START
NATIONAL CONSORTIUM FOR THE STUDY OF TERRORISM AND RESPONSES TO TERRORISM

AUXILIARY DATASET

Patterns of Islamic State-Related Terrorism, 2002–2016

The complex evolution and affiliations of the organization currently known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) presents challenges for systematic, comprehensive analysis of terrorist attacks carried out by ISIL and related groups and individuals. In order to facilitate analysis of the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) with respect to ISIL-related terrorism, the GTD team conducted supplemental research to generate this auxiliary dataset that identifies ISIL related attacks worldwide and classifies them based on the type of relationship the perpetrators of each event had to ISIL. GTD data files and documentation can be downloaded from the GTD website.

DATA AND REPORT

Dataset (last updated July 2017):

https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/KNERY9

Report:

Miller, Erin. 2016. "Patterns of Islamic State-Related Terrorism, 2002–2015." Background Report, START. College Park.
http://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_IslamicStateTerrorismPatterns_BackgroundReport_Aug2016.pdf
Miller, Erin. 2017. "Overview: Terrorism in 2016." Background Report, START. College Park.
https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_GTD_OverviewTerrorism2016_August2017.pdf

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VARIABLES

The dataset includes five variables. In addition to the *eventID*, which can be used to link the auxiliary data to the full GTD, we have classified the terrorist attacks in GTD into four ISIL-related perpetrator categories:

EventID: Global Terrorism Database unique event identifier
ISIL Predecessor: attacks by organizations that were part of the ISIL lineage prior to adoption of the ISIL name in 2013
ISIL: attacks by operatives of the "core" of the organization, based in and primarily active in Iraq and Syria
ISIL Affiliate: attacks by organizations that have declared allegiance to ISIL[1]
ISIL-Inspired: attacks by individuals who have indicated that they were motivated by allegiance to ISIL
ISIL-Related: any of the above

0=No/Not indicated
1=Yes

[1] Note: Statistics for ISIL-affiliated perpetrators include attacks that took place *after* a group declared allegiance to the Islamic State. Detailed information about the methodology of this classification and notable exceptions can be found in the "Methodological Note" below.

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METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Adapted from full report:

For each attack included in the GTD, researchers review supporting source materials and record the name of the perpetrator group responsible for the attack. In doing so, GTD staff retain as much specificity as possible, while adopting a canonical naming convention for each group. If sources identify one or more individual perpetrators not formally affiliated with a group or organization, GTD staff classify the perpetrator(s) as "unaffiliated individual(s)." As an event-level database, the GTD does not systematically record information about the relationships or allegiances between groups. In order to produce this report, we conducted supplemental analysis to comprehensively classify perpetrator groups as predecessors of ISIL or affiliates of ISIL, and to identify unaffiliated individual perpetrators who were reportedly inspired by ISIL. The resulting auxiliary dataset is available on START's Dataverse page, and can be merged into the June 2017 release of the GTD using the *eventid* variable.

Several noteworthy challenges arose during the process of classifying perpetrator groups as ISIL predecessors or affiliates. Perhaps the most significant challenge is the fact that links between these groups exist on a continuum ranging from formally established, operational coordination and cooperation to more abstract, ideological support. Further complicating matters is the fact that often little detail about the exact nature of these relationships is available in open source materials, and the terminology used by both the media and the group leaders is extremely imprecise. Terms such as "link," "allegiance," "alliance," "support," "loyalty," and "endorse" are used interchangeably. Among the more poetically phrased announcements is that of the Pakistani group Tehrik-e-Khilafat, whose statement read, "From today, Sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi shall consider [Tehrik-e-Khilafat] and Jihad mujahideen fighters of Pakistan as one of the arrows among his arrows which he has kept for his bow."[2] Furthermore, in some cases ISIL leadership have acknowledged declarations of allegiance, and in other cases they have not. Finally, these relationships can be fluid, strengthening and weakening over time. For example, given the complex progression of the relationship between al-Nusrah Front and the Islamic State, we classified al-Nusrah Front as an ISIL predecessor group *prior* to its split from the newly branded ISIL. We classified attacks carried out by al-Nusrah Front after this point as not ISIL-related. The other ISIL predecessor groups are: Tawhid and Jihad, al-Qaida in Iraq, Mujahideen Shura Council, and the Islamic State of Iraq.

