

Counterterrorism and Illicit Financing Working Group Summary Statement March 5, 2020

In an effort to address an evolving al-Qa'ida and its affiliates (collectively “al-Qa'ida”), the Warsaw Process Counterterrorism and Illicit Financing Working Group participant countries and organizations (collectively “Participants”) acknowledge the ever-changing threat posed by al-Qa'ida and the non-binding, underlying, strategic-level, diplomatic principles listed below. **Promoting these principles can inform and guide development of respective policies as well as shape collective cooperation by Participants to employ a comprehensive approach against the ever changing and evolving al-Qa'ida threat.**

This document and the current principles contained within it is meant to serve as a reference for further discussions about challenges faced and actions to be taken by Participants. The principles listed below are not exhaustive and could be reviewed by Participants when and if updates are required.

The evolving al-Qa'ida threat:

Despite losses to its senior leadership, the resilient al-Qa'ida network remains committed to its long-term goal of conducting worldwide operations. Since 2014 the network has taken advantage of the global attention focused on the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS/Daesh) to strengthen its existing regional affiliates, mostly in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Al-Qa'ida will most likely adapt in the face of evolving global and regional dynamics, as well as technological development. The future threats posed by the al-Qa'ida network will largely vary by region. For example, over the past several years, al-Qa'ida's ability to operate in Syria has increased, and the group currently has a relatively secure and permissive safe haven in the country. Al-Qa'ida has also taken advantage of the war in Yemen to rebuild its affiliate in the country, al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Historically, AQAP has demonstrated the capability and strong interest in attacking targets in other parts of the world.

Al-Qa'ida's affiliates in Africa pose continued – if not increased – threats to the continent. They are committed to exploiting the conflicts and permissive security environments to expand their influence and operations. Al-Qa'ida affiliates in Eastern and Southern Africa continue to target troop-contributing countries to African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) and to expand their influence across the region. Additionally, Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is under persistent pressure in Algeria but is taking advantage of the situation in Libya, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger to maintain and expand its operations. After pledging allegiance to al-Qa'ida in 2017, the AQIM-affiliated group Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) will also continue efforts to attack targets, including foreign targets in the Sahel and potentially West Africa. Both AQIM and JNIM are expected to pose increased challenges over the next three-to-five years in countries like Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger. Meanwhile, terrorist groups in Africa, such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, continue to draw inspiration from Al-Qa'ida's ideology, operations and messaging. The potential for emerging relationships between Al-Qa'ida and Islamic State affiliates in Africa, particularly in the Sahel, could exacerbate instability on the continent and threaten global security.

While the number of actual al-Qa'ida senior leaders and operatives in South Asia is small, the group established al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent in 2014. Seventeen years after Bali bombings that killed upwards of 200 people, al-Qa'ida ally Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) remains a key Southeast Asian terrorist group. JI, despite arrests of several key members, has historical political and ideological connections throughout the region. JI may have also benefited from regional focus on ISIS-connected groups to regroup and reposition itself for future operations across Southeast Asia.

Al-Qa'ida's messaging, tactics, and instruments will evolve. It is possible that the network may place more emphasis on promoting and inspiring attacks outside of conflict zones, exploiting commercially available technology to support operations, and employing low-cost, low-technology tactics and emerging tools of opportunity. Additionally, it is possible that the group may likely follow ISIS's lead and seek to develop a savvier and ultimately more effective use of the internet. They have already developed quite a sophisticated network of communication tools.

Underlying Principles:

Addressing the ever-changing al-Qa'ida threat requires a multidimensional comprehensive approach, which addresses the root causes of terrorism including the ideological, security, developmental, economic, and social aspects, and contains a range of security, diplomatic, intelligence, law enforcement, financial, and messaging tools. It moreover requires stopping supporters that may provide assistance directly or indirectly to terrorists, including foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), whether by facilitating their movement, providing arms, funding, training, media outlets, or offering safe havens. A country's counterterrorism approach to al-Qa'ida must be part of comprehensive strategies targeting all terrorist groups, exposing their malign objectives and disrupting their terrorist activities. Such a comprehensive approach will support Participants in countering immediate threats while, over the longer run, degrading the al-Qa'ida network and preventing radicalization and recruitment.

