United Nations S/2026/44

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 February 2026

Original: English

Letter dated 3 February 2026 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the thirty-seventh report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015), which was submitted to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, in accordance with paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution 2734 (2024).

I should be grateful if the attached report could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) James **Kariuki**
President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair
of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions
1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning
Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and
associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

Letter dated 29 December 2025 from the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

I have the honour to refer to paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution 2734 (2024), by which the Security Council requested the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to submit, in writing, comprehensive, independent reports to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, every six months.

I therefore transmit to you the Monitoring Team's thirty-seventh comprehensive report, pursuant to annex I to resolution 2734 (2024). In formulating the report, the Monitoring Team considered information it received up to 15 December 2025. I also note that the document of reference is the English original.

(*Signed*) Colin **Smith**
Coordinator
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team

Thirty-seventh report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities

Summary

The threat from Al-Qaida, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, QDe.115, hereinafter "ISIL (Da'esh)") and their affiliates was multipolar, and complex. There were lingering questions about Sayf al-Adl (QDi.001) and his de facto leadership of Al-Qaida. Nevertheless, Al-Qaida retained the ambition to carry out external attacks.

Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM, QDe.159) continued to expand the territory under its control. It instituted a fuel blockade around Bamako. Its coffers were swollen by the proceeds from kidnapping for ransom. Within the global Al-Qaida network, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP, QDe.129) was increasingly assertive.

ISIL (Da'esh) focus on parts of Africa continued to increase, accelerated by the death of the deputy leader of ISIL (Da'esh), Abdallah Makki Mosleh al-Rafi'i (alias Abu Khadija, not listed), in Iraq in March. ISIL (Da'esh) continued to seek to undermine the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. ISIL (Da'esh) activities in Somalia were constrained by sustained counter-terrorism pressure. Nevertheless, it remained resilient.

In Afghanistan, the de facto authorities continued to provide a permissive environment for a range of terrorist groups, notably Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP, QDe.132). There were growing concerns about the exploitation of commercial satellite communications by terrorist groups and their increasing proficiency in using artificial intelligence.

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* Circulated in the language of submission only and without formal editing.

I. Overview and evolution of the threat

1. The threat from Al-Qaida and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh) was multipolar and increasingly complex. It intensified in multiple theatres, notably in West Africa and the Sahel, and in South Asia. No single country or region can be said to be the epicentre or the primary focus of global terrorist activity. Foreign terrorist fighters continued to be attracted to, and coalesce around, a range of theatres.

2. The leadership of Al-Qaida remained cohesive, though isolated. Dissatisfaction among the rank-and-file with the de facto leadership of Sayf al-Adl continued. Nevertheless, Al-Qaida retained the ambition to carry out "spectacular" external attacks.

3. Partly as a result of the Al-Qaida senior leadership's isolation, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) – under its leader, Saad ben Atef al-Awlaki (Yemeni, not listed) – appeared to be increasingly asserting its ideological and operational leadership of the global Al-Qaida network. The external threat AQAP posed was assessed to be increasing, though it remained opportunistic. It was bolstered by support from Al-Shabaab (SOe.001) and facilitated, to a lesser extent, by opportunistic collaboration with the Houthis.

4. Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) continued to expand the territory under its control and instituted a fuel blockade around Bamako. It carried out its first attack in Nigeria. Its coffers were said to have been swollen by proceeds from kidnapping for ransom, including reports of a single ransom payment of around $50 million. Such a ransom payment would likely embolden the group and further increase its capability.

5. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the situation remained fragile. Elements from Al-Qaida-aligned Hurras al-Din (not listed) were active. Their allegiance to the global agenda of Al-Qaida remained undiminished. Some Hurras al-Din cells had pre-positioned themselves in the south of the country.

6. ISIL (Da'esh) cells remained active across the Syrian Arab Republic. Attacks targeted security forces, particularly in the north-east. ISIL (Da'esh) attempted to provoke sectarian tensions in order to undermine the Government. The President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Ahmad Al-Sharaa, was also a priority target.

7. ISIL (Da'esh) focus on parts of Africa increased. Following the death of Abu Khadija in March 2025, Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ali al-Mainuki (not listed), head of the regional Al-Furqan office (West Africa), was reported to have assumed a more prominent role within the global ISIL (Da'esh) leadership, with some suggesting he may have become head of the General Directorate of Provinces of ISIL (Da'esh).

8. Abdul Qadir Mumin (not listed), head of the Al-Karrar office and who is believed by some Member States to be the overall head of ISIL (Da'esh), was isolated by persistent counter-terrorism pressure from the Somali authorities.

9. ISIL (Da'esh) increased its propaganda coverage of attacks in Mozambique (see annex).

10. In Central and South Asia, the presence of terrorist groups in Afghanistan remained a source of concern. There was an increase in attacks in Pakistan launched by Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Afghanistan, which led to military exchanges. Regional relations remained fragile. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K, QDe.161) was under sustained counter-terrorism pressure, but it retained a potent capability, coupled with intent to conduct external operations.

11. Both ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida continued their efforts to build cybercapabilities, including by appealing to cyberexperts to join their ranks. In August, Cyber Jihad Movement, an established hacker group, pledged its allegiance to Sayf al-Adl, thereby potentially increasing Al-Qaida cybercapabilities.

12. Finally, there was a discernible increase in the effective use of new technology. Terrorist groups exploited commercial satellite communication systems, which enabled cheap, fast and relatively secure communication in remote areas. They also demonstrated greater proficiency in the use of artificial intelligence, primarily in propaganda; they were increasingly adept at seamlessly integrating artificial intelligence tools and visual effects into their efforts to radicalize and recruit. Although this did not represent a step change in capability, it underlined the increasing challenge that these tools pose to the international counter-terrorism effort.

II. Regional developments

A. Africa

West Africa

13. Terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel remained a major concern to Member States, as Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates made significant gains. JNIM carried out several attacks with a wider geographic reach. It remained active in Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, with continued expansion southwards toward the littoral States and north-west Nigeria.

14. Member States reported changes within JNIM leadership. Abderrahmane Talha, alias Abou Talha al-Libi, head of the Timbuktu Emirate, was replaced by Dunam Degheri alias Abderrahmane El-Djazairi (neither listed). Member States also noted that the group had a new head of media, Abu Sufyan al-Muhajir (not listed), installed in November 2024. Sekou Muslimu[1] (not listed), a national of Burkina Faso and senior JNIM leader in Burkina Faso, was appointed head of JNIM in eastern Burkina Faso, charged with expanding JNIM presence in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, the Niger and Togo, while Sheikh Albani (not listed) was appointed emir for Benin.

15. In Mali, JNIM activities were concentrated in the northern, central and western regions, with the western region emerging as a new front. The group demonstrated its ability to launch large-scale coordinated attacks on several fronts. JNIM extended its operations beyond military targets to include economic objectives, notably by attacking mining sites and industrial facilities operated by foreign investors, as well as conducting kidnapping for ransom operations and launching attacks on key strategic logistics routes.

16. In August, JNIM mobilized fighters along highways from Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania and Senegal in preparation for its fuel blockade on Bamako. From September, JNIM implemented the blockade, systematically targeting fuel convoys from neighbouring countries, destroying hundreds of tankers and disrupting fuel transportation to Bamako, thereby exerting economic pressure on the Government of Mali. In late October, Malian security forces targeted JNIM positions, killing several fighters, among them Ridwan al-Ansari (not listed), a close associate of Iyad Ag Ghali (QDi.316), near Boucle du Baoulé forest, west of Bamako. In mid-November, another key JNIM leader, Abou Salam Oumarou (not listed), was killed in Soumpi, Timbuktu Region, during a Malian Armed Forces operation.

[1] S/2022/547, para. 27.

17. Despite the pressure on Bamako, Member States assessed that JNIM was unlikely to overrun the city soon, as it lacked the capacity to occupy it. The group was, however, likely to continue the blockade to try to force the Government of Mali into negotiations.