We began identifying ISIL affiliates by including all organizations identified as an Islamic State *wilayat* or "province" and that include this identity in their names. We identified 20 such organizations named as perpetrators in the GTD, including Boko Haram, which ostensibly adopted the name "Islamic State West Africa Province" upon declaring allegiance to ISIL. However, this name has not been widely adopted in favor of "Boko Haram."

We then conducted an exhaustive search of open source materials to identify other organizations that made specific statements indicating that they act in support of the Islamic State and al-Baghdadi. Through this process we identified 15 additional ISIL-affiliated perpetrator organizations. In certain cases, source materials indicated that elements of a group had declared allegiance to ISIL, but that this sentiment was not widely shared among all members. For example, we did not include the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in the Philippines among ISIL affiliates, despite the fact that ASG leaders announced allegiance to ISIL around the same time BIFM leaders did. Subsequent reports indicated that certain ASG battalions may have

[2] Crilly, R. and Mehsud, S. (2014, July 9). Pakistani terror group swears allegiance to Islamic State. Retrieved from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/10955563/Pakistani-terror-group-swears-allegiance-to-Islamic-State.html

actually defected from ASG to join ISIL.[3] Likewise, although reports indicate that some al-Shabaab members have pledged allegiance to ISIL, this is certainly a source of division within al-Shabaab and is characterized as defection rather than shifting allegiance of the group itself.[4] The table below lists all organizations we classified as ISIL affiliates.

Adan-Abyan Province of the Islamic State
Ahfad al-Sahaba-Aknaf Bayt al-Maqdis
Algeria Province of the Islamic State
Ansar Al-Khilafa (Philippines)
Bahrain Province of the Islamic State
Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM)
Barqa Province of the Islamic State
Boko Haram
Caucasus Province of the Islamic State
Fezzan Province of the Islamic State
Hadramawt Province of the Islamic State
Hijaz Province of the Islamic State
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)
Islamic State in Bangladesh
Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS)
Jabha East Africa
Jamaah Ansharut Daulah
Jund al-Khilafa (Algeria)
Jund al-Khilafah (Tunisia)
Jundallah
Jundul Khilafah (Philippines)
Khorasan Chapter of the Islamic State
Lahij Province of the Islamic State
Maute Group
Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT)
Najd Province of the Islamic State
Okba Ibn Nafaa Brigade
Sanaa Province of the Islamic State
Shabwah Province of the Islamic State
Sheikh Omar Hadid Brigade
Sinai Province of the Islamic State
Supporters of the Islamic State in Jerusalem
Supporters of the Islamic State in the Land of the Two Holy Mosques
Tehrik-e-Khilafat
Tripoli Province of the Islamic State

In 32 cases source materials attributed responsibility for an attack to ISIL generically in locations and time periods where there was more than one ISIL affiliate known to be active *or* where an ISIL affiliated group would formally emerge shortly thereafter. Due to lack of information about which specific organization or emerging affiliate was implicated in the attack the perpetrator of record in the GTD was ISIL "core." However, unless sources specifically indicated that these attacks were carried out by "core" ISIL operatives, we classified them as attacks by ISIL affiliated perpetrators for the purpose of this analysis.

The GTD includes information about the motive of each attack, as reported in source materials. To identify the attacks that were carried out by perpetrators inspired by, but not directly linked to ISIL, we reviewed the event summaries and motives fields for references to ISIL. We then sought out additional information about attack motives for those events attributed to unaffiliated individuals or Muslim extremists. In order to classify an attack as ISIL-inspired, we relied on statements made by the perpetrator(s) or other direct evidence (e.g., journals, social media messaging). In four cases, ISIL-inspired attacks were claimed by organizations (al-Shabaab, Hamas, Jund Ansar Allah and Kilafah Islamic Movement) rather than unaffiliated individuals. Although these organizations had not explicitly declared allegiance to ISIL, sources indicated that the attacks were inspired by ISIL.

[3] Weiss, C. (2016, March 22). Abu Sayyaf Group battalion defects to Islamic State. Retrieved from http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/03/abu-sayyaf-group-battalion-defects-to-islamic-state.php
[4] Shabelle News. (2016, April 9). A new Al Shabaab group pledges allegiance to ISIL. Retrieved from http://www.shabellenews.com/2016/04/a-new-al-shabaab-group-pledges-allegiance-to-isil