

# Islamist Terrorism

The British Connections

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

Robin Simcox | Hannah Stuart | Houriya Ahmed | Douglas Murray

*Foreword by Lord Carlile of Berriew QC*

# **ISLAMIST TERRORISM**

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## **THE BRITISH CONNECTIONS**

Revised edition

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**Douglas Murray**

2011

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## **ABOUT THE HENRY JACKSON SOCIETY**

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Our founders and supporters are united by a common interest in fostering a strong British, European and American commitment towards freedom, liberty, constitutional democracy, human rights, governmental and institutional reform and a robust foreign, security and defence policy and transatlantic alliance.

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In April 2011, the CSC and all personnel combined with the HJS.

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# FOREWORD

**Lord Carlile of Berriew Q.C.**

**Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation 2001-2011,  
and Independent Oversight of the Prevent Strategy 2011**

It is a privilege to write the Foreword to this remarkable publication. It is a report unique in its scope, analysis and completeness. It provides an encyclopaedia of those convicted of Islamist terrorism in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. It gives an understanding of the motivations and connections of individuals.

The information and statistical analysis presented does not exist anywhere else in a single volume. The first edition impacted policy, and was a vital resource for governments, security services and agencies, and academic readers worldwide. This new edition builds upon that, and will be a required and well-thumbed volume on the desks of all interested in individual terrorists and their networks.

Above all, the report provides an unparalleled insight into the background and history of Islamism-related terrorism in the UK over the past 20 years. Its research means that even more can be understood about the dangers Islamic terrorism and extremism have brought and still threaten British citizens and UK government assets, at home and abroad.

Islamic extremism is not the only terrorist threat to the United Kingdom, but it remains far and away the greatest, and the least predictable. From the information in this report we can derive the mindsets of terrorists, and understand the development of terrorist violence from the activities of the extremist ideologues who sow the seeds of violent radicalism in the minds of actual and potential terrorists. Although terrorist training (especially in Pakistan) plays a part in the development of some Islamist extremists, we should not lose sight of the clear evidence provided by the report that a majority of terrorists in the UK are 'home-grown', and have not been trained abroad. Unfortunately the evidence reveals the UK to be something of a hub for the development of terrorists who export their activities to other countries: several examples are given from 2010.

Much work remains to be done to create the situation in which a publication of this kind will no longer be necessary. Currently it is required; and the Henry Jackson Society, the Centre for Social Cohesion, and of course the authors are to be congratulated on their achievement.



**Alex Carlile**





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This revised edition of *Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections* (first published in July 2010) includes new profiles of all Islamism-related terrorist convictions in the UK in 2010, and presents an overview of Islamism-related terrorism with significant connections to the UK between 1999 and 2010. This edition includes updated statistical analysis drawn from all cases between 1999 and 2010. It also updates the scope of British-linked Islamism-inspired terrorism threats worldwide – including new cases of militancy and terrorist training abroad. This now includes British citizens previously detained at Guantánamo Bay, whose files have recently been put in the public domain.

The Security Service estimated in 2007 that over 2,000 people in the UK pose a terrorist threat. In September 2010 the Director General of the Security Service said: 'There remains a serious risk of a lethal attack taking place. I see no reason to believe that the position will significantly improve in the immediate future.' Despite the recent assassination of Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda inspired terrorism remains the biggest threat to the UK's national security.

## SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS & PRECEDENTS

*Islamist Terrorism* presents significant incidents and precedents:

- In 1996 Khalid Shahid is said to have become Britain's first suicide bomber. While fighting jihad in Afghanistan, he asked members of the Taliban to hide grenades in his jacket, so he could detonate them when the Northern Alliance tried to arrest him.
- In March 1999 Amer Mirza was the first member of al-Muhajiroun (a group proscribed in the UK in 2010) to be convicted of an Islamism-related terrorism offence. He had attempted to petrol bomb a Territorial Army base in West London.
- In January 2002 Moinul Abedin was the first person convicted in UK courts for planning an Islamism-related terrorist attack.
- In April 2002 Iftikhar Ali became the first person convicted of inciting racial hatred with an Islamic religious text. Ali was distributing al-Muhajiroun leaflets which called for a holy war against Jews.
- In April 2003 Brahim Benmerzouga and Baghdad Meziane became the first people convicted of funding Islamism-related terrorism through conspiracy to defraud. Al-Qaeda was among those they had funded.
- In July 2005 Mohammad Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer, Hasib Hussain and Germaine Lindsay became the first suicide bombers to attack the UK.
- In November 2005 Abbas Boutrab was the first person to be convicted of Islamism-related terrorism offences in Northern Ireland.
- In May 2007 Syed Hashmi became the first person to be extradited from the UK to the United States of America on Islamism-related terrorism charges.
- In July 2007 Younes Tsouli was the first person to be convicted of inciting murder for terrorism purposes overseas over the internet.
- In November 2007 Abdul Rahman became the first person to be convicted of, among other Islamism-related offences, disseminating terrorist material under section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006.
- In February 2008 Mohammed al-Figari, Mohammed Hamid, Kader Ahmed, Mohammed Kyriacou, Kibley da Costa, Atilla Ahmet, Yassin Mutegombwa and Mustafa Abdullah were the first people convicted of providing or attending terrorist training in the UK under section 6 of the Terrorism Act 2006.
- In March 2008 Bilal Mohammed was convicted solely of disseminating terrorist material. This was the first time that section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006 was used independently.
- In April 2008 Simon Keeler became the first British Caucasian Muslim convert to be convicted of Islamism-

# ISLAMIST TERRORISM

related terrorism charges. He was found guilty of inciting murder for terrorist purposes overseas and fundraising for terrorist purposes.

- In June 2008 Yeshiemebet Girma became the first woman to be convicted of Islamism-related offences. She had assisted one of the failed 21/7 suicide bombers in London in 2005.
- In August 2008 Hammaad Munshi became the youngest British citizen to have been convicted of Islamism related terrorism offences. Munshi was aged 16 when charged and 18 when convicted.
- In December 2008 Rangzieb Ahmed and Habib Ahmed became the first people in the UK to be convicted of membership of proscribed Islamist organisations, namely al-Qaeda and Harakat ul-Mujahideen.
- In February 2009 Shella Roma became the first woman in Britain to be convicted of disseminating terrorist material.

## **SIGNIFICANT CASES IN 2010**

- Roshonara Choudhry was convicted for attempting to murder Labour MP Stephen Timms. She is the first person inspired by al-Qaeda to attempt to assassinate a public figure in the UK, and the first female to be convicted of a violent Islamism-related terrorist attack.
- Three transatlantic 'liquid bomb' cell members were found guilty of conspiracy to murder. This was their second retrial – they were previously convicted of conspiracy to commit public nuisance – and took the number in the cell convicted of conspiracy to murder to eight.
- Five members of the proscribed al-Muhajiroun were convicted of public order offences for their abuse of British soldiers who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan, during a homecoming parade.
- It was revealed that six Guantánamo Bay detainees had admitted (under no suggestion of duress) receiving paramilitary training in either Pakistan or Afghanistan prior to their incarceration. These camps are now widely acknowledged as al-Qaeda or Taliban training camps.
- Abid Naseer is facing extradition to the US to stand trial for terrorism related charges pertaining to planned al-Qaeda attacks in the United States, England and Norway during 2009. Naseer was identified in a British court in May 2010 as 'an Al Qaeda operative'.
- Abdul Jabbar, a British citizen, was killed by a CIA drone strike in Pakistan.
- Luton-based Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly committed a suicide bombing in Stockholm, Sweden.
- Mahmoud Abu Rideh – previously under a control order in the UK – was killed in a missile strike in Afghanistan.
- It was reported that five British residents left the UK to fight in Somalia for proscribed terrorist organisation al-Shabaab.

## **STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Fourteen convictions were secured in 2010; eleven were convictions from new charges and three were the result of re-trials. Between 1999 and 2010, therefore, there have been 133 individual convictions for Islamism-related offences and five individuals killed in suicide attacks. For brevity, the combination of 138 convictions and attacks will collectively be referred to as Islamism related offences (IROs) from this point. The new cases profiled have a varied effect on the statistical analysis.

### **Age and gender**

It is overwhelmingly young men who carry out Islamism-inspired offences (96%).

- A total of six women (4%) have been convicted of IROs.
- 2010 saw the first woman carry out an al-Qaeda inspired terrorism attack.
- 68% of IROs were committed by those aged under 30.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## **Education and employment**

There is little correlation between terrorist activity, low educational achievement and employment status.

