported that **its operatives had taken over the city of Al-Qaryatayn, southeast of Homs.** Before the attack, three ISIS operatives carried out suicide bombing attacks at Syrian Army checkpoints at the entrances to the city (a well-known modus operandi of ISIS). After the battles, which lasted several hours, ISIS's takeover of the city was complete. That same day, ISIS's Damascus province issued an official announcement of the takeover of Al-Qaryatayn (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 5, 2015).

- Even after the takeover of Al-Qaryatayn, **fighting continued in the area around the city**. On August 8, 2015, the Syrian Army reportedly carried out an attack on the outskirts of the city. There were also reports of battles near the town of Mheen, west of Al-Qaryatayn (aljazeera.net, August 8, 2015).



The city of Al-Qaryatayn and the town of Mheen to its west (Google Maps)



Left: Armed ISIS operatives in the city of Al-Qaryatayn (a3maqnews.tumblr.com; archive.org, August 6, 2015). Right: ISIS's Damascus province's announcement of the takeover of Al-Qaryatayn (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 5, 2015).

- Following the fall of the city of Al-Qaryatayn in the hands of ISIS, Christian leaders in Syria reported that they had lost contact with the Christian community southeast of Homs, and that a few dozen Christians and other residents of the region were apparently being held hostage by ISIS operatives. According to a representative of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), ISIS has captured approximately

230 people, including at least 60 Christians, though their number may reach as high as 500 (Christiantoday.com, August 9, 2015).

Damascus province

■ According to reports from Syrian Army-affiliated sources, Hezbollah and Syrian Army troops have managed to advance significantly in the city of Al-Zabadani, northwest of Damascus. It was also reported that the rebel organization of Ahrar al-Sham had announced the termination of negotiations held with Iran regarding the evacuation of the area of Al-Zabadani (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), August 5, 2015).

Main developments in Iraq



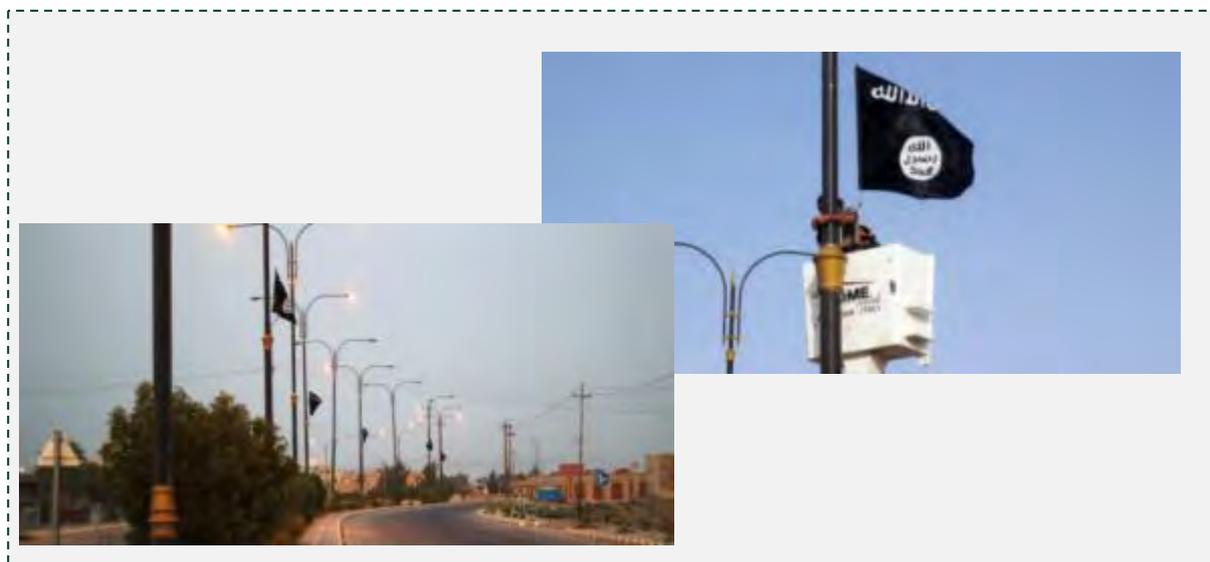
Map of Iraq (Google Maps)

Al-Anbar province

Ramadi

■ Fighting continues between the Iraqi Army and ISIS **in the area of the city of Ramadi**. According to reports by the Iraqi Army, Iraqi security forces have cut off most of the routes used by ISIS for sending supplies and reinforcements to the city of Ramadi and are besieging the city from three directions (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, August 9,

2015). The city of Ramadi itself is still controlled by ISIS. On August 7, 2015, photos were posted on Twitter showing ISIS operatives hanging ISIS flags on lampposts throughout the city of Ramadi (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 7, 2015; justpaste.it, August 6, 2015).