18. JNIM intensified its kidnapping for ransom activities by targeting foreign nationals. More than 20 foreigners were abducted around Bamako and southern Mali, and JNIM reportedly secured substantial payments for some abducted individuals. Ransom payments boosted JNIM coffers and encouraged it to view kidnapping for ransom as a key method of raising revenue, making foreign nationals prime targets for kidnapping.

19. In Burkina Faso, JNIM intensified its activities across the Sahel, East and Centre-Nord Regions, focusing attacks on civilians and security forces. The group carried out a major attack in the town of Barsalogo in August, killing several people it perceived to be collaborating with the Government. Member States reported that in September, the pace of JNIM attacks in Burkina Faso was reduced, following the deployment of JNIM fighters from Burkina Faso to Mali to bolster the group's attempted blockade.

20. JNIM maintained a smaller presence in the Niger compared to Mali and Burkina Faso, with most of its activities concentrated in the Tillabéri and Tahoua Regions. JNIM operations in north-west Niger were focused on securing supply routes for weapons, ammunition and vehicles, and were led by El Hadj Osmane Baidiri Ould Mohamed, alias Abou Ghosmane (not listed).

21. In Benin, Katiba Hanifa (not listed), part of JNIM, focused its activities in the Alibori, Borgou and Atacora Departments of northern Benin, where it targeted security forces on patrol, attacked security posts and intimidated or abducted villagers. In Nigeria, JNIM claimed responsibility for its first attack in late October 2025, when a soldier was killed in Kwara State near the Benin border. Member States observed that the attack was opportunistic; however, JNIM leveraged it to project an image of expansion. This followed an earlier propaganda video in which JNIM had signalled its presence in the country.

22. Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS, QDe.163) had a smaller presence in Mali during the period under review but remained active in the Niger, its primary area of operations. ISGS attacks were smaller in scale and asymmetrical, targeting security forces and civilians. In Niger, the Tillabéri, Tahoua and Dosso Regions saw sustained ISGS activity, while in Mali, attacks were recorded in Ménaka and Tessit. Between August and October, ISGS and JNIM clashed in Yagha Province, Burkina Faso, in Tillabéri and in Ménaka over territorial dominance. These confrontations marked the end of the détente between the two groups established earlier in 2025. The Lakurawa[2] remained key in projecting ISGS presence in north-west Nigeria. They enhanced illegal tax collection, engaged in cattle rustling and attacks against security forces and seemed to gain a foothold in north-west Nigeria.

23. In the Lake Chad basin, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP, QDe.162) prominence was enhanced following intensified counter-terrorism operations that weakened other ISIL (Da'esh) branches in the Middle East and Somalia. Significant developments were observed in the leadership structure of ISWAP. Member States reported the elevation of Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ali al-Mainuki (not listed), head of the al-Furqan office of ISIL, to ISIL (Da'esh) core leadership, some suggesting that he may have replaced Abu Khadija as head of the General Directorate of Provinces of ISIL (Da'esh). Ba'a Shuwa, alias Abu Musa al-Mangawi (not listed),

[2] Lakurawa is Hausa for "recruits", but also refers to a group within Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS).

was reported to be the current leader of ISWAP. Some Member States confirmed the death of Abu Musab al-Barnawi (not listed) in April 2023, while others maintained al-Barnawi was alive and continuing to oversee ISWAP media operations and the coordination of ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates.

24. ISWAP intensified its operations in Borno State, targeting security installations in north-east Nigeria and engaging in localized violence and extortion in the Far North Region of Cameroon, the Diffa Region in the Niger and Lac Province in Chad, with active cells in Kogi, Zamfara, Sokoto and Katsina States in Nigeria. Member States noted that ISWAP had carried out more than 500 attacks between January and October, with seven drone attacks recorded during the same period, compared to one in 2024, demonstrating increased operational capacity.

25. In a bid to strengthen territorial control in north-east Nigeria, ISWAP entrenched its positions across central and southern Borno in August, reinforcing its bases in Gargash and Sambisa. About 100 additional fighters were deployed to each camp after specialized training at its Kingarwa and Toumbouma camps. In September, the ISWAP shura elevated the Sambisa base to the status of a wilayah, headed by a wali.

26. Member States noted no significant changes within Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad (Boko Haram, QDe.138). The group has no regional or international allegiance but remained active in the Lake Chad basin, with activity in north-east Nigeria, the Far North Region of Cameroon, the Diffa Region in the Niger, and in parts of Chad. Member States noted that Ibrahim Mahamadu alias Bakura Modu (not listed), reportedly killed in a targeted operation in mid-August 2025 on Shilawa Island in the Diffa Region, may still be alive. The Bakura Modu faction was active in Diffa and Borno State, targeting civilians, military forces and rival ISWAP. The détente between ISWAP and Bakura's faction collapsed, and a clash over territorial control in late 2025 caused heavy casualties on both sides. The Aliyu Ngulde faction, based in the Mandara mountains and Ngoshe area in Gwoza Local Government Area, mainly carried out cross-border raids and abductions in Cameroon. There was a marked increase in kidnapping for ransom, signalling a shift towards more profitable and sustainable forms of financing.

27. Member States noted the resurgence of Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan (Ansaru, QDe.142) in Nigeria, with bases in Kwara and Niger States and its collaboration with Katiba Hanifa (part of JNIM). Counter-terrorism operations by Nigerian security forces in mid-2025 led to the arrest of two leaders: Muhammad Usman Muhammad, alias Abu Bara'a, alias Abas Mukhtar (not listed), head of Ansaru; and Mallam Mamuda alias Mahmud al-Nigeri (not listed), Abu Bara'a's deputy and head of a faction known as the Muhamuda group. The arrests disrupted Ansaru's operations. The group had yet to announce Abu Bara'a's successor, though it maintained active cells in north-central and north-west Nigeria.

Central and Southern Africa

28. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF, CDe.001) posed a substantial regional threat. Instability resulting from the occupation of key cities by Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) diverted a campaign of military pressure by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo away from ADF areas, stretching security resources. While M23 activities constrained the ADF theatre of operations, ADF enjoyed complete freedom within their designated area of operations.

29. ADF was assessed to have 2,000 members, including families and dependants, with between 600 and 700 fighters. ADF leader, Musa Baluku (listed as Seka Baluku, CDi.036) was in Madina camp, now located in Epulu National Park, Mambasa territory,

Ituri Province. Meddie Nkalubo (listed as Mohamed Ali Nkalubo, CDi.042) moved mostly with Baluku, while other key ADF commanders operated in Beni, Lubero and Irumu territories. Civilian deaths increased substantially, with ADF killing over 500 civilians since June.

30. Abu Waqas, alias Abwakasi (listed as Ahmad Mahmood Hassan, CDi.040), was in Bapere Sector in Lubero territory, North Kivu and operated unhindered in his sector. He bears responsibility for 300 deaths in and around Lubero since June 2025. His most significant attacks included the church massacre in Oicha, killing 50 churchgoers, and the massacre of 70 mourners at a funeral in Ntuyo village, Lubero territory, in August and September, respectively.

31. Member States noted they had seen no movements of regional foreign terrorist fighters to or from ADF areas or between groups, which they ascribed to the fragile security situation involving M23. ADF was assessed to be largely self-sufficient, currently receiving little outside financing. Despite these constraints, they have proven resilient in both extorting local small-scale industries in their territories and in adapting to new technologies.

32. Member States reported that unfettered access to privately owned, independently operated satellite communications systems posed an increased threat, acting as a force multiplier and enabler for ADF. Improved access and connectivity allowed ADF to instantly send large volumes of propaganda to ISIL central media for publication. Furthermore, given the increased use of cryptocurrency by ADF, Member States informed that, with satellite connections, ADF was now able to convert cryptocurrency into funds usable in mobile money applications and mobile wallets while in the middle of the bush, an area that is traditionally out of reach of conventional cellular towers.

33. In the Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique, the operating strength of Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama‘a (ASWJ) (not listed) declined to 250–350 fighters, with no new recruits joining its ranks in the reporting period. Leadership remained unchanged, with Suleimane Nguvu (Tanzanian, not listed) playing an increasingly strategic role as communications facilitator given his previous role of recruiting operatives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, and running facilitation networks in the United Republic of Tanzania. Member States assessed that operational commanders were deployed to lead in different districts and camps, operating semi-autonomously in a flat leadership structure.

