The ceasefire is being maintained in the Idlib region of northern Syria, apart from isolated incidents between the warring sides. This week, an outbreak of COVID-19 was reported in the Idlib region. The Salvation Government, affiliated with the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham, reported that there are 14 active cases. The number of cases may be much higher and there is great potential for the spread of morbidity in the Idlib region. This is due to the presence of many deportees, substandard living conditions, poor sanitation, and the lack of a functioning health system.

The main terrorist attack in Syria was a car bomb explosion near the Syrian-Turkish border crossing. Nine people were killed and over 60 were wounded. In the ITIC’s assessment, ISIS was behind the attack. In recent weeks, ISIS has carried out a series of attacks north of Aleppo against the Turkish army and its sponsored rebel organizations. On the other hand, the Turkish authorities made a series of arrests of ISIS operatives near the Syrian border and detained dozens of people suspected of belonging to ISIS in Istanbul. At the propaganda level, an article in ISIS’s Al-Naba’ weekly (July 16, 2020) sharply attacked Turkish President Erdoğan (“tyrant,” “deserter of Islam”) and claimed that no importance should be attached to Aya Sophia being turned into a mosque.

In the Iraq Province, low-intensity activity took place this week. The most noteworthy attack was the killing of an Iraqi army brigade commander and his escorts in an ISIS ambush about 30 km north of Baghdad.

In the Sinai Peninsula, a large-scale combined attack was carried out against an Egyptian army camp and checkpoint west of Bir al-Abd. It appears to have been carried out by ISIS, which has not yet claimed responsibility (and the Egyptian army has not yet released an official report on the attack). The attack involved car bombs, IEDs, and possibly also the use of suicide bombers. According to initial media reports, the attack was carried out by dozens of operatives, who arrived in vehicles and on motorcycles. Initial reports of the number of
fatalities in the attack are contradictory, but dozens of Egyptian soldiers and ISIS operatives were apparently killed.

This combined attack indicates that ISIS operatives in the Sinai Peninsula are growing more daring, in light of the waning pressure by the Egyptian security forces and the shift in Egyptian attention to developments in Libya and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. In the ITIC’s assessment, ISIS may take advantage of this situation to increase its attacks against the Egyptian security forces in the Sinai Peninsula.

ISIS’s activity in the various provinces

On July 16, 2020, ISIS’s Al-Naba’ weekly released an infographic entitled “The Harvest of the Fighters,” summing up its activity in the various provinces on July 9-15, 2020. A total of 38 attacks were carried out by ISIS around the world, compared to 56 in the preceding week (meaning a decrease of about 32%). A total of 23 attacks were carried out in Iraq, most of them (9) in the Diyala Province; seven in Syria; six in West Africa (mainly Chad and Nigeria); one in Pakistan and one in the Sinai Peninsula.

Over 170 people were killed and wounded in the attacks, compared to over 150 people in the preceding week (an increase of about 11%). The largest number of casualties (90) was again in West Africa, where the armies of Nigeria and Chad sustained many casualties. The other casualties were in the provinces of Iraq (63), Syria (17), Pakistan (2), and Sinai (1) (Al-Naba’ weekly, as posted on archive.org, July 16, 2020).

Jihadi organizations’ activity in Syria

Idlib region

Incidents of the past week

On July 19, 2020, the Syrian army fired artillery at the northern Al-Ghab Plain (40 km southwest of Idlib). One civilian was killed (Idlib Plus, July 19, 2020).

On July 16, 2020, the Syrian army fired artillery at a village about 25 km south of Idlib and at Jabal Zawiya (Edlib Media Center - EMC, July 16, 2020).

On July 16, 2020, the Syrian army fired artillery at the town of Sarmin, about 7 km east of Idlib (Edlib Media Center - EMC, July 16, 2020).

Russian airstrikes
On July 16, 2020, Russian aircraft carried out airstrikes in a village about 25 km south of Idlib and in Jabal Zawiya (Ibaa, July 16, 2020).

Building destroyed in a Russian airstrike (Ibaa, July 16, 2020).

COVID-19 outbreak in the Idlib region

On July 9, 2020, the first case of COVID-19 in the Idlib region was reported. By July 18, 2020, the number of active cases in the region had risen to 14. The morbidity figures were published on behalf of the “health minister” in the Salvation Government, a body that manages civilian affairs in the Idlib region, which is controlled by the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham (Ibaa, July 18, 2020).