The city of Ramadi is still in the hands of ISIS: ISIS flags hanging on lampposts in the city streets (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 7, 2015; justpaste.it, August 6, 2015)

The city of Mosul

■ According to British media reports, ISIS operatives have executed **300 Iraqi government officials in the city of Mosul**. ISIS recently published a list of 2,070 names of people who they claim to have executed since seizing control of the city in June 2014. The list was hung on the walls of houses in the city. The names listed include policemen, former army officers, local government officials and human rights activists (The Independent, August 9, 2015).

The city of Baghdad

■ ISIS's Baghdad province claimed responsibility for the detonation of a car bomb on August 5, 2015, in the city of Baghdad. The explosion occurred near the headquarters of the Shiite militias that support the Iraqi Army. According to the announcement, the attack killed over 50 operatives of the Shiite militias (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 6, 2015).

The conduct of the Islamic State

Training children in the Damascus province

- On August 8, 2015, an ISIS-affiliated Twitter account posted photos of children undergoing training at one of ISIS's Lion Cubs of the Caliphate (*Ashbal al-Khilafah*) camps in southern Damascus. The photos show the children undergoing military training, including in the use of weapons and self-defense. The photos also show the adult instructors who train the children (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account; justpaste.it, August 8, 2015).



Children's training at an ISIS camp south of Damascus (justpaste.it, August 8, 2015)

Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula

ISIS's Sinai province's campaign against the Egyptian security forces

- During the week, the Egyptian security forces continued their intensive activity against operatives of the Sinai province of the Islamic State. The security forces have carried out numerous airstrikes, mainly against terrorist bases in the area of Al-Arish, Rafah and Sheikh Zuweid. As part of their counterterrorism and preventive activity, the Egyptian forces hit car bombs and motorcycles, blew up several houses, neutralized IEDs, killed several dozen operatives and detained several dozen suspects. The security activity carried out by the Egyptian security forces included an attempt to find a Croatian national who was abducted by ISIS (Al-Shorouk Portal, August 8, 2015).

■ Despite the intense activity of the Egyptian security forces, attempts by operatives of the Sinai province to carry out attacks against the Egyptian forces have not ceased. Some of the attacks carried out against the Egyptian forces were successful, but the Egyptians also reported that a number of attacks had been foiled:

- **On August 4, 2015**, Egyptian security forces defused five IEDs planted on the roadside and intended to hit military vehicles in south Al-Arish (Akhbar al-Youm, August 5, 2015).
- **On August 5, 2015**, an IED exploded near a military convoy in south Al-Arish. There were no casualties (Veto Portal, August 5, 2015).
- **On August 6, 2015**, shots were fired at a watchtower at the police station in Sheikh Zuweid. An Egyptian soldier was wounded (Veto Portal, August 6, 2015).
- **On August 8, 2015**, Egyptian security forces blew up seven IEDs planted on the road between Sheikh Zuweid and Al-Jura by Sinai province operatives. The security forces also disconnected the communications networks so that the operatives would not be able to activate the IEDs remotely. There were no casualties (Al-Masry al-Youm, May 8, 2015).