In countering al-Qa'ida, States will comply with all relevant security council resolutions and to apply the sanctions on individuals and entities designated by the Security Council pursuant to UNSCR 1267 (1999). Participants are encouraged to focus diplomatic efforts on what they can direct and influence, as well as engaging third countries, and, where appropriate, organizations and non-governmental actors that could support Participants' efforts in countering al-Qa'ida. At the same time, in an effort to spend time and resources effectively in diplomatic settings, Participants are encouraged to identify geographic and thematic issues where they have particular expertise, leverage, or impact.

To improve collective efforts against al-Qa'ida, Participants are encouraged as appropriate, to make use of the following non-binding thematic- and geographically-focused underlying diplomatic principles. Participants also intend to ensure that al-Qa'ida is a top priority when addressing the global terrorist landscape, without prejudice to countering all other terrorist groups. When appropriate, including in relations with other partners, Participants are encouraged to make use of and promote these principles.

- 1) *Commitment to Countering Al-Qa'ida*: All Participants states should appropriately prioritize countering and preventing an evolving al-Qa'ida, with comprehensive internal whole-of-government approaches as well as with increased collaboration with other partners. Participants should each implement their own counterterrorism strategies and employ tools that are applicable to all terrorist groups. Participants should also ensure that countering al-Qa'ida remains one of the top objectives when implementing these strategies and engaging in broader counterterrorism efforts, without prejudice to countering all other terrorist groups. As reaffirmed by several resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the UN Security Council, Participants must ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law and humanitarian law. Participants should continue to take into account al-Qa'ida's leadership and structure, any shifts in dynamics between al-Qa'ida and ISIS, and al-Qa'ida's evolving tactics (including worldwide operations and the use of new technologies).
- 2) *Diplomatic Engagement in Key Geographic Regions*: Participants should, as appropriate, increase and coordinate diplomatic engagement and capacity building efforts with other key partners to ensure they are aware, willing, and able to address the evolving al-Qa'ida threat. Specifically, this includes building the capacity of law enforcement, prosecutorial, judicial, intelligence, border security, military, engaged in countering al-Qa'ida. Diplomatic engagement efforts should be focused mainly in and around conflict zones, undergoverned spaces, and areas with established Al-Qa'ida affiliates.
- 3) *Aviation and Border Security*: Participants are committed to preventing al-Qa'ida and its affiliates from attacking commercial aviation, and exploiting porous borders to move material, funds, and personnel, in compliance with all relevant UNSCRs. Participants should work together in appropriate fora to improve security at airports and adjust aviation security standards domestically and with other partners to match al-Qa'ida threats. Participants should increase their cooperation to share best practices and experiences on the deployment of advanced technologies designed to screen travelers against authoritative databases to deter, detect and interdict travel by al-Qa'ida members with adherence to internal legal regulations and limitations concerning the passenger name record (PNR) records. Participants should come into compliance as soon as possible with UNSCR 2396 – in particular, the obligations to use single standards regarding PNR data, biometrics, and watchlists of known and suspected terrorists. Participants likewise should encourage other third-party countries to do the same.
- 4) *Legal Frameworks*: Participants should consider review and, if necessary and legally appropriate, revision of their domestic laws to ensure that individuals affiliated with al-Qa'ida can be prosecuted and successfully convicted for a wide-range of terrorism-related offenses in compliance with relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. In addition, Participants and their third-country partners should examine their sentencing regimes to ensure that individuals who are convicted of terrorism offenses serve adequate sentences.