- Where known, 42% of IROs were perpetrated by individuals either in employment (33%, n=45) or full-time further or higher education (9%, n=13) at the date of charge or attack.
- 36% of IROs were perpetrated by individuals who were unemployed at the date of charge or attack.
- Where known, the most common level of education achieved at the time of the IRO (15%) was study at some point for a higher-education qualification.
- Including graduates and postgraduates, a minimum of 30% (n=21) of those who committed IROs had at some point attended university or a higher education institute.

## **Nationality, ancestry and place of residence**

The UK still faces a threat from 'home-grown' terrorism and London remains a focal point for IROs.

- 69% of IROs were perpetrated by British nationals.
- The only individual to have committed a violent attack in 2010 was a British national.
- Nobody of known foreign nationality was convicted of an IRO in 2010.
- All individuals convicted in 2010 whose origin was known were of South-central Asian ancestry. This raises the proportion of all IROs between 1999 and 2010 having links to that region to 50%. This is lower than the proportion of Muslims in the UK (66%) who have South-central Asian ancestry.
- Pakistan features prominently: over a quarter of all IROs (28%) were committed by either British Pakistanis or Pakistani born individuals
- London was the place of residence for 46% of IROs (n=63). North East London was home to 37% (n=23) of London-based perpetrators while the three highest boroughs – Newham (n=10), and Waltham Forest (n=9) in North East London as well as Lambeth (n=8) in South West London – were home to 20% of all IROs.

## **Year-on-year threat**

The date of charge (or attack), rather than date of conviction has been used as a standard measure of the year of offence.

- There was a clear rise in IROs between 2005 and 2007: almost two thirds (64%) of IROs were committed during this period.
- 21% of IROs were committed in 2005; 24% in 2006; and 19% in 2007.

## **Terrorism plots**

Between 1999 and 2010, there have been eight major terrorism plots in the UK which have either resulted in convictions or a successful attack.

- There has been one successful attack: the 7/7 London bombings in 2005.
- Seven other major plots were either unsuccessful or thwarted by the Security Service and the Metropolitan Police: the 2001 'shoe bomb' plot, for which Sajjid Badat was the only cell member convicted in the UK; the 2003 'ricin bomb' plot for which Kamel Bourgass was the only cell member convicted in the UK; the 2004 'fertiliser bomb' plot headed by Omar Khyam; the 2004 'dirty bomb' plot headed by Dhiren Barot; the 2005 21/7 plot headed by Muktar Said Ibrahim; the 2006 transatlantic 'liquid bomb' plot headed by Abdulla Ahmed Ali; and the Glasgow airport and London Haymarket attacks in 2007 carried out by Bilal Abdulla's cell.
- A total of 37 individuals, known as cell members, were involved in these eight plots.

# ISLAMIST TERRORISM

## Diversity of threat

The Islamism-related terrorism threat to the UK can be placed into four distinct categories of offenders: active participants, facilitators and ideologues, aspirants and supporters.

- **Active participants** – individuals who committed or were imminently about to commit acts of terrorism – were responsible for **36%** of IROs. Active participants posed the greatest threat in terms of immediate severity and include the 37 cell members involved in the eight major terrorism plots in the UK.
- **Facilitators and ideologues** – individuals involved in the preparation for acts of terrorism, either operationally, by fundraising, or by incitement – were also responsible for **36%** of IROs.
- **Aspirants** – individuals who demonstrated an interest in terrorism but whose plans were not advanced enough to pose an imminent threat or whose role was limited – were responsible for **19%** of IROs.
- **Supporters** – individuals convicted for assisting the active participants or failing to disclose information regarding their activities – were responsible for **9%** of IROs.

## Charges, legislation and sentence

There remains a spread of severity of charges and length of sentence.

- A total of 213 charges were successfully brought in 133 separate cases between 1999 and 2010.
- Forming a quarter (25%) of all successful prosecutions, the three most common charges were: possessing a document or record containing information likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism (21 convictions); intent or conspiracy to cause explosions (17 convictions); and conspiracy to murder (15 convictions).
- 58% of successful prosecutions were secured under anti-terrorism legislation, of which 73% (n=91) were secured under the Terrorism Act 2000 and 26% (n=32) under the Terrorism Act 2006.
- 20% of IRO cases resulted in life sentences or indefinite detention, of which the majority (89%, n=24) were active participants convicted of murder or explosives offences.
- Over a third of cases (35%) resulted in a sentence between one and four years, the most common sentence received for an IRO. 80% (n=37) of these were facilitators, ideologues or aspirants.
- Due to the average time spent on remand by those in the one to four years sentence bracket, those at the lower end are likely to be released upon conviction and those at the higher end are likely to serve no more than one year and four months.

## Links to proscribed organisations

The addition of convictions secured in 2010 saw the total number of all individuals directly linked to al-Muhajiroun exceed those linked to al-Qaeda (five of the 11 new individuals were members of al-Muhajiroun).

- The majority of individuals (66%) who committed an IRO had no direct link to any proscribed organisations, while a third (34%) did.
- The two most prevalent proscribed groups are al-Muhajiroun, connected to 18% of all IROs, and al-Qaeda, connected to 13%.
- 30% (n=11) of the 37 cell members involved in the eight major terrorism plots in the UK had direct links to al-Qaeda, making it disproportionately well represented as an associated organisation among cell members.
- Seven of the eight major cells contained individual members who had direct links to one or more proscribed organisation, including ringleaders or senior members who had direct links to al-Qaeda.

## Attendance at terrorist training camps

None of the individuals convicted in 2010 had attended terrorist training camps

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The majority of individuals convicted for IROs (72%) had not attended terrorist training camps.
- Of the 28% who had attended one or more training camps, the most common location was Pakistan. 16% (n=21) of individuals trained there, including members from six of the eight major terrorist cells.
- Cell members were also much more likely to have attended training camps than all those who were involved in IROs (51% and 28% respectively). Furthermore, the proportion of cell members who trained in Pakistan (38%) is approximately double that of all those who were involved in IROs (16%).
- Five of seven major cells with direct links to al-Qaeda had members train in Pakistan.
- Despite Security Service fears over the prevalence of al-Qaeda training grounds in both Yemen and Somalia, there is yet to be a conviction secured in the UK where an individual is known to have attended terrorist training camps in either of these two countries.



# METHODOLOGY

This revised edition of *Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections* (first published in July 2010) includes new profiles of all Islamism-related terrorist convictions in the UK in 2010, and presents an overview of Islamism-related terrorism with significant connections to the UK between 1999 and 2010.

This edition is a collection of profiles of Islamism-inspired terrorist convictions and attacks in the UK between 1999 and 2010; updated statistical analysis of the data collected has also been performed. This edition also updates the scope of British-linked Islamism-inspired terrorism threats worldwide – including convictions, training and suicide attacks abroad, terrorism extradition cases from the UK and new cases of militancy and terrorist training abroad. This now includes British citizens previously detained at Guantánamo Bay, whose files have recently been put in the public domain.

## STRUCTURE

The report is structured in two parts, comprising a number of sub-sections as follows:

### PART 1 – ISLAMIST TERRORISM IN THE UK (1999-2010)

- **Section 1(1) Convictions:** A comprehensive list of Islamism-related terrorism convictions in UK courts – including British and foreign nationals.<sup>1</sup>
- **Section 1(2) Suicide attacks:** All Islamism-related suicide attacks in the UK.
- **Section 1(3) Statistics:** Statistical analysis of trends found in section 1(1) and 1(2), including: background information; charges and sentences; connections to proscribed terrorist groups; and the frequency with which the individuals profiled received terrorist training. Also integrated into the statistics are maps indicating the distribution of places of residence for all individuals in sections 1(1) and 1(2), including a breakdown of London sub-regions.<sup>2</sup>

### PART 2 – ISLAMIST TERRORISM WORLDWIDE (1993-2010)

- **Section 2(1) British nationals convicted abroad:** British nationals convicted of Islamism-related terrorist offences abroad.
- **Section 2(2) Foreign nationals convicted abroad:** Foreign nationals with significant connections to the UK, who have been convicted of Islamism-related terrorist offences abroad.
- **Section 2(3) Combatants abroad:** British and foreign nationals with significant connections to the UK, who have been inspired by extreme Islamism to fight or commit suicide attacks abroad against civilian or military personnel.<sup>3</sup>
- **Section 2(4) Extraditions:** Individuals extradited from the UK for Islamism-inspired terrorism offences who are either awaiting or facing trial abroad, or are being held in British jails awaiting or appealing against extradition from the UK. Also included are those individuals who have been successfully convicted abroad following their extradition from the UK.<sup>4</sup>
- **Section 2(5) Networks:** Diagrams showing the worldwide connections between the individuals, terrorist groups, and British-based Islamist groups mentioned in the report.