34. ASWJ remained resilient, conducting regular low-intensity attacks. The period from June to September was characterized by the increased use of roadblocks, extortion, abduction for ransom and looting from civilian populations, with ASWJ under pressure to fund its operations. From September onwards, there was a distinct increase in the number of attacks against both civilians and security forces, with approximately 30 deaths every month. ASWJ split into smaller groups, spreading out to cover broader terrain, moving from Macomia to Chiúre, causing the mass displacement of 52,000 persons. Another group moved into Nampula, which saw sustained activity, with multiple attacks culminating in the displacement of 60,000 persons in mid-November. Montepuez also saw persistent activity in different mining areas. Activities in recent months were centred around Mocímboa da Praia, Macomia, Quissanga, Muidumbe, Montepuez and Nampula – a far wider spread than previously seen, which Member States assessed to be in response to counter-terrorism operations in ASWJ strongholds.

East Africa

35. The threat presented by ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia was significantly reduced owing to continued counter-terrorism efforts by Security Forces (Operation Hilaac), in conjunction with regional and international partners. Member States estimated that ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia now has approximately 200 to 300 fighters, with a significant number having been killed and over 180 arrested, and local fighters reintegrating into their clans. Regional Member States reported outward movement of Arab foreign terrorist fighters from Puntland to Yemen through the Gulf of Aden. The movement of foreign terrorist fighters from the region to Puntland was significantly constrained due to increased security operations and heightened security measures at regional borders.

36. In Somalia, Member States assessed that Abdul Qadir Mumin (not listed) remained the head of the Al-Karrar office, with his deputy, Abdurahman Fahiye (not listed), tasked with the operational leadership of ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia. Mumin was reported to be hiding in the Cal Miskaat mountains with Fahiye, who continued to give operational guidance to the group. Notwithstanding the recent reduction in threat due to counter-terrorism operations, ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia retained significant capacity for resilience, operating highly mobile cells to avoid territorial collapse. The group relied on deep sanctuaries, caves and smuggling routes to persist under pressure, with the mountainous terrain of Cal Miskaat and its proximity to coastal routes enabling fighters to evade detection and regroup easily.

37. The revenue collection capacity of ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia had been degraded, with more limited scope for revenue generation. ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia continued to raise funds from their businesses; however, the ports of Bosaso, Qandala and Ba'ad had become so heavily securitized that they were no longer able to collect revenue from those areas. Access to residual funds sustained the group despite their current operational challenges.

38. Al-Shabaab concentrated its attacks within Somalia and cross-border into Kenya, primarily targeting security forces. Member States noted that Al-Shabaab had slowed its offensive towards Mogadishu from July and instead prioritized heightened activities in Hirshabelle, Juba Hoose and Galmudug, marking a major resurgence in central Somalia. The African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) and Somali security forces retook and defended some key towns near Mogadishu. Within Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab attacks were largely directed at security installations and government officials, with notable incidents at the Jaalle Siyaad military academy of the Somali National Army in July, the Godka Jilaow prison in October and the General Dhagabadan training centre in December, reflecting a focus on military targets rather than mass civilian casualties.

39. Al-Shabaab had still not officially announced the replacement for Mohammed Mohamud Mire (SOi.024), head of Al-Shabaab internal affairs, who was killed in December 2024. Member States assessed that an announcement was unlikely given the increased targeting of Al-Shabaab leadership by security forces in Lower Juba. Senior Al-Shabaab leaders relocated from Jilib, Juba Dhexe to avoid being targeted. In September, Mahad Karate (SOi.020) relocated from Jilib to Hola Wajeer. Around the same time, the Al-Shabaab radio station, Radio Andalus, was moved from Jilib to Bu'aale in Juba Dhexe. Member States reported that in October, Mahmoud Abdi Hamud, alias Jaafar Gurey (not listed), a senior Al-Shabaab leader and close associate of Ahmed Diriye (SOi.014), may have been killed in an air strike in Bu'aale.

40. Al-Shabaab maintained relations with other groups, in line with Al-Qaida messaging encouraging inter-affiliate collaboration and pragmatic alliances. Member States noted that while Al-Shabaab financial support for AQAP may have declined,

the two groups continued to collaborate on media operations (see annex). Member States also assessed that Al-Shabaab maintained limited collaboration with the Houthis, which was reportedly transactional in nature and focused on training and weapons acquisition.

North Africa

41. The threat posed by ISIL and Al-Qaida across North Africa continued to be significantly constrained by sustained counter-terrorism efforts. Despite these pressures, ISIL-inspired attacks by lone actors were assessed as the most acute threat in the region. Regional Member States noted a rise in the radicalization of minors.

42. While no large-scale returns were noted during the reporting period, regional Member States emphasized that highly experienced North African foreign terrorist fighters in the Syrian Arab Republic remained a significant threat due to the risk of their clandestine return (possibly accompanied by radicalized children), or their relocation to other conflict zones.

43. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM, QDe.014) remained present in southern Algeria, western Tunisia and south-western Libya, with its strength assessed at up to 200 fighters.

44. In Algeria, AQIM continued to face counter-terrorism pressure. Its leadership maintained close ties with JNIM and participated in key JNIM leadership meetings. The group relocated most of its presence and activities from Algeria to northern Mali as part of its restructuring efforts. In September, Algerian authorities dismantled a cell in Tébessa near the Tunisian border, killing six militants and seizing arms and military equipment.

45. Jund al-Khilafah in Tunisia (JAK-T, QDe.167), with approximately 20 fighters, remained operationally inactive. Several ISIL-linked cells were also dismantled. ISIL (Da’esh) shifted its focus to online recruitment, particularly of minors, resulting in the recruitment of over 30 youths during the year.

46. In Morocco, recent arrests showed that the threat was mainly driven by exposure to terrorist content online and aspirations to travel to conflict zones, particularly in the Sahel-Saharan region. Authorities foiled four plots during the reporting period, including the arrest of a 21-year-old female student affiliated with ISIL who had begun acquiring bomb-making materials and toxic substances, believed to be intended for an attack on a religious site in Rabat.

47. In Libya, the southern part of the country remained a permissive environment for the movement and procurement of weapons, primarily benefiting Al-Qaida, which collaborated opportunistically with organized crime networks. AQIM was estimated to have around 50 fighters in the region.

48. During the reporting period, the Libyan Intelligence Service dismantled at least four ISIL-Libya (QDe.165) facilitation cells engaged in financing, the smuggling of migrants and fighters, and media operations, with links to Europe, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sahel and East Africa. One cell moved ISIL members from Europe to Libya and onwards to the Sahel and Somalia. Another cell, dismantled in October, focused on media production and the dissemination of propaganda through TikTok and Facebook. A third, dismantled in November, supported logistics through smuggling and money-laundering while planning operations in the Sudan. The fourth, specialized in the smuggling of migrants, facilitated ISIL (Da’esh) cross-border movements under external ISIL (Da’esh) leadership orders, and helped to expand sleeper cells in Libya.

49. In Egypt, Government-led development initiatives in northern Sinai and heightened security measures continued to limit terrorist activity. Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (not listed) remained inactive, with most of its key fighters eliminated.

B. Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Levant

50. A year after the collapse of the former Government of Bashar al-Assad, the security situation in the Syrian Arab Republic remained fragile. ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida affiliates continued to exploit the country's unrest, sectarian divides and weak State control to regroup and carry out attacks. Despite these challenges, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic made some progress in stabilizing the country and fighting ISIL, including by arresting at least 278 ISIL (Da'esh) suspects, disrupting 45 planned attacks, dismantling 23 terrorist cells and seizing weapons and explosives. Some of these efforts were in partnership with several Member States.