It can be assumed that the actual number of cases in the Idlib area could be much higher. This is due to the lack of an orderly testing system, a functioning healthcare system, and effective enforcement mechanisms. In addition, the morbidity reports are from the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham and the institution under its control, and not from the Syrian Health Ministry. In the ITIC’s assessment, the source of infection in the Idlib Governorate may be Turkey, since most of those infected are residents of towns in areas near the Turkish border. There is great potential for the spread of morbidity in the Idlib region due to the presence of many deportees and the substandard living conditions.

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1 The rebel organizations supported by Turkey operate their own administrative body, called the Syrian Interim Government, in southern Turkey.
2 On July 20, 2020, the Syrian Health Ministry released data on COVID-19 morbidity in the country’s various governorates. According to the report, there are 339 active cases and 154 patients who have recovered in Syria. In addition, 29 people have died as a result of the virus (Syrian Health Ministry, July 20, 2020). The Syrian Health Ministry’s reports are incomplete and do not include the Idlib Governorate, which is controlled by the rebel organizations, and the governorates controlled by the Kurds.
In the absence of effective government institutions, the fight against the spread of the virus in the Idlib region is carried out mainly by local councils and local voluntary organizations. For example, local councils in the Idlib Governorate handed out leaflets asking residents to close the weekly open-air markets (Enab Baladi, a news website affiliated with the rebel organizations, July 19, 2020). In addition, the Freedom Youth Union, a local youth organization, distributed masks and leaflets with instructions to the residents of the city of Idlib (Ibaa, July 18, 2020).

ISIS’s activity in Syria

The region of Deir ez-Zor, Al-Mayadeen, and Albukamal

- **On July 19, 2020**, an SDF fighter was targeted by gunfire in the town of Hajin, about 25 km north of Albukamal. He was wounded (Telegram, July 20, 2020).
- **On July 18, 2020**, an IED was activated against two SDF fighters riding a motorcycle about 7 km northeast of Albukamal. Both of them were wounded (Telegram, July 19, 2020).
- **On July 18, 2020**, an SDF vehicle was targeted by machine gun fire about 5 km east of Al-Mayadeen. Two fighters were killed and others were wounded (Telegram, July 18, 2020).
- **On July 18, 2020**, an SDF fighter was targeted by gunfire on the road leading to the Al-Omar oil field, about 5 km east of Al-Mayadeen. He was killed (Telegram, July 18, 2020).

Al-Raqqah region

- **On July 15, 2020**, an IED was activated against a vehicle of an SDF “agent” about 1 km west of Al-Raqqah. The vehicle was damaged (Telegram, July 16, 2020).
The area north of Aleppo
Detonation of a car bomb near the Syrian-Turkish border

On July 19, 2020, a car bomb was detonated in the town of Sijju, near the Bab al-Salameh border crossing between Syria and Turkey (about 45 km north of Aleppo). Nine people were killed and over 60, including women and children, were wounded. The attack took place a few days after a series of arrests of ISIS operatives by Turkish intelligence in the region controlled by the rebel organizations affiliated with Turkey (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights; AP, July 19, 2020). So far, ISIS has not claimed responsibility for the detonation of the car bomb.

Right: A firefighter and a civil defense operative spraying water on the wreckage of the car bomb (Nagi N. Najjar@NagiNajjar Twitter account, affiliated with the Turkish-sponsored rebel organizations, July 19, 2020). Left: The scene of the explosion (Twitter account of the Syrian Civil Defense, July 19, 2020).

In the second half of June 2020, ISIS launched a series of attacks against the Turkish army and the rebel organizations affiliated with Turkey operating in the Al-Bab region (north of Aleppo). This reason for this activity may have been a targeted killing near the city of Al-Bab, in which two senior ISIS operatives were eliminated. ISIS’s attacks consisted mainly of targeted killings and detonation of IEDs. The detonation of the car bomb, if it turns out that ISIS is behind it, may therefore be a step up in ISIS’s anti-Turkish activity north of Aleppo.