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1 There is one conviction from 2009 included in this edition. Faisal Saddique was omitted from the 1st edition as an ongoing terrorism trial in which he was involved meant he could not be publicly named. The case – and subsequent restriction on reporting – was dropped in late 2010.

2 For more details see Place of Residence methodology on page xv

3 When not obtainable from news sources, personal information on some cases in section 2(2) has been taken from jihadist-sympathetic websites, such as Caravan of Martyrs, available at [www.caravansofmartyrs.atspace.com](http://www.caravansofmartyrs.atspace.com)

4 Also included is Ibrahim Hussein Abdel-Hadi Eidarous, who died in July 2008 while awaiting extradition to the US.



# ISLAMIST TERRORISM

## CHANGES FOR THE REVISED EDITION – SECTION 2(3)

- (A) This edition now includes former Guantánamo Bay detainees, as certain individuals made admissions at their Guantánamo Bay's Combatant Status Review Tribunal which resulted in their fitting the authors' criteria for inclusion. At the tribunal, detainees stated which of their confessions were gained under duress. Any admission a Guantánamo Bay detainee claimed was gained under duress was dismissed; only admissions which the detainees agreed were extracted under no suggestion of duress were considered as reliable evidence by the authors.
- (B) In certain combatant abroad cases, individuals are grouped together in a single entry. This in order to avoid excessive repetition in cases where little is known about the individuals other than the country they travelled to. In such profiles, all the individuals in question travelled to the same country and had their cases reported together from a single media source. The information within the sub-headings applies to all individuals within the profile, unless specified.

**N.B.** Section 2 is intended to provide a sample of the British linked Islamism-related terrorist threat worldwide, while acknowledging that a complete analysis is beyond this report's remit.

## CRITERIA

In order to be included in this report, individuals must have: been convicted for terrorism-related offences; committed suicide attacks in the UK; been convicted, fought or committed suicide attacks abroad and possessed significant links to the UK (nationality, education, residency or UK-based radicalisation); or been involved in extradition cases from the UK. In addition they must have been motivated primarily by a belief in Islamism.

Acknowledging that there are no universally accepted definitions of Islamism and terrorism, the authors have used the following definitions as working criteria for inclusion.

- **Islamism:** A political ideology, whose key tenets include:
  - Belief that Islam is not a religion, but a holistic socio-political system;
  - Advocacy of Sharia (Islamic) law as divine state law;
  - Belief that a transnational Muslim community, known as the Ummah, should unite as a political bloc;
  - Advocacy of an 'Islamic' state, or Caliphate, within which sovereignty belongs to God.

Adherents are known as Islamists. The spectrum of Islamism ranges from entry-level Islamists (e.g. the Muslim Brotherhood) and revolutionary Islamists (e.g. Hizb ut-Tahrir) to militant Islamists, or jihadists (e.g. al-Qaeda), who are prepared to use violence to achieve their aims. While differing in methodology, all Islamists share the same core ideology.<sup>5</sup>

In order to be included in this report, individuals must be motivated primarily by a belief in Islamism, identified by any of the following:

- A self-proclaimed Islamism-inspired motive i.e. suicide video or letter
- An Islamism-inspired motive identified and proven as such during trial
- Possession (at time of arrest) of inflammatory Islamist material
- Membership of an Islamist organisation
- Evidence of foreign travel to join and/or fight for an Islamist organization

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<sup>5</sup> To legitimise terrorism as a tactic, militant Islamists utilise the writings of popular theorists of modern Islamism, such as the intellectual ideologue for the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Qutb; the founder of Hizb ut-Tahrir, Mohammed Taqiuddin an-Nabhani; and founder of the Islamic revivalist party Jamaat-e-Islami, Syed Abul A'ala Maududi. Al-Qaeda, for example, justify mass casualty attacks against civilians by combining Nabhani's call to implement an expansionist Islamist state with Qutb's classification of all Muslim and non-Muslim societies as *jahaliya*, or ignorance. See *Al-Qaeda Training Manual, The Al-Qaeda Documents* – downloadable from the United States Department of Justice, [www.usdoj.gov/ag/manualpart1\\_1.pdf](http://www.usdoj.gov/ag/manualpart1_1.pdf)

## METHODOLOGY

- **Terrorism:** Throughout this report the authors utilise the interpretation found in Section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2000, specifically:

The use or threat [of action] designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public [...] for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.<sup>6</sup>

**Part 1** – Offences in the UK which have been profiled are limited to those contrary to UK anti-terror legislation, namely the Terrorism Act 2000 and the Terrorism Act 2006, as well as any other offences that meet the aforementioned criteria.

**Part 2** – Convictions abroad and extradition cases are limited to those based on offences which are either contrary to that country's domestic terrorism legislation or otherwise meet the aforementioned criteria. Combatants abroad have been included when they have travelled abroad to join an Islamism-inspired insurgency and demonstrated willingness to commit attacks against civilians and military personnel without the sanction of their own state.<sup>7</sup>

**Cases omitted:** There have been terrorist convictions in the UK in which the perpetrators may appear to have pursued typical Islamist causes, but where Islamist motivation cannot be proven. The individuals involved may have been motivated by nationalist causes; significant mental health issues prevented the identification of a clear motive; or the inspiration behind the offence was simply unclear.

The following are examples of such cases, all of which have been omitted from this report:

- In 1985, Mohammed Baalbaki, a Lebanese national, was involved in a failed bomb attack in front of the Syrian embassy and Swiss Centre in London, allegedly organised in protest against the arrests of two terrorist suspects in Switzerland who had been preparing to attack Libyan and Syrian interests in Geneva. Following their arrests a statement from 'the Martyrs of Tal al-Zaatar' was sent to the Swiss embassy in London threatening reprisals. Baalbaki pleaded guilty to the attempted attack in March 1995 and sentenced to seven years. There was no proven Islamism-inspired motive.<sup>8</sup>
- In July 1994, Palestinian and Lebanese nationals Jawad Botmeh and Samar Alami were involved in a bomb attack against the Israeli embassy and Balfour House [offices of the Joint Israel Appeal and Zionist Federation] in London. Both imprisoned for 20 years, they belonged to the Palestine Resistance Jaffa Group, a breakaway British cell from the Marxist-aligned Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). It was never clarified during their trial (or after) whether they were acting under orders from the PFLP, or whether they were a self-motivated group. There was no proven Islamism-inspired motive.<sup>9</sup>
- In March 2003 Mohammed Abdullah Azam, a British national, was convicted for possessing books on terrorism, bomb making and using firearms. He said he was willing to use this knowledge in an attempt to

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6 Office of Public Sector Information, Terrorism Act 2000 (c.11), Section 1, available at [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga\\_20000011\\_en\\_2#pt1-l1g1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000011_en_2#pt1-l1g1)

7 Some cases involve individuals who fought in Bosnia from 1992–1995. The authors acknowledge the difficulty inherent in defining this activity as terrorism as per the report's criteria and the conflict was clearly not an ideological Islamist conflict from the outset. However, some 'mujahideen' units were involved in the conflict and the war as a whole was an important development in the Islamist narrative of Muslim/non-Muslim conflict in the modern world. There is good evidence that the individuals mentioned joined these 'mujahideen' units and similarly, many non-indigenous fighters involved in the conflict were motivated by relatively simpler, non-ideological religious reasons. The presence of these individuals in the conflict does not confirm Islamist intentions in their true sense. But the adoption of some ideals, perceived by many to be Islamist ideals, is likely i.e. physical fighting for the concept of Ummah. Additionally, these men's deaths and contribution to the 'mujahideen' cause have subsequently been hijacked by Islamism/jihadism-inspired narratives of the Balkans conflict. In summary, the cases (all of which come from a jihadist-supporting website) have been included to demonstrate the phenomena discussed above rather than to indicate the ideological disposition of those subjects and, therefore, are not typical of the cases included.