51. On 10 November, the Government joined the Global Coalition against Da'esh, sparking criticism from certain armed groups, which accused the Government of betrayal. The Security Council adopted resolution 2799 (2025) on 6 November, delisting the President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Ahmed al-Sharaa, and the Minister of Interior, Anas Hasan Khattab, from the sanctions list maintained by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities.

52. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic faced security and internal fragmentation challenges during this transitional period, including with respect to establishing a unified military structure; containing foreign terrorist fighters and various armed factions (some operating outside State authority); preventing the infiltration of terrorists into the security forces; and exerting effective control of territory.

53. In 2025, five assassination attempts were foiled against the President, the Minister of Interior and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates. The President was targeted in Aleppo and Dar'a by Saraya Ansar Al-Sunnah (not listed) – a group assessed as being a front for ISIL (Da'esh), providing it with plausible deniability and improved operational capacity. Saraya Ansar Al-Sunnah consisted of 5 to 12 decentralized cells, focused on targeting Syrian minorities. It included ISIL (Da'esh) members, some former members of Hurras al-Din (not listed) and other armed factions.

54. ISIL (Da'esh) maintained an estimated 3,000 fighters across the broader Syrian-Iraqi region, the majority in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Badia remained strategically important but no longer served as a primary stronghold for ISIL. ISIL (Da'esh) established networks across all Syrian governorates, embedding sleeper cells in urban centres, including Damascus. ISIL (Da'esh) also deliberately concealed the extent of its operations by leaving many attacks unclaimed. Between June and November, Member States attributed at least 129 attacks to ISIL (Da'esh), mainly through the use of improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, assassinations and ambushes. Most attacks were in Dayr al-Zawr. Nearly 70 per cent of attacks in the country targeted the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). Starting in late November, ISIL (Da'esh) expanded attacks in Idlib and Aleppo on Syrian military forces.

55. Member States warned that ISIL (Da'esh) had infiltrated newly formed security structures, particularly at the lower and mid-level ranks. ISIL (Da'esh) had also appropriated the logo of the military and its uniforms to pose as part of the Government.

The perpetrator of the attack on 13 December near Palmyra, which killed two soldiers of the United States of America and one civilian, was a newly recruited Syrian security forces member with reported links to ISIL (Da'esh). At the time of writing, no group had claimed responsibility. ISIL (Da'esh) also exploited the presence of armed factions that continued to use their own flags and insignia, despite being formally under the Syrian military.

56. ISIL (Da'esh) established a special battalion dedicated to high-profile and complex attacks. The group acquired weaponry following the collapse of the former Government of Bashar al-Assad, including anti-tank missiles, artillery, anti-aircraft systems and mortars. In the eastern part of the country, its cells secured drones and related components. The group continued to recruit hardline elements from dissolved factions. A group of defecting foreign terrorist fighters reportedly arrived at an ISIL (Da'esh) camp west of Dayr al-Zawr, where they were integrated into combat battalions. The group also prioritized the release of its fighters held in SDF-controlled prisons. In November, an escape attempt from Ghuwayran prison in Hasakah was thwarted.

57. A number of Member States assessed that Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS, QDe.137) remained in transition and was being absorbed into the new Syrian military and governance structures. One Member State noted that approximately 85 per cent of northern armed group members involved in the operation that led to the fall of the former Government of Bashar al-Assad joined the new structure.

58. Delays in implementing the agreement reached on 10 March between the Government and SDF heightened tensions in the north and north-east, creating openings for ISIL (Da'esh) and other armed actors. In the south, the violence in Suwayda' in July highlighted the difficulties in restraining radical elements within the security forces, including foreign terrorist fighters, and in consolidating State territorial control. Some of the deployed elements were foreign terrorist fighters operating in units with limited experience in centralized command structures.

59. Although no large-scale or systematic movements of foreign terrorist fighters into or out of the Syrian Arab Republic were observed, Member States remained concerned about potential flows of fighters – including from Central Asia – towards Afghanistan or Africa. In June, the Government implemented a plan to integrate at least 3,500 foreigners into the newly formed armed forces, including by establishing the 84th Division in Idlib, comprising six brigades. Some Member States cautioned that this integration may face hurdles, due to extremist ideologies of some foreign terrorist fighters, their loyalty to different command structures, challenges related to redeployment and societal resistance to their inclusion. Furthermore, some foreign factions continued to operate autonomously. ISIL (Da'esh) urged these fighters to join its ranks in the Syrian Arab Republic, though only isolated cases of inward movement were observed.

60. The Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement/Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIM/TIP, QDe.088) in the Syrian Arab Republic was among the largest groups of foreign terrorist fighters integrated into the Syrian Ministry of Defence where, as employees, they received training to enhance military capabilities, while continuing to recruit from Uighur communities in a neighbouring country. One Member State reported that ETIM/TIP had received multiple batches of Uighur militants from the north-eastern part of the country and from Hawl camp. Abdulaziz Dawood (also known as Zahid, not listed), commander of the 84th Division of the Syrian Army, made a speech on the sixteenth anniversary of the attacks of 5 July 2009 in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, China, saying that the target for ETIM/TIP remained the Government of China, and urged followers to fight for the "liberation of East Turkistan".

61. As part of a broader campaign to contain foreign fighters, Syrian forces arrested Abu Islam al-Uzbaki (not listed) and Abu Dujanah al-Turkistani (not listed), sparking controversy among some foreign terrorist fighters. In October, clashes broke out with Katibat al-Ghoraba al-Faransiya (not listed), led by Oumar Diaby (QDi.342). Also, more than 10 members of Ansar Al-Islam (QDe.098) were arrested in Idlib for allegedly plotting a coup against the President, Mr. al-Sharaa. Muhammad ‘Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ahmad (not listed), a senior attack planner for Ansar al-Islam, was killed in a drone strike by the Global Coalition against Da’esh in October.

62. The dissolution of Hurras al-Din continued to be assessed as superficial. The group remained Al-Qaida’s Syrian affiliate, with up to 1,000 fighters, maintaining links to Al-Qaida leadership and to AQAP. Fighters had greater freedom of movement and adopted a covert, decentralized structure with cells across all Syrian governorates. Hurras al-Din strengthened its finances and weapons supply, partly through Ansar al-Islam, and positioned networks in the southern part of the country in anticipation of further foreign incursions. Some Hurras al-Din members may be departing the Syrian Arab Republic for Yemen or Africa. One Member State noted that one of Sayf al-Adl’s daughters was in the Syrian Arab Republic.

63. In Iraq, ISIL (Da’esh) remained under sustained counter-terrorism pressure, limiting its capacity for large-scale operations. Yet, the group remained a threat by exploiting instability in the Syrian Arab Republic, focusing on rebuilding its network and conducting low-intensity insurgency. Notably, the group failed to launch attacks during the parliamentary elections held in November. However, it did carry out unsophisticated low-impact operations in Anbar, Diyala and Salah al-Din, while maintaining footholds in the Hamrin Mountains and western al-Anbar. In 2025, ISIL (Da’esh) attacks in Iraq were at an all-time low.

64. Some Member States assessed that ISIL (Da’esh) was still suffering from the loss of Abu Khadija. Following his killing in March, Jassim Khalaf Dawood al-Mazroui (alias Abu Abdul-Qader, not listed) emerged as the new head of the Bilad al-Rafidayn office and Ahmed Zeidan Khalaf al-Ithawi as the new wali of Iraq (both not listed). They are focused on reviving the Iraq province of ISIL (Da’esh) and enhancing cross-border coordination with the Syrian Arab Republic. Approximately 50 fighters were assessed to cross monthly through Anbar, facilitated by Abu Hikmat al-Nimrawi (not listed), who oversaw the Al-Ibrah Network responsible for transferring fighters and logistical support across the Iraqi-Syrian border. Iraqi border security increasingly constrained these movements.

65. ISIL (Da’esh) leadership in Iraq was fragmented, having lost four out of nine provincial leaders and five of seven branch heads. Although replacements were available, filling senior roles, such as walis, was increasingly difficult. The group’s recruitment strategy targeted displaced persons in Hawl camp and detainees in Syrian and Iraqi prisons, in order to mobilize them upon release.