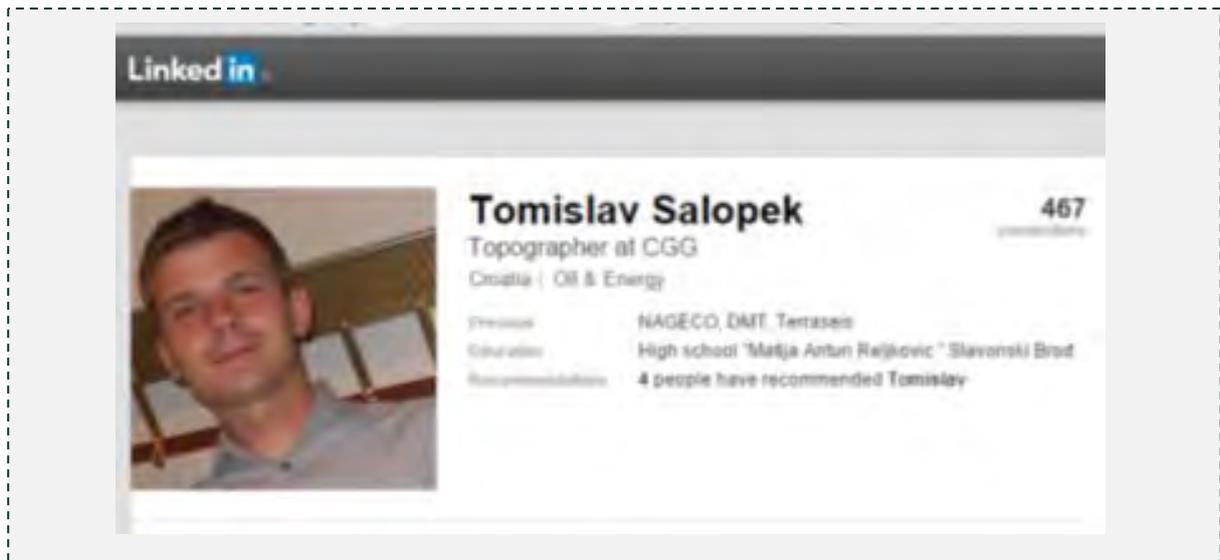
ISIS's Sinai province announced the abduction of a Croatian national

■ On August 5, 2015, a video was posted on social media by **ISIS's Sinai province, in which ISIS threatens to execute a Croatian national held by the organization.** The video shows the citizen kneeling with a masked man standing beside him. The hostage has been identified as a Croatian national by the name of **Tomislav Salopek**, 30, married with two children, who worked in Cairo for the French company CGG (an international geophysical research company). In return for his release, **ISIS operatives have demanded the release of female Muslim prisoners from prisons in Egypt within 48 hours.**

■ A Twitter account affiliated with operatives of the Sinai province posted a countdown clock along with a threat that ISIS would execute the Croatian hostage on August 7 at 16:35 if its demands are not met. The countdown has ended **but so far, the fate of the Croatian hostage remains unclear.**



Left: Announcement by ISIS's Sinai province about the abduction of the Croatian national and the ultimatum for his release in return for the release of female Muslim prisoners in Egypt (ISIS-affiliated Twitter account, August 5, 2015). Right: Croatian national held by operatives of ISIS's Sinai province in a video released by ISIS (isdarat.tv, August 5, 2015).



Details about the Croatian national held by operatives of ISIS's Sinai province (LinkedIn)

- Egyptian Foreign Minister **Sameh Shoukry** met with the Croatian Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, who came to Egypt to monitor the Egyptian government's efforts to free the hostage. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry Spokesman stressed the efforts invested by the relevant authorities to locate the hostage's whereabouts. According to information in the Foreign Ministry's possession, he was abducted around one month ago (Facebook page of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, August 7, 2015).

- The abduction of foreign nationals and demands for the release of prisoners (and/or ransom money) for their release is a course of action often employed by ISIS

in Syria and Iraq. **This is the first time** that abduction for bargaining purposes has been **carried out in Egypt**. The demand for the release of female Muslim prisoners is intended, in the ITIC's assessment (from ISIS's perspective), to "make it easier" for the Egyptian authorities to assent to ISIS's demands. The abduction of the Croatian national for bargaining purposes could, in the ITIC's assessment, **be an indication of the increasing self-confidence, and perhaps operational capabilities as well, of ISIS's branch in Egypt**.

ISIS-affiliated networks in the Gaza Strip

Claim of responsibility for rocket fire at Israel

- On the afternoon of August 7, 2015, a **rocket hit was identified** north of the community of Kissufim (in the northwestern Negev Desert in Israel), about 100 meters from the security fence on Israel territory. There were no casualties and no damage was caused. During the week, more rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip but they fell inside the Gaza Strip.
- A Salafist-jihadi network calling itself **Descendants of the Companions of the Prophet [Muhammad] - Greater Jerusalem – Gaza**, claimed responsibility for the rocket fire (The network's Twitter page, August 7, 2015). The network claimed responsibility for firing two additional rockets at the community of Netiv Ha'asara and two rockets at the Nahal Oz outpost. **The network also threatened to fire additional rockets** (the network's Twitter page, August 8, 2015).