On July 17, 2020, an “agent” of the Turkish-sponsored rebel organizations was targeted by gunfire in the city of A’zaz, about 40 km north of Aleppo (near the Syrian-Turkish border). He was killed (Telegram, July 18, 2020).
The Al-Sukhnah-Palmyra region (the Syrian Desert)

➤ **On July 21, 2020,** ISIS operatives attacked Syrian army positions **about 65 km northeast of Hama.** There were exchanges of fire between the sides, including artillery fire. Both sides reportedly sustained casualties (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, July 21, 2020).

➤ **On July 18, 2020,** ISIS operatives ambushed a convoy of Iranian-affiliated militias and operatives of the Lebanese Hezbollah **near Al-Sukhnah** (about 60 km northeast of Palmyra). The convoy was en route from Deir ez-Zor to Palmyra. An operative of the Iranian-backed **Al-Baqer Militia** was killed in the attack. Many of the convoy operatives were wounded (SY24, July 18, 2020). Following this incident, Russian fighter jets carried out airstrikes against ISIS in the Al-Sukhnah Desert (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, July 18, 2020).

➤ Due to the recurring attacks by ISIS, Syrian army reinforcements were dispatched to the Al-Sukhnah-Palmyra area on July 19, 2020 (Al-Durar Al-Shamiya, July 19, 2020).

**Counterterrorist activities by the SDF forces**

➤ **On July 17, 2020,** SDF forces launched the second phase of Operation Deterrence of Terrorism against ISIS in the Deir ez-Zor region. The SDF Counterterrorist Special Forces are taking part in this activity, in coordination with the International Coalition forces and with their air support (SDF Press, July 17, 2020). On June 4, 2020, the SDF forces launched Operation Deterrence of Terrorism in the region extending from south of Al-Hasakah to the Euphrates Valley (SDF Press, June 10, 2020).

![SDF fighters during an anti-ISIS activity in the Deir ez-Zor region](SDF Press, July 19, 2020)

➤ **On July 20, 2020,** the SDF forces announced that in the beginning of the second phase of Operation Deterrence of Terrorism, **they had captured 31 “terrorist operatives” (implicitly ISIS operatives), including a senior ISIS operative.** In addition, they seized weapons,
explosives, and several ferries used for smuggling (SDF Press, July 20, 2020). According to a source based on the SDF report, the senior ISIS operative (emir) captured had been in charge of distributing salaries to members of ISIS networks in the rural area east of Deir ez-Zor (Al-Masdar News, July 20, 2020).

**Releasing detainees from the Al-Hol camp**

On July 20, 2020, a total of 450 ISIS detainees were released from the Al-Hol detention camp. Mostly of them were women and children from 115 families. The released detainees were sent in a convoy to the villages of Al-Susah and Al-Baghouz, former ISIS outposts in the Euphrates Valley and from there were allowed to return to their homes. They were released based on lists submitted by notables from Al-Susah and Al-Baghouz, in coordination with the public relations office in the Deir ez-Zor civil council operating under SDF sponsorship (EuphratesPost Facebook page, July 20, 2020).

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**ISIS’s activity in the Iraqi arena**

Map of Iraqi provinces (Wikipedia)
This week, ISIS carried out low-intensity activity in the Iraqi arena. The most noteworthy attack was the killing of an Iraqi army brigade commander in an ISIS ambush about 30 km north of Baghdad. Concurrently with ISIS’s activity, COVID-19 is spreading in Iraq (nearly 28,000 active cases and 3,869 dead\(^3\)).

Attacks for which ISIS claimed responsibility

**Diyala Province**

- **On July 20, 2020**, an IED was activated against a foot patrol of the Popular Mobilization and Iraqi police about 15 km northeast of Baqubah. Two fighters or policemen and a sapper were wounded (Telegram, July 20, 2020).

- **On July 20, 2020**, an IED was activated against Popular Mobilization fighters about 35 km northeast of Baqubah. One fighter was killed and six others were wounded (Telegram, July 20, 2020).

- **On July 19, 2020**, ISIS operatives tricked an Iraqi army force into entering a booby-trapped house in a village about 40 km northeast of Baqubah. When the force approached the house, the ISIS operatives detonated an IED. One soldier was killed and another was wounded (Telegram, July 19, 2020).

- **On July 18, 2020**, an Iraqi soldier was targeted by sniper fire about 60 km north of Baqubah. He was wounded (Telegram, July 19, 2020).