66. Member States reported links between ISIL (Da’esh) in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic and its African affiliates. In August, Iraqi authorities dismantled a transnational network of Iraqi and Syrian operatives facilitating financing and the movement of fighters to West Africa. This followed the arrest of a logistics cell in Kirkuk and led to further arrests of 10 individuals in Côte d’Ivoire, Madagascar and Togo, all linked to a senior ISIL (Da’esh) financier based in Africa.

67. In the wider Levant, arrests of ISIL-affiliated individuals or children radicalized by its propaganda continue. During the reporting period, Türkiye arrested over 215 individuals, including the 16-year-old student who attacked Izmir police station in September.

C. Arabian Peninsula

68. Member States assessed that the threat from Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP, QDe.129) was growing, driven by improved funding and greater operational freedom within Yemen. While AQAP prioritized domestic operations through selective, high-impact attacks, it maintained capability and intent for external operations. Yemen also remained a transit corridor for fighters en route to Somalia. AQAP may exploit friction or weaknesses in counter-terrorism coordination, particularly in the southern and eastern regions, where it is most active.

69. The leader of AQAP, Saad bin Atef al-Awlaki (not listed), was regarded as a strategic planner who relied heavily on tribal alliances. He instructed members to participate in tribal customs and form marital ties with influential families. Simultaneously, he reinforced the group's autonomy from Al-Qaida central leadership and limited reference to Al-Qaida core in AQAP propaganda.

70. The group's estimated strength ranged from 2,000 to 3,000 fighters, primarily in remote areas of Abyan, Shabwah, Ma'rib and Hadramawt. Although internal tensions continued, which were manifested in some covert assassinations, these conflicts remained largely hidden from public view. A Member State also noted the presence of AQAP Urdu-speaking elements who, despite lacking external networks at present, could become an increased threat if the security environment in Yemen worsens.

71. AQAP senior leadership remained stable, with its shura council comprising Ibrahim al-Qosi (alias Khubayb al-Sudani), Ibrahim al-Banna (alias Abu Ayman al-Masri) and Abdallah Al-Mubarak (all not listed). Al-Qosi played a dual role, influencing both AQAP and Al-Qaida central media and was close to Sayf al-Adl. Counter-terrorism efforts led to the deaths of at least six key AQAP members (none of them listed) during the reporting period, including Abdul Wasi' al-San'ani in August and Abu Muhammad Al-San'ani, head of security in Ma'rib and deputy to al-Banna, in Wadi Obeida in November.

72. Despite ongoing military pressure, AQAP continued to demonstrate logistical capabilities and shifted toward more complex operations. Between June and October, it conducted at least 14 attacks in Abyan and Shabwah, employing increasingly sophisticated tactics. These included weaponized drones, double suicide bombings, improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, ambushes and thermal-sighted sniper rifles. The most notable incident was the suicide raid on 21 October on a government compound in Abyan, which demonstrated advanced coordination and planning. The previous suicide attack occurred in August 2024.

73. The shura council reportedly discussed launching external operations and forming a maritime operations cell and training members in the use of uncrewed boats. One Member State also reported AQAP interest in liquid explosives.

74. AQAP enhanced its covert pragmatic relationship with the Houthis based on shared tactical interests. One Member State noted that in June, the Houthis communicated with AQAP and provided estimated payments totalling 250,000 Saudi riyals (around $ 65,000) as a reward for an attack, and that in August, Houthi elements were present in Abyan and participated in joint operational planning.

75. The alliance between AQAP and Al-Shabaab remained strong, forming part of a broader logistical and operational network across the Gulf of Aden. One Member State reported meetings in Somalia in October aimed at forming a joint unit comprising Houthis, AQAP and Al-Shabaab.

76. Meanwhile, ISIL-Yemen (QDe.166) remained marginalized, with around 100 fighters and some cells in Lahij, Ma'rib and Aden. Key ISIL (Da'esh) media figures were in Yemen coordinating with ISIL-Somalia. The killing in April of Abu Zaid, former head of the ISIL (Da'esh) core media office (diwan), disrupted ISIL (Da'esh) media operations. He was a communication node between Abu Khadija and ISIL-Somalia.

D. Europe and the Americas

77. Across both Europe[3] and North America, there continued to be persistent but relatively low-sophistication attack plots, most of which were self-initiated or had minimal contact with terrorist groups overseas.

78. It was often difficult to attribute attacks unequivocally to specific groups or accurately describe attackers' claimed motivations. Some attacks were allegedly in response or linked to the Gaza and Israel conflict. In many cases, though, the ideological motivation was confused or unclear.

79. The threat picture was further complicated by some criminal actors trying to obscure their disinformation campaigns by linking them to terrorism. For example, spurious allegations that ISIL (Da'esh) endorsed one of the candidates in the election for the mayor of New York City, were widely shared on social media. These allegations were shown, however, to be part of a disinformation campaign and not linked to terrorism.

80. In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on 2 October, three people were killed (including the attacker) as a result of an attack on a synagogue in Manchester. The attacker phoned the authorities of the United Kingdom during the attack and claimed it on behalf of ISIL (Da'esh). It remains unclear whether he had previously professed support for the group or had any prior links to it.

81. Another national of the United Kingdom with links to ISIL (Da'esh) was convicted of planning an attack. He regularly shared violent antisemitic messages online and was also found to have instructions on how to make mustard gas. This followed the conviction of another national of the United Kingdom earlier in 2025 for murder and terrorist-related offences; he was also found to be trying to develop ricin. In France, six planned terrorist attacks had been thwarted since January 2025.

82. In the United States of America, several men were arrested in connection with a terrorist plot to carry out a mass shooting over Halloween weekend in Michigan. They had reportedly scouted potential locations in a Detroit suburb and expressed support online for ISIL (Da'esh). The pair had bought semi-automatic guns and more than 1,600 rounds of ammunition. The plotters allegedly had links to individuals overseas, including in Europe.

83. The trend continued towards younger people being targeted for radicalization and recruitment, in particular by ISIL (Da'esh). In France, two minors, aged 15 and 17, were arrested for early-stage attack planning against various high-profile targets. They were reported to be avid consumers of online violent extremist content. In Austria, an 18-year-old was arrested after researching bomb construction and attack planning, reportedly inspired by AQAP. In Canada, nearly 1 in 10 of the agency's terrorism investigations included at least one person under the age of 18.

[3] Western and Eastern Europe.

84. Concerns about terrorist groups exploiting human smuggling networks to infiltrate Europe persisted. In a weekly publication, *Al-Naba*, ISIL called upon its followers to reactivate cells in Libya and to use it as a gateway to attack Europe.

E. Asia

Central and South Asia

85. Regional countries remained concerned about the number of terrorist groups in Afghanistan and its spillover effects, including cross-border attacks and the radicalization of vulnerable domestic communities. The Afghan de facto authorities claimed that there were no terrorist groups within its borders. No Member State supported this view.

86. The de facto authorities continued to act against ISIL-Khorasan (ISIL-K) and control the external activities of some other groups. Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP),[4] however, was accorded greater liberty and support from the de facto authorities, and consequently TTP attacks against Pakistan increased, amplifying regional tensions.

87. Al-Qaida status and strength remained unchanged from that reported in the previous report of the Monitoring Team, and its appetite for external operations undiminished. Its focus was on "spectacular" attacks aimed at attracting notoriety and global media coverage, rather than the lower sophistication attacks favoured by ISIL (Da'esh).

88. Al-Qaida continued to enjoy the patronage of the de facto authorities. It acted as a service provider and multiplier for other terrorist groups in Afghanistan in terms of training and advice, principally to TTP.

89. Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) (not listed) remained active in south-eastern Afghanistan, where the Haqqani Network exerts considerable influence. Osama Mahmoud (not listed), the "emir" of AQIS, and Yahya Ghauri (not listed), his deputy, were reported to be in Kabul, with the media cell of AQIS based in Herat. There were concerns that AQIS was increasingly focused on external operations. Such operations would likely be unclaimed or deniable operations, perhaps as part of the umbrella group Ittihad-ul-Mujahideen Pakistan (not listed)[5] (which declared itself in April) so as not to create difficulties for the Taliban as hosts of AQIS.