Claim of responsibility for rocket fire at Israel (Descendants of the Companions of the Prophet [Muhammad] - Greater Jerusalem – Gaza's Twitter account, August 7, 2015)

■ **In recent months, there have been incidents of rocket fire at Israel by ISIS-affiliated networks in the Gaza Strip. These incidents were intended to challenge Hamas (which finds it difficult to put a stop to them) and were carried out in contravention of Hamas's policy.** In all the incidents to date, Israel has not sustained any losses or damage as a result of the rocket fire.

The global jihad in other countries

Libya

Derna

■ **ISIS operatives are trying to regain control of the city of Derna,** having been ousted by a local jihadi organization. So far, the operatives defending Derna have managed to prevent ISIS operatives from entering the city. ISIS operatives have fired artillery at the eastern outskirts of the city. They also detonated a car bomb in Derna on August 9, 2015. The blast killed at least seven people and wounded 19 (Al-Arabiya, August 10, 2015).

Sirte

■ **ISIS's Tripoli province announced that it had executed an Indian national accused of "immoral conduct" in the city of Sirte.** The Indian was executed on a street corner in front of passersby (Akhbar al-Alam, August 7, 2015). It should be noted that last week, ISIS abducted four Indian nationals who were staying in Libya. It is not clear whether the Indian who was executed is one of the four hostages.



Photo released by ISIS's Tripoli province, documenting the execution of an Indian citizen (Akhbar al-Alam, August 7, 2015)

Saudi Arabia

■ Seventeen Saudi security officials, most of them members of the Special Forces, were killed when a suicide bomber blew himself up among worshippers at the Abha Mosque in **the Asir region in southwest Saudi Arabia** (Al-Hayat, August 6, 2015). **The Hejaz province of the Islamic State** has claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing attack (Twitter, August 7, 2015). An ISIS-affiliated Twitter page posted an audiotape, accompanied by photos of the suicide bomber, codenamed **Abu Sinan al-Najdi**. The speaker on the tape promises that additional attacks will be carried out against the Saudi security forces. He urges other ISIS operatives to carry out suicide bombings, noting that explosive belts are more effective than shooting (time.com, August 8, 2015).



The city of Abha, in southwestern Saudi Arabia (Wikimapia)

■ According to the Saudi interior ministry spokesman, the suicide bomber's name is **Yusef Bin Suleiman Abdullah al-Suleiman**, 21, a Saudi national. He was reportedly arrested by the Saudi security forces for 45 days in 2013, but was released without being convicted (Al-Arabiya, August 9, 2015).



Left: The suicide bomber (isdarat.tv, August 7, 2015). Right: ISIS's Hejaz province's claim of responsibility for the attack in the mosque (Twitter, August 6, 2015).

ISIS's Khorasan province (Afghanistan - Pakistan)

■ On August 6, 2015, ISIS's branch in Khorasan published a video documenting the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan's pledge of allegiance to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (Isdarat al-Dawla al-Islamiyya, August 6, 2015). If the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan did indeed pledge allegiance to ISIS, this is evidence that **ISIS has spread from Afghanistan-Pakistan to the Muslim countries of Central Asia.**



The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan pledging allegiance to ISIS's leader (Isdarat al-Dawla al-Islamiyya, August 6, 2015)

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) is a Salafist-jihadi organization established in Uzbekistan in 1988. Its founders were a radical Islamic ideologue named **Tohir Yo'ldosh** and an Uzbek Islamic operative and Soviet Army veteran named **Jumma Kasimov**. The organization's goal is to overthrow Uzbekistan's secular regime and establish in its place an Islamic regime in accordance with Islamic law. The organization's operatives joined forces with **global jihad elements in Afghanistan**. **IMU received the sponsorship of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and was allowed to operate under their auspices in northern Afghanistan**. The organization also operates in **Tajikistan** (Wikipedia).

Jihad organizations affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Middle East and North Africa

■ Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb and the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, all three of which are affiliated with Al-Qaeda, issued a joint condolence message following the report of the death of Taliban leader **Mullah Mohammed Omar**. In their message, the Al-Qaeda branches praise Mullah Omar, noting that he unified the Afghans and Muslims under the banner of the Taliban and turned Afghanistan into a place where heroes who restored the nation's honor were trained. The message also notes that thanks to him, the US was defeated in Afghanistan and the Taliban has expanded its influence (Al-Nusra Front-affiliated Twitter account, August 5, 2015).