- **On July 15, 2020**, Tribal Mobilization fighters were targeted by sniper fire about 20 km southwest of Khanaqin. One fighter was killed and four others were wounded (Telegram, July 16, 2020).

**Salah al-Din Province**

- **On July 20, 2020**, Iraqi policemen were targeted by machine gun fire about 80 km north of Baghdad. Two policemen and two police officers were wounded (Telegram, July 21, 2020).

- **On July 19, 2020**, an IED was activated against a Popular Mobilization vehicle west of Baiji. Two fighters were killed and two others were wounded (Telegram, July 21, 2020).

**Iraqi brigade commander killed north of Baghdad**

- **On July 17, 2020**, the Baghdad Operations Headquarters announced that commander of the 59th Brigade of the 6th Infantry Division, Brigadier General Ali Hamid Ghaidan al-Khazraji,

\(^3\) According to the Facebook page of the Iraqi Health Ministry, July 20, 2020.
had been killed in a shooting attack by “terrorist operatives” (implicitly ISIS). The attack was carried out about 30 km north of Baghdad. According to another Iraqi report, the brigade commander was shot to death by ISIS snipers (Al-Sumaria, July 17, 2020; Iraqi News Agency, July 18, 2020).

ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. According to ISIS, its operatives ambushed a convoy at the entrance to the city of Al-Tarmiyah. Commander Ali al-Khazraji was in one of the vehicles. The brigade commander was killed, as well as three of his escorts. Other soldiers were wounded (Telegram, July 18, 2020).

On July 16, 2020, an IED was activated against a Popular Mobilization vehicle about 20 km south of Shirqat (about 90 km west of Kirkuk). One fighter was killed and two others were wounded (Telegram, July 17, 2020).

Al-Anbar Province

On July 18, 2020, an IED was activated near a Popular Mobilization headquarters about 15 km west of Baghdad. One fighter was killed (Telegram, July 18, 2020).

On July 16, 2020, an IED was activated against two Iraqi intelligence “agents” about 15 km west of Baghdad. One of them was killed and the other wounded (Telegram, July 18, 2020).

On July 14, 2020, an IED was activated against an Iraqi army vehicle west of Hit. Three soldiers were killed (Telegram, July 15, 2020).

On July 14, 2020, Iraqi soldiers were targeted by machine gun fire about 20 km west of Hit. Two soldiers were killed (Telegram, July 15, 2020).
Counterterrorist activity of the Iraqi security forces

**Diyala Province**

On July 19, 2020, an Iraqi army force located an ISIS guesthouse about 15 km southeast of Baqubah. They found weapons and explosives (Facebook page of the Iraqi Defense Ministry, July 19, 2020).

![Iraqi army force during activity to locate an ISIS guesthouse southeast of Baqubah (Facebook page of the Iraqi Defense Ministry, July 19, 2020)](image1)

![Iraqi soldiers during preparations for a controlled detonation of one of the IEDs found in the guesthouse (Facebook page of the Iraqi Defense Ministry, July 19, 2020)](image2)

**Kirkuk Province**

On July 18, 2020, teams of the Interior Ministry’s Intelligence Directorate captured two wanted ISIS operatives about 35 km southwest of Kirkuk. One of the operatives had been in charge of manufacturing IEDs and the other was his assistant. They admitted to having participated in several attacks carried out by ISIS (Al-Sumaria, July 18, 2020).

**Baghdad Province**

On July 19, 2020, teams of the Baghdad Intelligence and Security Directorate, in coordination with a joint security force, captured a wanted “terrorist operative” (implicitly an
ISIS operative) in southwest Baghdad (Facebook page of the Iraqi Defense Ministry (July 19, 2020).

**Nineveh Province**

On July 16, 2020, teams of the Interior Ministry’s Intelligence Directorate and the Counterterrorist Service captured nine wanted ISIS operatives in various areas in the Nineveh Province. In their interrogation, they admitted to having participated in terrorist attacks against the Iraqi security forces and having harassed civilians during ISIS’s control of the province (Al-Sumaria, July 16, 2020).

**Counterterrorism and preventive activity by a British elite unit**

According to a report from July 19, 2020, fighters from the British elite unit SAS located ISIS operatives, including operatives with British citizenship, who were hiding in caves in northern Iraq. The SAS unit attack involved the use of sniper fire, artillery fire, warplanes and armed UAVs. More than 100 ISIS operatives were killed in an attack on a cave in the area. ISIS operatives have a network of caves and tunnels in northern Iraq which they use as hiding places (Euro Weekly, July 19, 2020).