90. TTP operates as one of the largest terrorist groups in Afghanistan and its attacks on Pakistani security forces and State structures led to military confrontation. Attacks were increasingly complex and, at times, involved large numbers of fighters. An attack on an Islamabad courthouse on 11 November resulted in 12 deaths and was claimed by a TTP splinter group: it was the first attack in the capital for several years, and a departure from previous targeting by TTP. Some Member States expressed concern that TTP may deepen its cooperation with Al-Qaida-aligned groups in order to attack a wider range of targets, potentially resulting in an extraregional threat. However, TTP suffered several operational setbacks, notably the death of Mufti Muzahim (TTP deputy emir, not listed) in a Pakistani operation in October.

91. ISIL-K[6] was under significant pressure, mostly from security operations of regional States and military actions by the Taliban. While there were fewer attacks, it retained significant operational and combat capability and the ability to rapidly replace fighters, including through online recruitment. The pressure campaign pushed

[4] See S/2025/796, paras. 82–89, for further information on TTP.
[5] See S/2025/796, paras. 97 and 98, for further information on Ittihad-ul-Mujahideen Pakistan.
[6] See S/2025/796, paras. 66–81, for further information on Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K).

ISIL-K to search for alliances with other armed factions in different areas in Afghanistan. ISIL-K was active mainly in northern Afghanistan, particularly Badakhshan, and areas close to the Pakistani border. It continued to develop its network of cells to project a threat regionally and beyond.

92. Aggressive propaganda by ISIL-K in Central Asian languages expanded its target audience. It sought to exploit issues such as the Gaza and Israel conflict to promote recruitment and financing.

93. ISIL-K was comprised of individuals from nearly all ethnic groups in the region, including from Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation. Regional countries, especially Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, were concerned about their nationals who have played increasingly important roles in the group and the establishment of "sleeper cells" in those countries. Central Asia remained a key focus for the group, with an aspiration to hold territory there. It also retained aspirations to attack Shia places of worship in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

94. Under the de facto authorities' patronage, which included the issuance of identity documents, ETIM/TIP members were able to move freely within Afghanistan and have gradually concentrated in Badakhshan. According to one Member State, they raised funds from poppy cultivation and mining. Approximately 250 members were reported to have joined Taliban police forces in 2025. One Member State noted that ETIM/TIP in Afghanistan called upon its members in the Syrian Arab Republic and neighbouring countries to move to Afghanistan in preparation for "returning to Xinjiang for jihad".

95. One Member State noted that Jaish-i-Mohammed (JiM, QDe.019) had claimed responsibility for a series of attacks. It was also reported to be linked to an attack on the Red Fort in New Delhi on 9 November that killed 15 people. On 8 October, Jaish-i-Mohammed leader Mohammed Masood Azhar Alvi (QDi.422) formally announced the establishment of a women-only wing, Jamaat ul-Muminat (not listed), which was aimed at supporting terrorist attacks. Another Member State reported that Jaish-i-Mohammed was defunct. Separately, it was reported that on 28 July, three individuals allegedly involved in the attack perpetrated in Pahalgam, in Jammu and Kashmir, were killed.

96. The Baloch Liberation Army (not listed) conducted a series of attacks against Pakistani security forces and projects in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). On 16 September, the Baloch Liberation Army ambushed a Pakistani military convoy patrolling the Corridor, killing 32 troops. While counter-terrorism operations by Pakistan restricted the Baloch Liberation Army's operational space, it remained active. Some Member States reported that the Baloch Liberation Army collaborated with TTP and ISIL-K through shared training camps and resources, coordinating attacks and meetings between commanders. Some Member States assessed that there was neither an association nor growing ties between the Baloch Liberation Army and Al-Qaida or ISIL (Da'esh).

South-East Asia

97. The terrorist threat in South-East Asia remained stable, but the online radicalization of minors and the return and release of former fighters constituted growing concerns. Maritime-focused groups remained of concern for several States due to recurring kidnapping activities in strategic waterways.

98. Approximately 700 to 1,200 South-East Asian nationals remained in north-eastern Syrian camps. Managing their return and their deradicalization and reintegration into society presented specific challenges and strained resources.

99. Planned or actual attacks in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, primarily by males between the ages of 13 and 17, increasingly used gaming platforms (especially Discord and Roblox) for radicalization. Indonesia reported that 110 minors had been recruited in this manner in 2025, noting the quickening pace of radicalization.

100. ISIL in South-East Asia (ISIL-SEA, QDe.169) operated primarily in the southern Philippines and consisted of about 100 members. Philippine security forces remained active with operations against ISIL factions, including the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (not listed) and Dawlah Islamiyah-Maute Group. The killing on 7 December of a Dawlah Islamiyah-Maute Group leader and bombmaker is expected to result in the surrender of other members of the ISIL-affiliated network.

101. Following clashes in July, the Philippine National Police reported the peaceful surrender of 64 former members of Abu Sayyaf Group (QDe.001) on 13 November. There was further unrest in Mindanao as violence was perpetrated by various ISIL (Da'esh) factions. Police investigated the recruitment of minors by the Maute Group and made several arrests.

102. In Indonesia, the disbandment of Jemaah Islamiyah (QDe.092) continued, without the formation of splinter groups or opposition from former members.

103. In Malaysia, a group of 36 Bangladeshi nationals were arrested in June as part of an operation to dismantle an Islamic State-inspired organization recruiting Bangladeshi workers through social media and collecting funds to support ISIL (Da'esh) operations in the Syrian Arab Republic and Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi nationals had been urged to recruit other workers among the migrant community in Malaysia. Some 100 to 150 individuals were involved in the group, paying about $120 annually in membership fees to Islamic State-affiliated organization. The incident highlighted risks and vulnerabilities faced by migrant labour communities.

104. On 14 December, an attack on a Hanukkah celebration held at Bondi beach in Sydney, Australia, killed 16 individuals (including one of the attackers), and wounded more than 40. The attackers were reported to have been inspired by ISIL (Da'esh).

III. Impact assessment

A. Resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2462 (2019) on the financing of terrorism

105. Terrorist groups relied on territorial control for taxation and appropriated criminal tactics of extortion and kidnapping for ransom. The latter increased significantly and led to a substantial infusion of funds, primarily to JNIM.

106. JNIM, the wealthiest Al-Qaida affiliate next to Al-Shabaab, continued to raise revenue through its expansion of territorial control, taxing and controlling gold mining and other commercial activities, as well as imposing road tolls and transportation fees. It also engaged in smuggling, livestock rustling and the collection of zakat, which varied widely by location; if locals proved troublesome, zakat could be increased to extortive levels.

107. JNIM escalated its kidnapping operations, which were focused on foreign nationals. From May to October, the number of foreign nationals kidnapped nearly doubled, to 22 cases, many of whom were expatriate workers. The ransom demanded in most cases did not involve large sums and they were primarily paid in cash. In September, however, a member of the royal family of a State Member of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf was abducted. The ransom payment reportedly approximated $50 million, with unconfirmed reports that prisoner

releases and arms shipments were part of the package. The increase in scale and scope was likely to increase the operational capability of JNIM and its focus on kidnapping for ransom.

108. Member States reported that the financial situation of AQAP had improved, citing revenue from commodity and weapons smuggling between Somalia and Yemen, kidnapping for ransom and the extortion of businessmen. In July, AQAP killed a hostage who had been held for a long period, after ransom was refused. AQAP also profited from Al-Shabaab piracy by receiving a share of revenue from payments made by vessels in exchange for transiting safely through high-risk waters. While traditionally reliant on hawala transfers for covert donations, the group now uses encrypted platforms, such as Telegram, to discreetly solicit funds and connect supporters to financial intermediaries.