The message was published following confirmation of the death of Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar in April 2013. The publication of a joint message by these three jihadi organizations **is unusual**. The message indicates their common denominator, which is mainly **their close ties to Al-Qaeda**, under the leadership of Ayman al-Zawahiri, **and their differentiation from ISIS**.



Joint message of condolence by the three leading organizations affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Middle East (Al-Nusra Front-affiliated Twitter account, August 5, 2015)

Counterterrorism and preventive activity

Britain

- According to British media reports, security forces in Britain are working to prevent the realization of global jihad threats to carry out an attack against the Queen and other members of the royal family. According to the reports, the intelligence agencies believed that terrorist operatives in Syria were planning to carry out a terrorist attack during the annual parade marking Japan's surrender and the end of World War II, to be held in London (VJ Day). The planned attack was reportedly revealed following calls by ISIS encouraging Muslim extremists to carry out attacks in the countries where they live instead of joining the fighting in Syria and Iraq. It is not yet known whether police have detained any suspects (Daily Mail, The Guardian, August 8, 2015).

The United States

- A US citizen from New Jersey was detained because of his intention to leave the US and join ISIS as a fighter. **Nader Saadeh**, 20, was detained around two months after his brother and other US citizens had been detained on suspicion of trying to join the ranks of ISIS. According to the prosecutor, he boarded a flight from New York to Amman, Jordan, on May 5, 2015, in an attempt to reach the area under ISIS's control. He was reportedly detained in Jordan (Fox, August 10, 2015).

The battle for hearts and minds

ISIS's new app

■ ISIS supporters have used their Twitter pages to announce that ISIS recently launched **a new app for the Android operating system designed for mobile phones**. The app posts newswatches, articles, videos and updates from the field on behalf of ISIS's media offices in Syria and Iraq. The app also posts videos on behalf of ISIS's main headquarters and news bulletins on ISIS's radio station, Al-Bayan.

ISIS makes intelligent use of advanced technology to spread its ideology and political messages worldwide. The creation of an app designed for mobile phones indicates the understanding that this is a tool that is no less important, and possibly even more important, than the websites and social networks that ISIS has used for spreading its messages up to now. ISIS attaches great importance to the battle for hearts and minds, and invests considerable resources in this area (skilled personnel, large sums of money). **ISIS has a highly effective propaganda system that produces a large amount of diverse media products intended for various target audiences.**

ISIS encourages the recruitment of operatives in Indonesia

■ According to British media reports, ISIS operatives in Indonesia are boasting that they have managed to recruit the next generation of jihad operatives, by showing a photo of a newborn infant lying next to a rifle and a hand grenade. The photo was uploaded to Twitter by ISIS supporters. According to government reports in Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world, support for ISIS is growing. A previous photo uploaded to social networks in Indonesia shows uniformed children no older than six or seven carrying weapons (The Daily Mirror, August 8, 2015).



Left: Children fighting. Right: Photo of the infant (Twitter page affiliated with ISIS in Indonesia)

Encouraging Muslims in Germany to carry out terrorist acts

■ ISIS's Homs province issued a German-language video. The video shows **two German-speaking ISIS operatives calling on Muslims in Germany** to join the Islamic State. The speakers in the video say that if the Germans don't support their brothers through migration (to Syria and Iraq), **then they should support them through attacks on "infidels" in their home** (i.e., carrying out attacks in Germany). One of the speakers threatens to carry out attacks in Germany due to its partnership in the coalition against ISIS, and voices a direct threat against **German Chancellor Angela Merkel**. The two speakers are codenamed **Abu Omar the German** and **Mohammad Mahmoud from Vienna**. German security sources estimate that **720 operatives from Germany are now fighting alongside ISIS in Syria or Iraq** (Die Welt, August 6, 2015).

This is not the first time that ISIS has called on European Muslims to join its ranks. Similar calls have been issued in French, Italian, English and other languages. ISIS calls on its supporters to carry out attacks in the West as an alternative for those who cannot immigrate to the Islamic State. Such calls inspire **local jihadists** to carry out terrorist attacks in **Western countries**.