8 'Seven years' jail for Lebanese who attacked Syrian embassy', *Agence France-Presse*, 9 March 1995

9 'Middle-class woman "planted embassy bomb"', *Independent*, 8 October 1996, available at [www.independent.co.uk/news/middleclass-womanplanted-embassy-bomb-1357328.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/middleclass-womanplanted-embassy-bomb-1357328.html); 'Caught in the blast', *Guardian*, 21 October 2000, available at [www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2000/oct/21/weekend7.weekend1](http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2000/oct/21/weekend7.weekend1); 'Palestinian bombers resume UK appeal', *BBC News*, 16 October 2001, available at [www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1602587.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1602587.stm)

## ISLAMIST TERRORISM

overthrow the Algerian government; however, it has not been possible to determine whether Azam was inspired by nationalism or Islamism.<sup>10</sup>

- In February 2008, Malcolm Hodges was convicted for publishing statements intending to recklessly encourage terrorism. Hodges sent letters to mosques throughout the UK in November 2006 encouraging their members to undertake terrorist acts against accountancy bodies. Hodges claimed that he was a follower of Osama bin Laden, encouraged 'jihad' and said that Israel needed to be 'wipe[d] from the map'. However, the judge accepted that Hodges had 'some form of personality disorder'. Hodges had previously sent threatening letters to accountants and it appeared that borrowing Islamism-inspired idioms was the latest manifestation of his vendetta.<sup>11</sup>

In this edition, cases were omitted either due to a lack of reliable information available to justify inclusion, or as they were part of an ongoing trial:

- Nigerian student Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab is the sole suspect in an al-Qaeda inspired plot to detonate a bomb during a flight to Detroit, USA on 25 December 2009. Abdulmutallab is alleged to have attempted unsuccessfully to set off a bomb concealed in his underwear mid-flight. While Abdulmutallab meets the addendum's criteria for inclusion and had significant connections to the UK (he was a graduate of University College London and had lived in the UK), as he has not been convicted he is not eligible for inclusion. His trial will begin in the US in October 2011.<sup>12</sup>
- Two white converts to Islam, using the pseudonyms Abu Bakr and Mansoor Ahmed, were killed in a drone attack in Pakistan in December 2010. A media outlet reported that the individuals were British citizens.<sup>13</sup> However, neither the authors nor the Foreign & Commonwealth Office has been able to verify the accuracy of this information.

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10 'Britain Charges Computer Programmer Under Anti-Terror Laws,' *Fox News*, 18 September 2002, available at [www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,63468,00.html](http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,63468,00.html); 'Six arrests in London after anti-terrorist raid,' *Guardian*, 20 September 2002, available at [www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2002/sep/20/september11.britainandseptember11](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2002/sep/20/september11.britainandseptember11); 'Bomb books suspect is held,' *Daily Express*, 20 September 2002; 'Political plotters and extremist violence – the history of town that harboured terror,' *Express on Sunday*, 4 April 2004

11 "Jihad on accountants" man jailed,' *BBC News*, 19 February 2008, available at [www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/7253780.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/7253780.stm); 'Man urged terror attacks on accountancy institutes – 10 years after failing professional exams,' *Daily Mail*, 19 February 2008, available at [www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-516448/Man-urged-terror-attacks-accountancy-institutes--10-years-failing-professional-exams.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-516448/Man-urged-terror-attacks-accountancy-institutes--10-years-failing-professional-exams.html)

12 'Profile: Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab,' *BBC News*, 14 October 2010, available at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-11545509](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-11545509)

13 'Foreign Office probes Brits killed by drone in Pakistan,' *Channel 4 News*, 16 December 2010, available at [www.channel4.com/news/foreign-office-probes-brits-killed-by-drone-in-pakistan](http://www.channel4.com/news/foreign-office-probes-brits-killed-by-drone-in-pakistan)

# PROFILES

Each individual has an entry which details their case and background as well as indicating affiliations to groups and associates where known. The following sub-headings are used to standardise the information presented:

**NAME:** The name of the individual as appears on court documentation. Where unavailable, the name most commonly used to refer to the individual has been cited. Where possible the authors have reproduced all aliases outside of those natural differences that occur when translating names from Arabic into English. Commonly used aliases and the names adopted by those converting to Islam are included.

**CHARGE:** All charges the individual has been convicted of. UK convictions include the act and sub-section of UK legislation the offence was contrary to. For courts abroad, the precise wording of the charges is often unknown and the information has been taken from news sources. The following headings have also been used where applicable:

**Outcome:** Section 1(2) Suicide attacks, Section 2(3) Combatants abroad – whether the individual profiled fought abroad, carried out a suicide attack, or was killed fighting abroad.

**Country of conviction:** Section 2(2) Foreign nationals convicted abroad – the country in which the individual profiled was convicted.

**Destination:** Section 2(4) Extraditions – The country that applied for the extradition of the individual profiled.

**DATE OF CHARGE:** All convictions are listed by date of charge. Where date of charge could not be determined, the date of arrest is indicated instead. Where date of charge is not applicable the following headings have been used:

**Date of outcome:** Section 1(2) Suicide attacks, Section 2(2) Combatants abroad – the date or dates that the individual profiled fought abroad, carried out a suicide attack, or was killed fighting abroad.

**Date of arrest & date of extradition:** Section 2(3) Extradition cases – The dates that the individual profiled was arrested and, where applicable, subsequently extradited.

**DATE OF CONVICTION:** The date the defendant was either found guilty or admitted guilt.

**PLEA:** Whether the individual pleaded guilty or not guilty to the charge(s) they were convicted of.

**SENTENCE:** Details of the sentence the individual received.

**TARGET:** Where applicable, the specific individual, group, building, or institution that was explicitly intended to be the subject of the intended attack.

**NETWORK:** Known links to cases, plots or cells; links to known terrorist networks or groups, most of which are proscribed by the UK Home Office (see glossary of organisations); and links to known extreme Islamist groups that are not currently proscribed by the Home Office. Other networks the authors have chosen to include are explained below:

**Finsbury Park Mosque [Abu Hamza's network]** – Abu Hamza al-Masri was imam of North Central London Mosque (aka Finsbury Park Mosque) between 1997 and 2003. Finsbury Park Mosque at this time is categorised as a network because under his control it became a centre for the recruitment and planning of terrorist activities.<sup>14</sup> Many of the individuals profiled were also radicalised while attending Abu Hamza's extremist sermons there.

**Malakand training camp, July 2003** – Malakand, in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, was the site of a terrorist training camp organised primarily by Omar Khyam, leader of the Crawley cell responsible for the 'fertiliser bomb' plot in the UK. Attendance during July 2003 has been included as a network because of the large number of individuals profiled in this report who trained there at the same time – including members of both the 'fertiliser' and the 7/7 cell as well as individuals convicted abroad – and who knew one another.

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14 For more information see Sean O'Neill and Daniel McGrory, *Suicide Factory: Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Park Mosque* (Harper Collins, 2006)

# ISLAMIST TERRORISM

**Tablighi Jamaat [aka Jamat-al-Tablighi]:** Tablighi Jamaat, or literally ‘the group that propagates the faith’, is a primarily apolitical, religiously conservative, Sunni-Deobandi movement which operates in over 150 countries and has an estimated 70-80 million members. Founded in India during the 1920s, Tablighi Jamaat aims to revive religious practices which are in line with a conservative interpretation of Islam. Membership of the group, however, does not indicate an affinity with Islamism, nor does it indicate links to Islamist or terrorist organisations. It has been included as a network because of its non-ideological connections to Islamism-related terrorism. For example, federal investigators in the US have evidence of al-Qaeda operatives using the movement’s global reach and its history of travelling missionaries in order to travel without attracting suspicion. Furthermore, some analysts have claimed that Tablighi Jamaat’s literal interpretation of Islam has, on occasion, served as a precursor towards developing an ideological, Islamism-inspired interpretation of Islam.<sup>15</sup>

**KNOWN ASSOCIATES:** Includes known links to other individuals listed in this report; links to other known terrorists; links to senior figures in extreme Islamist groups; and links to terrorist suspects placed under government control order in the UK. Associates are grouped according to network or case affiliation. If the individual profiled was part of a terrorist cell, then other members of that cell are also listed as known associates, even if they may not have had personal interaction with fellow cell members. When this is the case, the notes section will specify who exactly knew whom within the cell. Affiliations are denoted in square brackets and separated by semi-colons.

**GENDER:** The sex of the figure profiled.

**AGE AT TIME OF CHARGE:** The age of the individual profiled when charged with the crime that led to their inclusion in the report. Where the date of charge could not be determined, the age at time of arrest has been used instead.

**AGE AT TIME OF CONVICTION:** The age of the individual profiled when convicted of the crime that led to their inclusion in the report.

**Age at time of extradition:** Section 2(3) Extradition cases – The age of the individual profiled when extradited to face trial for the crime that led to their inclusion in the report.

**NATIONALITY:** The status of belonging to a particular country by birth or naturalisation.

**ORIGIN:** The ancestry of the figure profiled, indicating ethnic heritage as well as place of birth. For example an individual born in the UK to parents who had emigrated from Pakistan is described as British Pakistani; an individual born in Ethiopia who subsequently gained British nationality is described as Ethiopian. When an individual is described as Asian, this refers to the Oxford English Dictionary’s definition of the term in the UK, namely ‘people who come from (or whose parents came from) the Indian subcontinent’.