109. The Syrian Arab Republic remained a strategic hub for key logisticians and financiers of ISIL (Da'esh). In August, a drone strike killed Salih Noman Abdulnaief al-Jobori (not listed), who oversaw funding through the Bilad al-Rafidain office, managed financial activities in Iraq and coordinated between the Bilad al-Rafidayn and Al-Ard al-Mubaraka offices. In September, Iraq disrupted an ISIL (Da'esh) financial network that spanned Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Togo.

110. As a reminder of risks associated with digital assets, ISIL-K reportedly lost control of around $100,000 in *Monero* cryptocurrency following the arrest of several individuals, as the organization could not access their digital wallets. In June, ISIL-K changed its Quick Response code for Monero and added a new bitcoin address in its "Voice of Khorasan" publication.

111. United Nations sanctions explicitly prohibit the provision of funds and services to facilitate terrorist groups' access to Internet platforms. Member States have noted that listed groups use such services, which likely require payment, and underlined the importance of vigilance by social media and Internet companies.

B. Resolution 2396 (2017) on foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators

112. Foreign terrorist fighters continued to travel widely to various countries and regions, coalescing around principal conflict theatres. No single theatre appeared to attract the majority of foreign terrorist fighters. The number of fighters travelling remained relatively stable.

113. Some terrorist groups were reported to be increasingly reticent about receiving foreign terrorist fighters, due to the costs associated with their travel, difficulty in assimilating into local cultures and the risk of infiltration by foreign services.

114. Member States also reported that some groups encouraged prospective foreign recruits to carry out attacks in their home countries before travelling abroad, as a way of demonstrating their commitment.

115. Nevertheless, several terrorist groups consisted of significant numbers of foreigners. For example, Hurras al-Din was assessed to consist of 50 per cent foreign terrorist fighters. The Monitoring Team previously reported[7] on the large number of foreign terrorist fighters that had joined ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia; their numbers were significantly reduced following the recent campaign by the Somali security forces in Puntland, though it was not clear how many remained.

[7] S/2025/482, para. 37.

116. Overall, Member States reported that individual fighters travelled, rather than large groups of fighters. In Libya, a cell that transported foreign terrorist fighters from Europe to the Sahel was disrupted. Another network from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic was used to raise funds for terrorist groups. Organized criminal groups, in particular networks involved in the trafficking of humans, were sometimes involved in supporting the travel of foreign terrorist fighters.

117. The choice of transit routes used was quickly amended in response to counter-terrorism pressure and the local context. For example, several foreign terrorist fighters were reported to have attempted to travel to join ISIL (Da'esh) in Somalia, but some of them were redirected to other theatres following the counter-terrorism campaign by the Government of Somalia. Others were reported to have tried to change routes and travel to Somalia through Yemen.

118. Foreign terrorist fighters in the Syrian Arab Republic remained a key concern, for a number of reasons:

(a) The large number of foreign terrorist fighters involved in overthrowing the former Government of Bashar al-Assad and remaining in the country. Some of them remained independent of the formal security forces and their commitment to the new Government was not clear. They were potentially at risk of exploitation or recruitment by ISIL (Da'esh) or other groups;

(b) The large number of foreigners in camps and detention facilities, in particular in the north-eastern part of the country. ISIL (Da'esh) remained focused on trying to free them so as to replenish its ranks;

(c) Some foreign terrorist fighters had joined Government structures in the Syrian Arab Republic, but their degree of integration was uncertain. They may pose an insider threat;

(d) Foreign terrorist fighters leaving the Syrian Arab Republic and presenting a security threat in their home country or in neighbouring countries.

119. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic integrated some foreign terrorist fighters into its security structures in 2025, such as into the 84th Division of the army. Reportedly classified as a special forces unit, the 84th Division consisted of more than 3,500 foreign terrorist fighters, mostly ETIM/TIP fighters, headquartered in Jisr al-Shughur, Idlib and headed by Abdulaziz Dawood (Zahid), the leader of the Syrian branch of ETIM/TIP since May. There were differing views about the extent to which ETIM/TIP fighters had been fully integrated into the 84th Division, or whether they remained a distinct contingent within the Syrian army. Nevertheless, the Government regarded Zahid as one of its most loyal and capable commanders and tasked loyal troops under his command with guarding some critical State facilities and participating in some of the most challenging combat in various parts of the country.

120. ISIL (Da'esh) continued to encourage fighters to travel to the Syrian Arab Republic. It remained unclear, however, whether many had responded to the call.

121. There was no information of large-scale movement of foreign terrorist fighters from the Syrian Arab Republic to Afghanistan, although a few isolated cases were reported. Central Asian States, in particular, remained concerned about the potential risk of the movement of Central Asian fighters to northern Afghanistan, with a view to planning attacks against their native countries. There were reports that foreign terrorist fighters were trained in dedicated camps in Badakhshan Province.

IV. Implementation of sanctions measures

122. The sanctions list maintained by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities remained relatively static, with 252 individuals and 89 entities. The Committee amended nine list entries with additional identifiers and two individuals were removed from the list under the terms of Security Council resolution 2799 (2025), adopted on 6 November: Ahmad al-Sharaa (formerly, QDi.317) and Anas Hasan Khattab (formerly, QDi.336).

123. The Monitoring Team remained concerned about the continued lack of new listings (only one in 2025), as the sanctions list needs to evolve in order to keep pace with the dynamic threat.

A. Travel ban

124. Six requests for exemptions from the travel ban were received for Ahmad al-Sharaa (listed as QDi.317 until 6 November 2025), all of which were granted by the Committee.

B. Asset freeze

125. Five requests for exemptions from the asset freeze were received. The Committee granted three and denied one. One exemption request remains pending.

C. Arms embargo

126. Both Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) continued to see benefits in enhancing military technologies, such as drone capability, and have identified drones as a growth area, with collaboration and knowledge-sharing happening across combat zones.

127. In Yemen, Member States noted AQAP efforts to enhance its commercial drone capabilities, specifically to increase payload capacity and operational range, with current drones assessed to have a range of 5 to 10 km. AQAP also reportedly had access to heat-seeking missiles, mortars and improvised explosive devices. AQAP acquired weapons through seizure after combat, purchases in weapons markets, smuggling networks and from the Houthis.

128. In Mali, JNIM enhanced its fighting capabilities through the use of drones, with the group training on how to weaponize drones to target Government and military targets. It is assessed that JNIM has a significant number of drones. In Mali, Front de libération de l'Azawad (not listed) used more sophisticated techniques involving drones, which Member States fear could spread to JNIM, ISGS and other groups in West Africa.

129. In Somalia, Member States noted that Al-Shabaab had expanded its weapons acquisition, with a notable increase in the usage of drones for surveillance. Al-Shabaab attempted to acquire motors for drones, carbon-fibre frames, flight controllers, optics and long-range rifle components, mostly sourced from Yemen, commercially and through trafficking networks. Al-Shabaab maintained engagement with Houthis in order to acquire weapons and expertise. They recently enhanced their capacity, modifying 82mm and 107mm rockets with winglets to provide longer range and accuracy, likely with expertise from Houthi trainers. Al-Shabaab is gradually integrating affordable commercial technology into its operational toolkit by using

artificial intelligence, encrypted messaging platforms and satellite phones to maintain operational security and avoid interception.

130. In Afghanistan, various groups have acquired weapons, including sophisticated modern weapons and equipment, through cross-border smuggling and the black market trade. Several Member States noted that the continued proliferation of weapons from stockpiles left by former partners in the Global Coalition against Da'esh had enhanced the lethality of TTP attacks against the security forces of Pakistan. TTP used advanced assault rifles, night-vision devices, thermal-imaging devices, sniper systems and drone attack systems. Most of these were provided by the de facto authorities in conjunction with weapons permits and travel documents.

131. In the Syrian Arab Republic, ISIL (Da'esh) seized weapons and military equipment belonging to the former Government. The group acquired guided anti-tank missiles, rockets, SPG-9 recoilless rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and Katyusha rocket launchers, short-range missiles, drones, anti-aircraft systems and military vehicles. Similar weapons were acquired by Hurras al-Din. Weapons are also being sold in the Syrian Arab Republic in order to raise funds.

