



## Drive for Bitcoin donations on an ISIS-affiliated website

December 6, 2017

### Overview

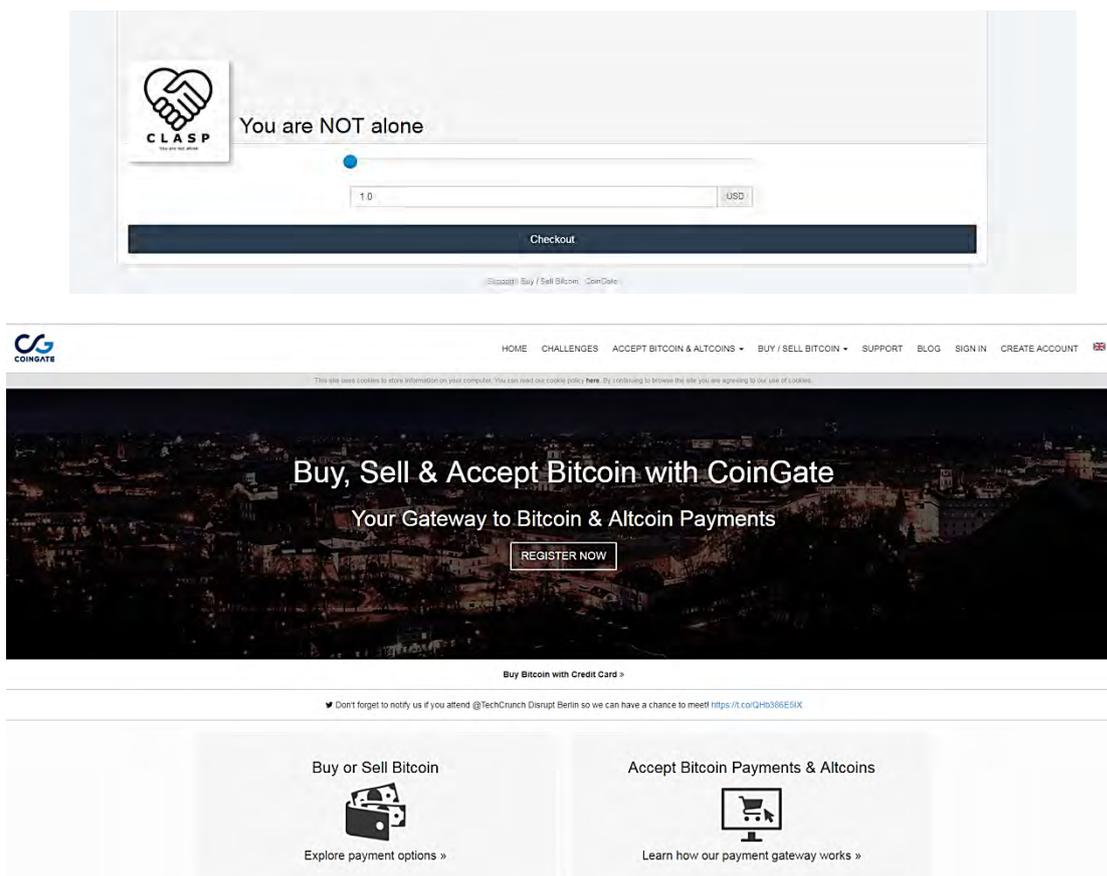
In November 2017 a **drive was launched on the ISIS-affiliated website Akhbar al-Muslimin for donations of Bitcoins** (for information about the website see below). The website has posted a link for Bitcoin donations. The donations are allegedly for the website, but in ITIC assessment they may be used for **ISIS** broader goals, one of which is **rehabilitating its propaganda machine** (which was recently damaged) and possibly also for **funding terrorist attacks abroad**.

► **Asking for donations:** under every article there is a link reading, "**Click here to donate Bitcoins to the [Akhbar al-Muslimin] website – do not donate from *zakāt* funds**" [i.e., funds earmarked for charity, one of the Five Pillars of Islam] (Akhbar al-Muslimin, November 27, 2017).



The drive for Bitcoin donations. The link appears in orange under the date: "**Click here to donate Bitcoins to the [Akhbar al-Muslimin] website – do not donate from *zakāt* funds**" (Akhbar al-Muslimin, November 27, 2017).

- Clicking on the link opens a page for Bitcoin donations called [coingate.com](https://coingate.com):



The [coingate.com](https://coingate.com) home page

## The Akhbar al-Muslimin website

- **The Akhbar al-Muslimin website is affiliated with ISIS.** It has been active since 2015. In mid-2017 it ceased operations, in ITIC assessment because of the blow dealt to ISIS in Syria. In November 2017 it reappeared with a new address, <http://ou7zytv3h2yaosqq.stopisis.top>.<sup>1</sup> **The site publishes reports and pictures about attacks carried out by ISIS operatives.** It contains relatively updated information, although less than a year ago, probably because of the damage done to ISIS's propaganda machine (the website is updated every few days, while six months ago it was updated daily).

<sup>1</sup> The choice of an address containing the phrase "stop ISIS" is, in ITIC assessment, intended to mislead. It is aimed to prevent the site from being closed by hackers or international security agencies.



The drive on the Akhbar al-Muslimin website is further evidence of **ISIS's severe financial hardship**, following **the loss of its economic assets (mainly the oil and gas fields) and the collapse of the Islamic State. Its propaganda machine was also damaged, which in ITIC assessment is in urgent need of funds.** The Bitcoins donated may not be used only by the Akhbar al-Muslimin website (as claimed by the site) **but possibly for other, broader purposes, including rehabilitating ISIS's propaganda machine and funding terrorist attacks abroad.**