**PLACE OF RESIDENCE:** The town or city and county the individual lived in at the time of arrest, as indicated on their court record sheet for British convictions. For London addresses the information is listed by ward where known, London borough, and London sub-region.<sup>16</sup> For Birmingham addresses the information is listed by ward where known and Birmingham constituency.<sup>17</sup> The individual’s place of birth or place where the individual was raised is included in brackets where known.

**OCCUPATION:** Employment at time of charge or at time of arrest. Previous employment is also included where known.

**EDUCATION:** Level of educational attainment at time of charge, and the institutions the individual attended are included, where known. When this includes undergraduate and postgraduate study, the degree subject is listed where known.

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<sup>15</sup> ‘A Muslim Missionary Group Draws New Scrutiny in U.S.’, *New York Times*, 14 July 2003, available at [www.nytimes.com/2003/07/14/national/14ISLA.html?pagewanted=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/14/national/14ISLA.html?pagewanted=1); for more information on Tablighi Jamaat see Graham Fuller, ‘The Future of Political Islam’, *Foreign Affairs*, Mar.-Apr., 2002, p. 49, article available at [www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/57806/graham-e-fuller/the-future-of-political-islam](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/57806/graham-e-fuller/the-future-of-political-islam)

<sup>16</sup> The authors have used the most recent London sub-regions, defined in The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, Greater London Authority, February 2008, available at [www.london.gov.uk/thelondonplan/docs/londonplan08.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/thelondonplan/docs/londonplan08.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> See ‘Birmingham constituencies’, Birmingham City Council website, available at [www.birmingham.gov.uk/constituencies](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/constituencies)

## PROFILES

**NOTES:** Description of the case and activities the individual has been involved in, providing relevant information to compliment the entry. Accordingly, notes vary in length.

**SOURCES:** All sources used. The information in section 1(1), Islamism-inspired convictions in UK courts, and Section 2(4), extradition cases from the UK, has been obtained largely from court records (gained through personal correspondence), Court of Appeal documents, the Crown Prosecution Services (CPS), the Home Office, and news archives. Information reported in the media does not always match the court and government records. Conflicting information was also reported inter-governmentally, between Home Office, CPS and court records. When this has occurred, official court records have been given precedence as the authoritative source. When information has only been available from news sources, and there are discrepancies in the way this information is reported, it is noted within the text.



# GLOSSARY

*The following is a list of organisations mentioned in this report and proscribed by the Home Office.*

**Abu Sayyaf:** The aim of the Abu Sayyaf group is the establishment of an autonomous Islamist state in the Southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

**Al-Gama'a al-Islamiya:** The aim of this group is to overthrow the Egyptian government and replace it with an Islamist state. The group believes in using all means, including violence, to achieve its aims. Some members also want to see the removal of Western influence in the Arab world.

**Al-Ghurabaa:** A splinter group of al-Muhajiroun (see below) and based in the UK, the group has disseminated materials that glorify acts of terrorism. Its aims are the same as al-Muhajiroun, namely the removal of secular regimes and the establishment of an Islamist state in the UK.

**Al-Muhajiroun:** Founded in the UK in 1996 by Omar Bakri Mohammed, al-Muhajiroun is also known as al-Ghurabaa, Saviour/Saved Sect, Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah and Islam4UK. The group, currently led by Anjem Choudary, calls for the removal of secular regimes and the establishment of an Islamist state in the UK. In January 2010, the Home Office confirmed al-Muhajiroun – and its successor group Islam4UK – as proscribed organisations, as the groups were alternative names for al-Ghurabaa and Saviour/Saved Sect – groups banned in 2006. **Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'ah**, also mentioned in this report, was formed in the UK in November 2005 by former leading members of al-Muhajiroun, after that organization was disbanded in 2004. Like its predecessors, this group calls for the establishment of an Islamist state in the UK. However, after some of its leading members were jailed in 2008, the name is no longer used.

**Al-Qaeda:** The aims of al-Qaeda are to create an Islamist state governed by Islamic law; the expulsion of western forces from Saudi Arabia; the destruction of Israel; and the end of Western influence in the Muslim-majority countries. The group is inspired and was until May 2011 led by Osama bin Laden.

**Al-Shabaab:** Based in Somalia, the group aims to establish an Islamist state in the country using both military and political tactics. Controlling parts of Somali territory, the group has used violence against the Somali Transitional Federal Government and African Union peacekeeping forces since 2007. The Home Office proscribed the group in March 2010.

**Ansar al-Islam:** This is a Sunni Salafi group from Halabja, northeast Iraq. The group is anti-Western, and opposes the influence of the US in Iraqi Kurdistan. The group has been involved in operations against Multi-National Forces in Iraq.

**Armed Islamic Group:** The aim of this group is to create an Islamist state in Algeria. It will use all necessary means, including violence, to achieve its aims.

**Egyptian Islamic Jihad:** The aim of this group is to overthrow the Egyptian government and replace it with an Islamist state. In September 1998 the group's leadership allied itself to al-Qaeda.

**Hamas Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades:** The military wing of the Palestinian group Hamas, its stated aim is to end Israeli occupation in Palestine and establish an Islamist state.

**Harakat Ul-Jihad-Ul-Islami:** This group's aim is the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan, and the spreading of terror throughout India using violence. It targets Indian security positions in Kashmir and conducted terrorist operations in the Indian mainland.

**Harakat Al-Islami Bangladeshi:** The Bangladeshi branch of this group aims to create an Islamic regime in Bangladesh based on the former Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

**Harakat ul-Mujahideen:** Based in Pakistan, this group seeks independence for Indian administered Kashmir. The leadership was signatory to Osama bin Laden's 1998 fatwa, which called for worldwide attacks against US and Western interests. The group was previously known as **Harakat ul-Ansar**, which is also mentioned in this report. It formed as a result of a coalition between Harakat ul-Mujahideen and Harakat ul-Jihad ul-Islami in 1993. However, in 1997 the group renamed itself again as Harakat ul-Mujahideen.



# ISLAMIST TERRORISM

**Islamic Army of Aden:** The group aims to overthrow the Yemeni government and establish an Islamist state.

**Jaish-e-Mohammed:** Based in Pakistan, the group seeks the 'liberation' of Kashmir from Indian control as well as the 'destruction' of America and India. It has also stated that it aims to unify various Kashmiri militant groups. The group was founded in 2000 and is a splinter group of Harakat ul-Ansar.

**Jemaah Islamiyah:** A Southeast Asian militant group that aims to create an Islamist state unifying Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Southern Philippines.

**Lashkar-e-Taiba:** Founded in 1990 and based in Pakistan, the group seeks independence for Kashmir and the creation of an Islamist state unifying Muslim-majority countries using violent means. It considers India, Israel and the US to be enemies.

**Lashkar-i-Jhangvi:** The group's aim is to create an Islamist state in Pakistan using violent means. The group sees Muslims belonging to the Shia Islamic sect as infidels and also aims to destroy other religions. The group has links to al-Qaeda and is a splinter of Millat-E Pakistan, which renamed itself in April 2003 from Sapha-i-Sahaba Pakistan.

**Libyan Islamic Fighting Group:** The group seeks to replace the Libyan government with an Islamist state. The group has mounted several operations inside Libya, including a 1996 attempt to assassinate Mu'ammarr Qadhafi. Until September 2009, the group was also part of the wider global Islamist extremist movement, inspired by al-Qaeda. The group has now publicly renounced the use of violent tactics to achieve its stated aims.

**Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (Groupe Salafiste pour la Predication et le Combat):** The group aims to create an Islamist state in Algeria using all necessary means, including violence. The group aligned itself with al-Qaeda's global jihad in 2004. It has now been renamed itself as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

**Saviour Sect, aka Saved Sect:** A splinter group of al-Muhajiroun and based in the UK, the group has disseminated materials that glorify acts of terrorism. Its aims are the same as al-Muhajiroun and al-Ghurabaa, namely the removal of secular regimes and the establishment of an Islamist state in the UK.

**Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan [TTP]:** TTP – the Pakistani Taliban – is an umbrella organisation comprising 13 militant groups active in Pakistan. Its goals are to implement Sharia law and fight against both NATO forces in Afghanistan and the Pakistani army. It was officially formed in December 2007 under Baitullah Mehsud's leadership. After Mehsud was killed in August 2009 in a U.S. missile strike, he was succeeded by his cousin, Hakimullah Mehsud. The Home Office proscribed the group in January 2011.

*The following organisations are not proscribed by the Home Office but are mentioned in this report. Groups include those that have used terrorist tactics, or are aligned with al-Qaeda as well as non-violent Islamist groups.*

**Advice and Reform Committee:** The Committee was the London media liaison office for Osama bin Laden, which was opened by Khalid al-Fawwaz in 1994 and operated until 1998. The Committee advocated the ousting of the Saudi Arabian monarchy and its replacement with a strict Islamist regime that would end any Western influence and military involvement in the country and other Muslim majority countries.

**Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (Fatah):** The group emerged from a Fatah linked coalition of militias. They comprise of local units that largely act independently but are united in their alliance to Fatah and are often seen as the group's military wing. They emerged in 2000 at the beginning of the second Palestinian intifada, seeking to establish a Palestinian state and drive Israeli forces out of Palestinian territories. Initially they focussed on settlements and military outposts, but in 2002 began targeting Israeli civilians. The group was thereafter designated as a terrorist group by the US.<sup>18</sup> Unlike the Hamas Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade is inspired by a nationalist and not an Islamism-related cause.

**Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights:** The Committee is an exiled Saudi Arabian opposition group founded in 1993 with the aim of overthrowing the ruling Saudi family and replacing it with a more 'pure' Islamic state. Headed by Mohammed al-Massari, its headquarters moved to London in 1994.

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<sup>18</sup> See State Dept. Updates List of Terrorist Individuals and Groups, America.gov, 15 October 2002, available at [www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2002/October/20021015160910ddenny@pd.state.gov.09141504.html](http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2002/October/20021015160910ddenny@pd.state.gov.09141504.html)

## GLOSSARY

**Hizb ut-Tahrir:** Founded in Jordan in 1952, this revolutionary Islamist group seeks to overthrow governments in Muslim-majority countries – peacefully or via a military coup – and establish an Islamist state that would eventually expand and annex or colonise all existing countries. The group claims to be a non-violent political party.

**Jama'at Al-Tawhid Wal-Jihad:** Led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the group eventually became known as al-Qaeda in Iraq. The group's initial aim was the replacement of the Jordanian Monarchy with an Islamist government. They also focussed on training militants in Afghanistan and Iran.

**Jamaat-e-Islami:** Jamaat-e-Islami is the oldest political party in Pakistan. It was founded in 1941 by Maulana Maududi, an Indian journalist and Islamist theologian. The group – which has a full organisational structure and constitution – aspires to the removal of man-made political systems, and the creation of an Islamist state ruled under sharia law.<sup>19</sup>

**Maktab al-Khitmet [MAK]:** MAK, translated as the Office of Services, or Services Bureau, was established in Peshawar by Abdullah Azzam in 1984. Azzam was a key jihadist ideologue who fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union and was an intellectual mentor to Osama bin Laden. The organisation was created to receive and supervise the growing numbers of mujahideen, and funds from the Middle East.

**Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (Groupe Islamique Combattant Marocain):** The group aims to establish an Islamist state in Morocco and supports al-Qaeda. Established during the 1990s, it comprises mainly Moroccan recruits who attend training camps in Afghanistan. The group is also believed to have been involved in planning the 2003 Casablanca bombings and Spanish authorities are investigating possible links to the 2004 Madrid bombings.

**Muslim Brotherhood:** Founded in Egypt in 1928, the Brotherhood aims to establish an Islamist state by using entry level tactics – political participation – as a means to advocate social and political reform. Through this, the Brotherhood hopes to gradually Islamise societies through grassroots activism. The group claims to be a non-violent political party.

**National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty:** A now defunct Pakistani based terrorist group that claimed to be behind the beheading of American journalist Daniel Pearl. The group sought the release of Pakistani prisoners held by the United States at Guantánamo Bay. According to the Australian government, this group belongs to Jaish-e-Mohammed.<sup>20</sup>

**Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Chechen Martyrs:** Led by Shamil Basayev, this group is an Islamist Chechen separatist outfit, engaged in guerrilla operations against Russian forces and pro-Russian Chechen forces, as well as Russian and Chechen non-combatants. The group was designated as a terrorist organisation by the United States in 2003.<sup>21</sup> In 2004, Basayev claimed the group was responsible for the Beslan school hostage crisis.

**Salafia Jihadia:** A group affiliated with al-Qaeda that is active in North Africa and Spain.

**Supporters of Shariah:** Founded in the UK in 1994 and headed by Abu Hamza al-Masri, this group rejected 'manmade' laws and regarded Islamic law as sovereign. Believing that Western influences need to be purged, as they pose a threat to Islam, the group encouraged Muslims to take up armed jihad as an obligation. The group operated out Finsbury Park Mosque in London when Abu Hamza controlled the mosque.

**Takfir-wal-Hijra:** Originating in Egypt in the 1960s as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, the group has now allied with al-Qaeda, and has members and supporters in several countries.

**Taliban:** An extreme religious and political group that governed Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, enforcing an extreme interpretation of Islamic law. Headed by Mullah Mohammed Omar, it has a strong insurgency movement in Pakistan and Afghanistan, fighting against those countries' current governments and allied NATO forces there.

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<sup>19</sup> Burke, J. *Al-Qaeda: The true story of Radical Islam* (Penguin Books: London, 2004); Zahab and Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*, Columbia University Press: New York, 2004)

<sup>20</sup> See Australian National Security, Australian Government, available at [www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/nationalsecurity.nsf/Page/What\\_Governments\\_are\\_doing\\_Listing\\_of\\_Terrorism\\_Organisations\\_Jaish-i-Mohammed](http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/nationalsecurity.nsf/Page/What_Governments_are_doing_Listing_of_Terrorism_Organisations_Jaish-i-Mohammed)

<sup>21</sup> See State Department Briefing, America.gov, 28 February 2003, available at [www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2003/February/20030228182135ross@pd.state.gov0.704632.html](http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2003/February/20030228182135ross@pd.state.gov0.704632.html)

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**Tunisian Fighting Group:** Sometimes known as the Tunisian Combat Group, the Fighting Group is an offshoot of the Tunisian Islamic Front. Formed in the summer of 2000, their ultimate goal is to establish an Islamist state in Tunisia. They aim to attack both Tunisian and Western interests in the country and abroad. They have had ties with al-Qaeda and the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat.

## TERMS USED<sup>22</sup>

**Fatwa:** an authoritative statement on a point of law from an Islamic scholar.

**Jihad (lit. struggle):** interpretations range from a personal effort to live according to Islam to defending Islam by means of an armed struggle and physically fighting in the way of Allah to establish Islam. In the context of this report jihad should be taken to mean armed struggle.

**Kafir (pl. kuffar):** usually translated as ‘non-believer’ – referring to non-Muslims – the term can also be used derogatorily to suggest a person (Muslim or non-Muslim) who rejects Islam.

**Madrasa:** a traditional place of Islamic study and learning.

**Mujahid (pl. mujahideen) (lit. struggler):** a person who takes part in jihad as armed struggle.

**Ramadan:** the Muslim holy month of fasting.

**Sharia/Shariah (lit. road):** a range of diverse traditions and interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence, from strict rules to broad principles and objectives.

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22 Taken primarily from Aisha Bewley, *Glossary of Islamic Terms* (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 1998)

# BACKGROUND

## CURRENT THREAT LEVEL

Al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda inspired terrorism remains the biggest threat to the UK's national security. In May 2011, Prime Minister Cameron stressed that the recent assassination of Osama bin Laden 'does not mark the end of the threat we face from extremist terror'.<sup>23</sup> In March 2005, Sir John Stevens, former head of the London Metropolitan police, said that 'there are at least 100 Osama bin Laden-trained terrorists walking Britain's streets. The number is probably nearer 200 ... the cunning of al-Qaida means we can't be exact'.<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Evans, the head of MI5, said in a 2007 speech that 'at least 2,000' people in the UK posed a threat to national security because of their support for terrorism.<sup>25</sup> In a September 2010 speech, Evans said:

At any one time we have a handful of investigations that we believe involve the real possibility of a terrorist attack being planned against the UK. That number will fluctuate and some cases may not develop as far as we had expected, but most turn out to be the real thing. The fact that there are real plots uncovered on a fairly regular basis demonstrates that there is a persistent intent on the part of Al Qaida and its associates to attack the UK [...]

There remains a serious risk of a lethal attack taking place. I see no reason to believe that the position will significantly improve in the immediate future.<sup>26</sup>

In January 2011, Baroness Neville Jones, then Minister for Security and Counter-terrorism stated that

The fact that terrorists have not succeeded in attacking this country since the 2007 attack on Glasgow Airport is testimony to the tireless work of the police and the intelligence agencies. It is not because the threat has diminished. We still face a serious and sustained threat from terrorism.<sup>27</sup>

At the time of publication, the official threat level was 'severe', meaning an attack is 'highly likely'.