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**The Sinai Peninsula**

**Large-scale attack in the Bir al-Abd area**

On July 21, 2020, a large-scale combined attack was carried out against an Egyptian army camp and checkpoint west of Bir al-Abd. In the ITIC’s assessment, the attack was carried out by ISIS, although it has still not issued a claim of responsibility. At this stage, the versions regarding the type and outcome of the attack are partial and contradictory.

Main initial reports:

- According to the Arab news website Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, which relies on tribal sources and eyewitnesses, operatives of ISIS’s Sinai Province simultaneously attacked an army camp and a checkpoint. The attack began with the detonation of two IEDs (Note: according to other versions, a car bomb was activated). Then dozens of gunmen, who arrived at the scene by vehicle, motorcycle and on foot, fired at the camp (Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, July 21, 2020).
- According to a report based on the Egyptian army, the Egyptian security forces of a “security post” in Bir al-Abd, in cooperation with the air force, thwarted a major...
terrorist attack. The attackers fled to a farm in the area of Bir al-Abd. A total of 18 “terrorist operatives,” one of whom was wearing an explosive belt, were killed at the farm. In addition, three car bombs were destroyed (Al-Masry al-Youm; Al-Youm al-Sabea, July 21, 2020).

According to “medical sources,” dozens of people wounded from the attack and 10 bodies were evacuated to hospitals in the area (Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, July 21, 2020). According to another report, 43 Egyptian army officers and soldiers were killed and 67 were wounded in the attack (Al-Jazeera, July 21, 2020; Shahed Sinaa – Al-Rasmia Facebook page, July 21, 2020). The Egyptian army has not yet issued official data on the casualties.

Selection of photos from the attack

Right: One of the car bombs exploding in the Egyptian airstrike on the area of Bir El-Abed, west of Al-Arish (Al-Youm al-Sabea, July 21, 2020). Left: One of the car bombs exploding, as documented by a local resident (Shahed Sinaa – Al-Rasmia Facebook page, July 21, 2020).
This appears to be the boldest and most significant attack carried out by the Sinai Province in recent years against the Egyptian army. The way it was conducted and its outcome are still unclear. In the ITIC’s assessment, the attack was carried out in light of the **waning pressure on ISIS by the Egyptian security forces**, the shift in Egyptian attention to developments in Libya (which may lead to Egyptian military intervention) and the tension surrounding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. **In the ITIC’s assessment, ISIS is liable to take advantage of this situation to increase its attacks against the Egyptian security forces in the Sinai Peninsula.**
An additional attack

On July 17, 2020, an IED was activated against an Egyptian army armored vehicle west of Rafah. According to ISIS, the armored vehicle was destroyed and its passengers were killed or wounded (Telegram, July 18, 2020).

Right: Egyptian army armored vehicle before the IED was activated.  Left: The IED being activated (Telegram, July 18, 2020)

ISIS’s activity around the globe

Africa

Nigeria

On July 16, 2020, ISIS operatives attacked a Nigerian army compound south of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State in northeastern Nigeria. Two soldiers were killed and others were wounded. ISIS operatives seized weapons and ammunition (Telegram, July 17, 2020).

On July 13, 2020, ISIS operatives ambushed a Nigerian army convoy west of Maiduguri. According to ISIS, eight Nigerian soldiers were killed in the attack and others were wounded. In addition, weapons, ammunition and vehicles were seized (Telegram, July 15, 2020).

Chad

On July 14, 2020, ISIS operatives attacked a Chadian army headquarters in the Lake Chad area, in the southwest of the country. A total of 11 soldiers were killed or wounded. In addition, ISIS operatives seized weapons and ammunition (Telegram, July 19, 2020).
Jan Gerber, a senior journalist from Cape Town, South Africa, published recently an article in which he referred to an article in ISIS’s Al-Naba’ weekly, which was published about two weeks ago. In the article, ISIS threatened South Africa not to intervene in what was going on in Mozambique. The threat was made in view of reports about the South African government’s intention to send forces to Mozambique to assist it in its fight against ISIS and other jihadi groups operating in the country.4

According to the article, an ISIS-affiliated group called Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah is behind an uprising in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique’s northeastern province, in order to enforce an extreme interpretation of Islamic law (Sharia) in the province.5 The uprising, which began in

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Jan Gerber is an experienced political journalist from Cape Town, South Africa. He holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism and a master’s degree in political management from Stellenbosch University. For highlights of the article that appeared in Al-Naba’, see Spotlight on Global Jihad (July 2-8, 2020).