- 5) Countering and Prevention of Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism: Al-Qa'ida's narrative largely targets a range of governments as its enemy. Al-Qa'ida's messaging also emphasizes its global presence and longevity and continues to call for lone-actors attacks. Al-Qa'ida-linked groups will continue to identify vulnerable segments of society and engage those communities with tailored narratives to raise support and recruits, including through in-person and internet propaganda campaigns. Participants and their partners – including community leaders and others from the private sector – should use existing and new efforts and fora to counter and discredit al-Qa'ida's messaging, such as by refuting its ideology and by exposing the dangers and destruction the group poses in the real world and in the cyberspace. Where possible, local partners should lead efforts and lend local expertise and standing to address al-Qa'ida's narrative.
- 6) Terrorism Financing: Al-Qa'ida's informal fundraising networks continue to pose challenges for countries across the globe. Through existing channels and emerging new efforts, such as the *Paris Agenda*, Participants should prevent al-Qa'ida from raising, storing, and moving their funds by addressing the full scope of measures against the financing of terrorism. Participants should counter problematic non-governmental, relief and charitable front organizations that raise and provide funds to finance terrorist acts, including funds that help promote extremist ideology that leads to terrorism. This should include implementation, of FATF recommendations against the financing of terrorism, fully implementing and using the sanctions tools and obligations of UNSCRs 1267 and 1373, increasing financing information sharing and cooperation standards with other Participants, and offering technical assistance to other third-party countries where al-Qa'ida operates. These actions should be undertaken in complementarity with broader global efforts to disrupt terrorism financing, expose terrorist groups' sponsors and mobilize a global response – through bilateral and multilateral cooperation channels- to counter these groups and prevent their illicit activities.
- 7) Donor Coordination: To ensure that al-Qa'ida does not exploit the counterterrorism capacity gaps of third-party partners, Participants should make additional efforts to better coordinate their international counterterrorism assistance. Specifically, Participants could support a unity of purpose, as appropriate, through burden sharing and a division of labor based on comparative resources and expertise along with influence and access in key recipient countries, while encouraging cooperation between countries with developing counterterrorism capabilities. To reduce gaps and avoid duplication in assistance, Participants should regularly communicate and increase coordination about their respective regional, sub-regional and thematic priorities and programming efforts.
- 8) Regional and Multilateral Institutions: Multilateral, regional and sub-regional intergovernmental institutions can and should play key roles and provide new resources and mechanisms in amplifying Participants' efforts to counter al-Qa'ida. Participants should appropriately elevate threats and responses of all terrorist groups, including Al-Qa'ida, in multilateral, regional and sub-regional fora in which they or other willing states participate.

The following participants contributed to the working group summary statement:

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| 1-Albania | 31-Kuwait |
| 2-Arab League | 32-Liberia |
| 3-Australia | 33-Mali |
| 4-Austria | 34-Mauritania |
| 5-Bahrein | 35-Montenegro |
| 6-Belgium | 36-Morocco |
| 7-Belorussia | 37-Netherlands |
| 8-Brazil | 38-Niger |
| 9-Bulgaria | 39-Nigeria |
| 10-Burkina Faso | 40-Norway |
| 11-Canada | 41-Oman |
| 12-Chad | 42-Poland |
| 13-Colombia | 43-Romania |
| 14-Cote d'Ivoire | 44-Saudi Arabia |
| 15-Croatia | 45-Slovenia |
| 16-Cyprus | 46-South Korea |
| 17- Czech Republic | 47-Spain |
| 18-Egypt | 48-Thailand |
| 19-European Union | 49-Togo |
| 20-Georgia | 50- Ukraine |
| 21-Ghana | 51-United Arab Emirates |
| 22-Guinea | 52- United Kingdom |
| 23-Hungary | 53-United States of America |
| 24-India | 54-United Nations |
| 25-Israel | 55-Yemen |
| 26-Italy | |
| 27-Japan | |
| 28-Jordan | |
| 29-Kazakhstan | |
| 30-Kenya | |