The British-based threat is not limited to the UK: a number of British Muslims have been convicted in foreign courts or have fought for terrorist or extreme Islamist groups abroad. Furthermore, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) claims that America's most likely terrorist scenario comes from a British-born extremist entering the US under the visa waiver programme – 40% of its operations aimed at disrupting terrorism plots against the US are conducted against targets in the UK.<sup>28</sup>

## ISLAMISM-INSPIRED TERRORISM CONVICTIONS IN THE UK

The Intelligence and Security Committee enquiry into the 7/7 London bombings, published in May 2009, found that basic data on terrorist convictions in the UK had not been compiled. It concluded:

The Committee is both disappointed and concerned that such a simple, yet essential, piece of the evidence base – the successful conviction of terrorists – was not only unused, but was not even available. This is basic information that should have been being [sic] analysed to assess how well aspects of the strategy were working and what changes needed to be made – particularly in terms of legislation.<sup>29</sup>

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23 'David Cameron welcomes bin Laden death', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 May 2011, available at [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/8487508/David-Cameron-welcomes-bin-Laden-death.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/8487508/David-Cameron-welcomes-bin-Laden-death.html)

24 'Ex-Policeman Warns of U.K. Terror Threat', *Associated Press*, 6 March 2005

25 'Thousands pose UK terror threat', *BBC News*, 5 November 2007, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7078712.stm>

26 'Jonathan Evans' terrorism speech', *Daily Telegraph*, 17 September 2010, available at [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8008252/Jonathan-Evans-terrorism-speech.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8008252/Jonathan-Evans-terrorism-speech.html)

27 'Al-Qaeda a "money making machine"', *Daily Telegraph*, 15 March 2011, available at [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8383789/Al-Qaeda-a-money-making-machine.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8383789/Al-Qaeda-a-money-making-machine.html)

28 'CIA warns Barack Obama that British terrorists are the biggest threat to the US', *Daily Telegraph*, 7 February 2009, available at [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/barackobama/4550144/CIA-warns-Barack-Obama-that-British-terrorists-are-the-biggest-threat-to-the-US.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/barackobama/4550144/CIA-warns-Barack-Obama-that-British-terrorists-are-the-biggest-threat-to-the-US.html)

29 *Could 7/7 Have Been Prevented?: Review of the Intelligence on the London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005*, Intelligence and Security Committee, May 2009, p.88-89, available at [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/210852/20090519\\_77review.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/210852/20090519_77review.pdf)

# ISLAMIST TERRORISM

From 2009, the Crown Prosecution Service began compiling an online resource cataloguing high profile convictions for terrorism offences since 2007.<sup>30</sup>

In February 2011, the Home Office published statistics about the number of arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000 between 11 September 2001 and 30 September 2010 and their outcomes.<sup>31</sup> Within this time: 1,897 people were arrested; 1,031 of those were released without charge; 670 were charged;<sup>32</sup> 240 were convicted of terrorism offences;<sup>33</sup> and in a further 189 cases alternative action was taken.<sup>34</sup>

The Home-Office statistics also include background information on all 'terrorist/extremist prisoners in Great Britain' but does not distinguish between Islamism-inspired and non-Islamism-inspired offences. There are three categories of data: Terrorist legislation or terrorism-related; Domestic extremist/separatist; and Historic terrorist cases.<sup>35</sup>

## BRITISH MUSLIMS FIGHTING ABROAD

Reports on the numbers of British Muslims who have fought for terrorist or extreme Islamist groups abroad vary. The Ministry of Defence, for example, has stated that, 'it is too complicated to go into estimating numbers for this type of thing'.<sup>36</sup> An associate of the radical preacher Abu Hamza al-Masri – who recruited British Muslims to fight abroad throughout the 1990s – has also said that the figure is unknowable.<sup>37</sup> There have, however, been a series of figures and destinations reported.

### Pre 9/11

According to one UK-based newspaper, between 1997 and 2000, 200 British Muslims fought in countries such as Chechnya, Kashmir and Afghanistan, with a number being killed.<sup>38</sup> Salman Abdullah – a British Muslim who fought in Kashmir in the late 1990s and who was a regular at Finsbury Park Mosque when Abu Hamza al-Masri was the imam – estimates that approximately fifty Muslims from that mosque alone were killed fighting abroad.<sup>39</sup> In 2000, then head of al-Muhajiroun, Omar Bakri Mohammed, claimed that approximately 1800 British Muslims were recruited at mosques and universities to take part in 'military service' every year.<sup>40</sup> It is almost certain, however, that this claim was exaggerated for propaganda purposes.

### Supporting the Taliban

Following the invasion of Afghanistan by the US in October 2001, one UK-based newspaper reported that 'no more than a few dozen' British Muslims had travelled there to fight for the Taliban.<sup>41</sup> That month, however, Abdul Rahman Saleem, then al-Muhajiroun spokesman in Pakistan, claimed that 'between 500 and 700' British Muslims had arrived to fight for the Taliban.<sup>42</sup> Also in October, a source described as 'al-Muhajiroun's spokesman in Pakistan' claimed to have, 'personally met almost 1,000 British mujahideen [fighters] in the last few weeks', estimating that British

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30 Prosecuting terrorists – Counter Terrorism Division, CPS website, available at [www.cps.gov.uk/your\\_cps/our\\_organisation/ctd.html](http://www.cps.gov.uk/your_cps/our_organisation/ctd.html)

31 'Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes and stop & searches Quarterly update to September 2010', Home Office Statistical Bulletin, available at [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/counter-terrorism-statistics/hosb0411/hosb0411?view=Binary](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/counter-terrorism-statistics/hosb0411/hosb0411?view=Binary)

32 272 were charged under terrorism legislation, which includes The Terrorism Act 2000, The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, and The Terrorism Act 2006; 148 were charged under non-terrorism legislation but were considered terrorism related; while 250 were charged for non-terrorism offences.

33 117 were convicted under terrorism legislation; and 123 were convicted under non-terrorism legislation considered terrorism related.

34 Alternative action includes a caution, transfer to immigration authorities or the Police Service of Northern Ireland or the use of mental health legislation.

35 The Home Office bulletin does not define the remit of the first category. Domestic extremists are defined as individuals who belong to groups or causes that originate in the UK, and include extreme left- and right-wing groups, animal rights activists and domestic (or 'lone wolf') bombers. Historic cases are defined as those imprisoned pre-2001 following a terrorist organisation and include members of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, the Democratic Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Arabistan and domestic bombers.

36 'British brigade of Islamists join Al-Qaeda foreign legion', *The Times*, 4 June 2006, available at [www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article671510.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article671510.ece)

37 Sean O'Neill and Daniel McGrory, *Suicide Factory: Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Park Mosque*, p.80

38 'Family in fear as son joins terrorists', *The Times*, 22 January 2000

39 O'Neill and McGrory, *Suicide Factory*, p.93

40 'Suicide bombing reveals UK link to terror', *Yorkshire Post*, 29 December 2000

41 "'We will replace the Bible with the Koran in Britain'", *Guardian*, 4 November 2001

42 'The British prepared to die fighting the British', *Yorkshire Post*, 30 October 2001

## BACKGROUND

recruits constituted, 'about 60 per cent of the total', number of Muslims from the West fighting with the Taliban.<sup>43</sup> However, al-Muhajiroun are notorious for over-exaggerating their influence and these figures are almost certainly vastly inflated. In response, British government officials said that while they were aware of the problem of British Muslims travelling to Afghanistan via Pakistani to fight for the Taliban, the figure of 'thousands' was likely to be an exaggeration.<sup>44</sup> In January 2009 a British military officer described the presence of British Muslims in Afghanistan as, 'not big numbers, but they are there, definitely'.<sup>45</sup> Intercepted Taliban communications have also shown that British Muslims are fighting in southern Afghanistan.