5 Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah, the prominent terrorist group in Mozambique, was established in 2015 as a religious Muslim group, originating from extremist Islamic operatives from Kenya who had immigrated to Mozambique. Initially, Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah advocated non-violence, but that same year it changed its name to Ansar al-Sunna and became a radical Salafi movement with an armed military group using Mozambique as a base for its activity. The movement challenges the local government and strives to enforce Muslim law (Sharia) on Mozambique. In the first phase, its activity is aimed at taking over the northern part of the country (the Cabo Delgado Province), which borders on Tanzania. For more
2017, recently expanded and, in Jan Gerber’s estimation, it poses a dilemma for South Africa on whether to help Mozambique. Following are Jan Gerber’s main points on the implications of ISIS’s activity in Mozambique for South Africa:

- **The danger to South Africa if it becomes involved in the conflict in Mozambique:** Jan Gerber estimated that if forces from South Africa joined the fight against ISIS in Mozambique, this would put South Africa in a great financial and military predicament. It may also motivate ISIS to begin carrying out terrorist attacks in South Africa itself or, alternatively, ISIS is liable to carry out attacks against South African citizens in Mozambique.

- **South African Defense Minister’s response to request for aid for Mozambique’s fight against ISIS:** Jan Gerber noted that South African Defense Minister Mosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula was asked on July 7, 2020 to meet urgently with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), a body for cooperation between the countries in the region, with regard to the ISIS threat. According to a South African MP, ISIS is liable to carry out attacks against South African citizens living, traveling or working in Mozambique. Mozambique is a popular holiday destination [for South Africans] and many South Africans have friends or family living and working in Mozambique. In June 2020, South Africa’s defense minister announced, **for the first time, that local military intelligence had confirmed that there had been an escalation in Islamic insurgency activities in Mozambique’s northernmost province, Cabo Delgado.** She said the uprising may spread to other provinces in Mozambique, as well as to the SADC member states bordering on it. She added that regional cooperation plans are currently being prepared.

- **Summary:** These developments reflect the South African government’s understanding that the situation in Mozambique and its environs cannot improve without regional cooperation, and that the Cabo Delgado region is particularly important to the country’s economy due to its abundant gas, and also to Western companies investing capital in the development of the gas fields. However, there is a fear among the South African government of becoming a target for ISIS, if South
Africa takes part in this type of activity. The author of the article estimates that if South Africa does not send forces to Mozambique, this could be interpreted by ISIS as weakness, and could prove to ISIS and its supporters that its threats are indeed effective and that it is creating a deterrent force in the region. This may encourage ISIS to continue to use this tactic in other areas as well, and to weaken the West’s overall deterrence against ISIS.

### Counterterrorism and preventive activity

### Activity against ISIS’s financial system

- On July 15, 2020, the US Department of the Treasury announced that it had imposed sanctions on six ISIS-affiliated targets: three financial entities and one person, operating in Turkey and Syria, from where they provide important financial and logistical assistance to ISIS and its branches around the world. Sanctions were also imposed on a humanitarian aid organization operating in Afghanistan called the Nejaat Social Welfare Organization, and on its director, Sayed Habib Ahmad Khan. The organization was used for transferring funds to finance the activity of ISIS’s branch in Afghanistan (in the Khorasan Province) (for further details, see US Department of the Treasury website, July 15, 2020).

The announcement of the imposition of sanctions, on the US Department of the Treasury website (US Department of the Treasury website, July 15, 2020)

### Arrest of ISIS operatives in Turkey

- On July 19, 2020, the Turkish Anatolia News Agency reported that Turkish security forces had arrested dozens of suspected ISIS operatives in 15 different neighborhoods in the city of
Istanbul. According to police sources, the suspects planned to carry out terrorist attacks on behalf of ISIS. When they were arrested, documents and digital equipment were seized (Anatolia News Agency, July 19, 2020).