



Algeria - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Wednesday 23 July 2014

Information on active terrorist groups

A report issued in April 2014 by the *United States Department of State* notes:

“Within Algeria, al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) remained the most active terrorist threat. AQIM attacked Algerian security forces, local government targets, and westerners in the Sahel, operating primarily in the mountainous areas east of Algiers and in the expansive desert regions near Algeria’s southern border” (United States Department of State (30 April 2014) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013 – Algeria*).

In January 2014 a paper issued by the *Governance and Social Development Resource Centre* states:

“Algeria faces a diverse range of interrelated security threats. Key drivers of conflict and potential drivers of conflict are Islamist terrorist groups, trafficking and kidnapping, protests, tensions in the Sahrawi camps in Tindouf, and a range of economic and political factors...Islamist groups: Both (AQIM) Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and MUJAO (Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa) are active in Algeria. AQIM has split into northern cells and southern cells, with the former sticking more closely to its jihadi origins and the latter increasingly turning to criminal activity” (Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (January 2014) *Conflict Analysis of Algeria*, p.4).

This document also points out that:

“Most current conflict activity takes place in the north of the country, which is more densely populated than the south, however, increasing incidences of conflict are being recorded in the south...There has also been growing insecurity along the borders with Tunisia and Libya. The majority of the violence occurring in Algeria targets the security forces and takes the form of battles (Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and ambushes)...” (ibid, p.7).

A paper released in April 2014 by the *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project* notes:

“Recent militant activity has generally been limited to attacks against the police and military...” (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (April 2014) *Regional Report: North Africa*, p.8).

A report issued in July 2014 by *Reuters* notes:

“A roadside bomb killed seven members of Algeria’s security forces as they were patrolling in the west of the country, the second major attack on the military in three months” (Reuters (13 July 2014) *Roadside bomb kills seven members of Algeria’s security forces*).

This document also states:

“Violence and militant attacks have become rarer since Algeria ended its decade-long 1990s war with armed Islamists, but the north African branch of al Qaeda and other militants are still active, especially in the south where desert borders are porous. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, as the regional al Qaeda branch is known, also carries out sporadic attacks in the north. It killed at least 14 soldiers in an ambush in April in mountains east of the capital Algiers” (ibid).

The *Jamestown Foundation* in June 2014 notes:

“The continuing break-up of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) into northern and southern factions under rival commanders Abd al-Malik Droukdel and Mokhtar Belmokhtar has presented Algerian authorities with the necessity of fighting a two-front war against factions interested in establishing their dominance by striking security targets within the country” (Jamestown Foundation (15 June 2014) *Algeria Fighting a Two-front War with Islamist Militants*).

In May 2014 a document produced by *Magharebia* points out that:

“Algerian troops on Tuesday (May 13th) killed two terrorists in Boumerdes, bringing to 14 the number of militants killed this month, the defence ministry said. One of the two slain terrorists was identified as Bouchlaala Abdenour, aka Abou Abdelilah, a prominent figure of al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)” (Magharebia (15 May 2014) *Algeria reviews border security after Tamanrasset operation*).

In May 2014 a publication released by the *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project* notes:

“Conflict activity has predominantly centred in the Kabylie region of Northern Algeria and the central province of Ghardaïa. In Kabylie, sporadic outbreaks have involved on-going battles between Islamist militants and security forces catalysed by domestic politics. Serving to reinforce questions of the military’s effectiveness...the most violent attack on security forces since the 2011 attack in Azazga took place in Tizi Ouzou this month. The attack carried out by Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb was seen as a direct response to the landslide 85.1% victory of Bouteflika a few days previously...” (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (May 2014) *ACLEDA Conflict Trends Report No. 26 May 2014*, p.2).

BBC News in April 2014 states:

“Islamist militants have killed 14 Algerian soldiers in an ambush on a convoy in mountains east of the capital Algiers, security officials say...It is believed the attack was carried out by fighters from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).It was one of the deadliest attacks on the Algerian military for several years” (BBC News (20 April 2014) *Algeria: AQIM militants kill 14 soldiers in mountains*).

This article also notes:

“A 10-year civil war was fought between the government in Algiers and Islamist insurgents in the 1990s, but now the militants are largely confined to isolated regions such as the mountains east of Algiers. AQIM, al-Qaeda's north African branch, is mostly based in southern Algeria but over the past few months the army has killed

several militants in the north-eastern mountains, and security sources say some fighters have been found with weapons traced to neighbouring Libya” (ibid).

The *United States Department of State* in a publication released in April 2014 states:

“The al-Mulathamun Battalion (AMB) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on December 19, 2013. Originally part of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), AMB became a separate organization in late 2012 after its leader, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, split from AQIM. In Belmokhtar's first public statement after the split, he threatened to fight against Western interests and announced the creation of the sub-battalion, "Those Who Sign in Blood." In August 2013, AMB and the Mali-based Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) announced that the two organizations would merge under the name "al-Murabitoun." “ (United States Department of State (30 April 2014) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: al-Mulathamun Battalion*).

References

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Attachment not included due to IT limitations

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
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