132. In West Africa, ISWAP increased its cache of unmanned aerial vehicles through the acquisition of parts for such vehicles through open commercial channels, which were later reassembled. Drones enhanced the group's ability to carry out coordinated and simultaneous attacks. Member States report that the group expected a delivery of 25 drones from parties in the Sudan at the end of September 2025, to be adapted for reconnaissance and offensive operations.

133. ISWAP expanded its arsenal and mobility assets through a combination of illicit arms trafficking, exploiting organized criminal networks operating in areas of Libya and the Sudan, as well as raids on Nigerian and Cameroonian military outposts. The main trafficking routes included the Chad-Cameroon-Nigeria and Niger–Nigeria corridor into the Lake Chad basin, as well as logistics routes (including cattle corridors).

V. Recommendations

134. The Monitoring Team recommends that:

(a) The Committee write to Member States requesting information on the increase in radicalization among youth and minors, and task the Monitoring Team with looking into the issue in more detail, with a view to submitting a separate report on the matter, with recommendations;

(b) The Committee write to Member States, recalling resolution 2133 (2014), underlining their commitments to prevent terrorists from benefiting directly or indirectly from ransom payments or political concessions;

(c) The Committee invite relevant Internet, social media and commercial satellite communications companies to brief the Committee on their work to counter the exploitation of services by designated individuals and entities.

VI. Monitoring Team activities and feedback

135. The present report covers the period from 23 June to 15 December 2025.

136. The Monitoring Team is grateful for Member States' support and engagement in drawing up the present report.

137. The Monitoring Team continues to work closely with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to help to build Member State capability. It has collaborated with UNODC to deliver several bilateral workshops and one regional conference, raising awareness of the sanctions regime and supporting Member States in line with its mandate under Security Council resolution 1267 (1999).

138. The present report is based on Member State contributions and assessments. Reliable data, for example, regarding the number of fighters aligned with specific groups, is difficult to obtain. Where possible, the report reflects either consensus or a range of States' views.

139. The Monitoring Team welcomes feedback at 1267mt@un.org.

Annex

Propaganda and social media

1. The media output of both Al-Qaida and ISIL remained prolific. It was increasingly well-targeted, focusing on youth and minors, including through exploitation of online gaming and game-adjacent platforms.

2. Using translation services enhanced by artificial intelligence, terrorist groups quickly reached audiences in multiple languages. Key messages were then amplified and contextualized by sympathisers and supporters.

3. Al-Qaida maintained a smaller presence online than ISIL. *Al-Sahab Media Foundation* remained the primary media vehicle for Al-Qaida senior leadership. It was run by Abd al Rahman al Maghrebi, son-in-law of former Al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. *Al-Sahab* encouraged its affiliates to be pragmatic and to develop relationships with non-traditional partners in order to achieve its goals. It attempted to incite self-initiated terrorists to carry out attacks.

4. The most prominent Al-Qaida media operation was AQAP's *Al-Malahem Media Foundation*, alongside its *Inspire* publication. It remained adept at following global political issues and trying to exploit them. Media remained a core tool for AQAP's influence. It continued to focus on the Gaza and Israel conflict, using *Telegram* to circulate discreet fundraising appeals and to direct supporters to financial intermediaries. AQAP central media unit in Ma'rib edited and disseminated content from field units, increasingly targeting Western audiences. Three new editions of *Inspire* magazine were published, with potential support from overseas. Active media figures include Ibrahim al-Qosi, Marwan al-Taazi, and Motaz al-Hadrami (all not listed). AQAP also received media support from other affiliates, and in October Al-Shabaab media published previously unseen photographs of an AQAP raid.

5. AQAP also issued a statement in September criticizing the Monitoring Team's 36th report and denying – in spite of evidence provided by Member States – that AQAP was maintaining a tactical alliance and cooperating with the Houthis. This suggests that AQAP is sensitive to criticism and opinion. It is also a reminder that terrorists read what we write and listen to what we say.

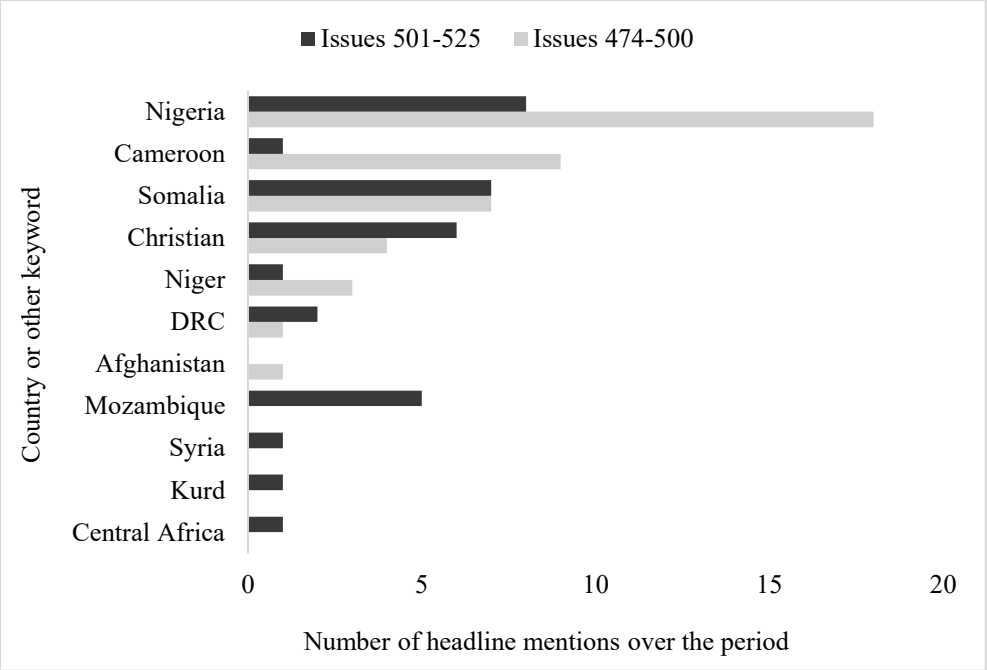
6. JNIM rebranded its image to appeal to younger audiences and exploit regional and social grievances. From September, Nabi Diarra alias Abu Hudheyfa was the public face of the fuel blockade in Mali instead of Mohamoud Bary (alias Abu Yahya) who is the official JNIM spokesperson. JNIM's propaganda was also refined to appeal to both local and international audiences. JNIM's *Al-Zallaqa* channel remained its primary media outlet catering for international audiences, while *Al-Fath* and *Minbar al-Bayan* channels, which were recently established, were employed to target local communities with tailored messaging in local languages such as Bambara.

7. ISIL propaganda was more prolific. It promoted a large number of attacks throughout Africa, called for *hijra* (migration) to various parts of the world, and appealed for digital currency donations to various ISIL affiliates (including ISIL-K and ISWAP). Some of its publications were notably graphic, reminiscent of the brutality shown by ISIL in 2014-15.

8. ISIL propaganda showed a clear shift towards operations in Central Africa. The following compares key words from the main headline in ISIL's weekly publication, *Al-Naba*, for the periods covered by the 36th and 37th MT reports. It shows that the highest frequency of references, over both periods, refer to Nigeria (referred to in half of all publications) and Somalia. However, over the past 6 months there has been a reduction in the frequency of references to both countries, and a marked decline in

the number of references to Cameroon. At the same time, there has been an increased emphasis on Mozambique. It also suggests an increase in the number of references to targeting Christian communities. This does not necessarily reflect the reality of operations on the ground, but the propaganda priorities that ISIL wants to promote.

Figure I
Changes in Country & Other Keyword Mentions in Al-Naba Weekly, 19 December 2024 to 11 December 2025



Source: Monitoring Team analysis.

9. There was continued concern about delays in removing terrorist content from some social media platforms. For example, Tech Against Terrorism, an independent organization launched by the United Nations in 2016, reported that it had been able to identify and alert tech platforms to 10,000 URLs hosting verified terrorist content in a 30-day period.

10. There were also concerns raised about the advertising revenue that was being generated by some social media companies through hosting terrorist content.