### **'British brigade' in Iraq**

Iraq has been another destination for British Muslims inspired to fight by Islamism. For example, in June 2005, senior security sources revealed that approximately 70 British Muslims were fighting against coalition troops in Iraq, with at least three having been killed.<sup>46</sup> In 2006, security sources said that between 120 and 150 British Muslims had travelled to Iraq to fight coalition troops. Labelled the 'British brigade', they were thought to have operated under the now deceased Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, formerly head of al-Qaeda in Iraq.<sup>47</sup>

## **ATTENDING TERRORIST TRAINING CAMPS**

### **Afghanistan**

Evidence presented to the Special Immigration Appeals Commission in 2002 showed that, 'upwards of a thousand individuals from the UK are estimated on the basis of intelligence to have attended training camps in Afghanistan in the last five years,' and that, 'the backgrounds of those detained show the high level of involvement of British citizens and those otherwise connected with the United Kingdom in the terrorist networks'.<sup>48</sup>

In July 2005 Sir John Stevens, the then Metropolitan police commissioner, claimed that approximately 3,000 British-born or British-based Muslims had attended training camps in Afghanistan over the past decade.<sup>49</sup>

### **Pakistan**

The most common country of heritage for Britain's Muslim population, Pakistan has been a popular site for terrorist training in recent years. Osama Nazir, formerly a senior member of the Pakistani terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed and associate of 7/7 bomber Shehzad Tanweer, said that between 2001 and 2005 he believed over 300 British Muslims of Pakistani origin had visited Pakistan to attend training camps and enrol for suicide bomb missions.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, in November 2008 the Security Service revealed that over 4,000 British Muslims had attended terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>51</sup>

However, the head of MI5 revealed in September 2010 that the percentage of plots linked to al-Qaeda in the tribal areas of Pakistan had dropped from around 75% in 2007-2008 to around 50%. This was partly due to pressure exerted on al-Qaeda in Pakistan – but also partly due to increased terrorist activity in Somalia and Yemen.<sup>52</sup>

### **Somalia**

Since al-Shabaab's alignment with al-Qaeda in 2007 Somalia has become another base for British militants. In September 2009, it was reported that the numbers going to fight or attend terrorist training there, 'has more than

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43 "Brainwashed" Britons killed in rocket attack', *Daily Telegraph*, 29 October 2001, available at [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1360816/Brainwashed-Britons-killed-in-rocket-attack.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1360816/Brainwashed-Britons-killed-in-rocket-attack.html)

44 'Britons who join Taliban to face trial Jail threat to those "who return alive"', *Daily Telegraph*, 30 October 2001

45 'British Muslims fighting alongside Taliban, commanders claim', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 January 2009, available at [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/4076591/British-Muslims-fighting-alongside-Taliban-commanders-claim.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/4076591/British-Muslims-fighting-alongside-Taliban-commanders-claim.html)

46 '70 British Muslims join Iraq fighters', *The Times*, 26 June 2005, available at [www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article537577.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article537577.ece)

47 'British brigade of Islamists join Al-Qaeda foreign legion', *The Times*, 4 June 2006

48 *Judgments – A (FC) and others (FC) (Appellants) v. Secretary of State for the Home Department (Respondent)*, House of Lords, 16 Dec 2004, available at [www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld200405/ldjudgmt/jd041216/a&oth-2.htm](http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld200405/ldjudgmt/jd041216/a&oth-2.htm)

49 'Radical Muslim youth who aspired to be UK's first suicide bombers: British connection', *Guardian*, 13 July 2005

50 'A Search for Roots Goes Bad', *TIME Europe*, 24 July 2005, available at [www.time.com/time/europe/html/050801/tanweer.html](http://www.time.com/time/europe/html/050801/tanweer.html)

51 'British Muslims have become a mainstay of the global "jihad"', *Independent*, 29 November 2008, available at [www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/british-muslims-have-become-a-mainstay-of-the-global-jihad-1040232](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/british-muslims-have-become-a-mainstay-of-the-global-jihad-1040232)

52 Jonathan Evans' terrorism speech', *Daily Telegraph*, 17 September 2010

# ISLAMIST TERRORISM

quadrupled to at least 100 since 2004.<sup>53</sup> Other analysts have warned that the actual figure will be 'much higher.'<sup>54</sup>

In January 2010, it was reported that close to a dozen young British Muslims had joined al-Shabaab in the previous year.<sup>55</sup> In September 2010, the head of MI5 commented that there were a 'significant number' of UK residents training in al-Shabaab camps. Furthermore, he said 'it is only a matter of time before we see terrorism on our streets inspired by those who are today fighting alongside Al Shabaab.'<sup>56</sup>

## Yemen

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) – the al-Qaeda affiliate in Yemen – has been described by the head of MI5 as an area of increased concern in respect of the domestic terror threat to the UK.<sup>57</sup> In 2009, it was estimated by the government that up to 20 British nationals had travelled to Yemen to be trained by AQAP.<sup>58</sup> A police source told a UK-based newspaper in the same year that there were 'four or five radicalised British Muslim cells in the Yemen.'<sup>59</sup> The suspects were believed to be of Pakistani and Somali descent, and some were believed to have been to university and studied engineering or computer sciences.

The role played in Yemen by Anwar al-Awlaki,<sup>60</sup> the US-born al-Qaeda ideologue and operational planner, is especially significant. While al-Awlaki is only directly linked to one case in this report – the first al-Qaeda inspired political assassination attempt in the UK (see pp. 233-235) – he has played a significant role in both ongoing and recently concluded major terrorism trials. He was in email contact with Major Nidal Hasan, the US soldier accused of the shootings in a military installation at Fort Hood, Texas, which killed 13 people,<sup>61</sup> and was in contact with Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian citizen accused of attempting to detonate a bomb stitched into his underwear on a flight heading to Detroit on 25 December 2009, who he described as his 'student.'<sup>62</sup> Al-Awlaki is also the prime suspect in the cargo plane bomb plot of October 2010, in which two packages containing explosives were discovered on cargo planes bound for the US from Yemen. The bombs were believed to be designed to detonate in mid-air, but were discovered at en-route stop-overs in the UK and Dubai.<sup>63</sup>

In the UK, al-Awlaki also coordinated Rajib Karim's plot to blow up a plane.<sup>64</sup> Karim was a British Airways employee who used his access to the airline's information to assist al-Awlaki in targeting flights to the US. He was convicted in the UK in February 2011, and sentenced to 30 years in jail.<sup>65</sup>

In early 2010, President Obama authorized al-Awlaki's assassination. He is the only US citizen to be subject to a presidentially sanctioned targeted killing.<sup>66</sup> At time of publication, he was still believed to be based in Yemen.

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53 'Jihad: The Somalia connection', *Independent*, 13 September 2009, available at [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/jihad-the-somalia-connection-1786608.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/jihad-the-somalia-connection-1786608.html)

54 Ibid.

55 UK students recruited for Somali jihad', *The Sunday Times*, 24 January 2010, available at [www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article6999929.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article6999929.ece)

56 Jonathan Evans' terrorism speech', *Daily Telegraph*, 17 September 2010

57 Ibid.

58 'Detroit terror attack: Britain sends counter-terrorist forces to Yemen', *Daily Telegraph*, 3 January 2010, available at [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/6924502/Detroit-terror-attack-Britain-sends-counter-terrorist-forces-to-Yemen.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/6924502/Detroit-terror-attack-Britain-sends-counter-terrorist-forces-to-Yemen.html)

59 'Bomb plotter: "More like me"', *The Sun*, 28 December 2009, available at [www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article2785733.ece](http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article2785733.ece)

60 For more on al-Awlaki's connections to the UK, see Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, *Anwar al-Awlaki: The UK Connection*, The Centre for Social Cohesion (2009), available at [www.socialcohesion.co.uk/files/1289579667\\_1.pdf](http://www.socialcohesion.co.uk/files/1289579667_1.pdf)

61 'Major Hasan's E-Mail: "I Can't Wait to Join You" in Afterlife', *ABC News*, 19 November 2009, available at <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/major-hasans-mail-wait-join-afterlife/story?id=9130339>

62 'Cleric in Yemen Admits Meeting Airliner Plot Suspect, Journalist Says', *New York Times*, 31 January 2010, available at [www.nytimes.com/2010/02/01/world/middleeast/01yemen.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/01/world/middleeast/01yemen.html?_r=1)

63 'Prime suspect in cargo plane bomb plot: Anwar al-Awlaki', *Guardian*, 31 October 2010, available at [www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/oct/31/cargo-plane-bomb-suspect-anwar-al-awlaki](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/oct/31/cargo-plane-bomb-suspect-anwar-al-awlaki); 'Printer cartridge bomb plot planning revealed', *BBC News*, 22 November 2010, available at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11812874](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11812874)

64 'Rajib Karim: The terrorist inside British Airways', *BBC News*, 28 February 2011, available at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-12573824](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-12573824)

65 Due to his conviction not taking place until 2011, Rajib Karim is not eligible for inclusion in this report.

66 'U.S. Approves Targeted Killing of American Cleric', *New York Times*, 6 April 2010, available at [www.nytimes.com/2010/04/07/world/middleeast/07yemen.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/07/world/middleeast/07yemen.html)

## Islamist Terrorism

### The British Connections

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

The 1st edition of *Islamist Terrorism* became an invaluable resource for governments, counterterrorism officials and academics across the world, and was exhaustively referenced in the recent review of the UK PREVENT strategy. This edition of *Islamist Terrorism: The British Connections* expands upon the scope of the 1st edition, presenting the most comprehensive ever overview of the UK's links to Islamism-inspired terrorism worldwide.

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