



# Global Terror Alert



© 2007 Evan Kohlmann (<http://www.globalterroralert.com> – [info@globalterroralert.com](mailto:info@globalterroralert.com))

## “Islamic Army in Iraq: A Response to Abu Omar al-Baghdadi”



“A Letter in Response to Abu Omar al-Baghdadi”  
Islamic Army in Iraq (IAI)  
(a.k.a. Jaysh al-Islami fi al-Iraq)  
Published: April 5, 2007

The Islamic Army in Iraq (IAI) first emerged publicly in 2003 and has since grown into one of the largest and most influential Sunni insurgent groups active in Iraq. From its very inception, the IAI established a reputation for itself as being a sophisticated, indigenous, and more-mainstream alternative to Al-Qaida and the Ansar al-Sunnah Army. However, the IAI has nonetheless routinely used terrorist tactics as part and parcel of its military operations. In November 2003, the IAI organized and videotaped a shoulder-fired surface-to-air missile attack on a DHL Airbus A300 leaving from Baghdad International Airport. In April 2005, the IAI organized and videotaped a shoulder-fired surface-to-air missile attack on a civilian Blackwater Mi-8 helicopter twelve miles north of Baghdad. The video showed IAI personnel summarily executing the lone survivor of the crash, co-pilot Lyubomir Kostov. Between 2003 and 2006, the IAI has admitted responsibility or has been otherwise implicated in the kidnapping and abduction of nearly a dozen foreign civilians in Iraq; including French journalists Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, Christian Science Monitor journalist Jill Carroll, U.S. security consultant Ronald Schultz (who was murdered during his captivity), and Italian journalist Enzo Baldoni (who was also murdered during his captivity).

For the length of its existence, the IAI has maintained an awkward détente with Al-Qaida forces in Iraq. While the group has conducted occasional joint operations with Al-Qaida since at least mid-2004, the IAI has—in the past—carefully distanced itself from some of Al-Qaida’s more controversial irredentist positions. When Al-Qaida threatened to kill any Iraqi—Sunni or Shiite—who dared to participate in U.S.-sponsored national elections, the IAI issued a communiqué in late 2006 along with other insurgent groups clarifying, “we are not against any proposals which extract our nation from its present ordeal provided that they do not interfere with our Shariah Law... and are not empty media slogans.”

Over the past year, factions within the IAI have been increasingly drawn into the orbit of Al-Qaida’s Mujahideen Shura Council and, later, the “Islamic State of Iraq.” In early December, a copy of a statement branded with the IAI logo appeared on the Internet that was not officially released by the IAI’s media wing. According to that statement, IAI units based in the western Anbar province have already agreed to join Al-Qaida’s Islamic State and have even sworn an oath of allegiance to Al-Qaida’s newly-appointed “leader of the faithful” in Iraq, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi. For months, the IAI’s media wing remained conspicuously silent regarding these rumors and other reports of high-level, ongoing negotiations with Al-Qaida leaders—until April 5, when it released the following communiqué through its official website and other credible online jihadi news sources.



Alleged statement from IAI fighters in Anbar swearing loyalty to Al-Qaida’s “Islamic State of Iraq”, December 2006

**“...It is a source of pain and sadness that, each time the day comes when the people... are close to the victory of Allah and closer to the departure of the occupiers who are dragging their feet in defeat and they are drinking the poison of humiliation, the Devil, his demons, and human beings create divisions within the mujahideen and they devote all of their resources towards the splintering of the structure and power of the mujahideen. Thus, the Muslims will become preoccupied with internal strife, which will [negate] the fruits of the holy jihad, even after Allah elevated the abilities of the mujahideen and the enemies of Allah tasted painful humiliation. Ever since the founding of the Islamic Army in Iraq and still to this day, we have followed a clear platform represented by:”**

**“1.) Serious work built upon the book of Allah and the path of the Prophet and the ancestors of the Islamic nation...”**

**“2.) The mobilization of all resources in order to defeat our enemies: from the Americans, and everyone allied with them, to the Iranians and the Safawi [Iranian-allied Shiites]. Also, not wasting any effort that might help in this battle.”**

**“3.) The use of all resources to bring together all of our manpower for all of us to reach our goals in life and death by the will of Allah.”**

**“4.) Making our work a priority and focusing on achieving our goals and uniting our vision.”**



# GlobalTerrorAlert



© 2007 Evan Kohlmann (<http://www.globalterroralert.com> – [info@globalterroralert.com](mailto:info@globalterroralert.com))

**“5.) Matching ambitions with reality in order to reach perfection and [evaluating] the righteousness of actions in each phase with [an understanding of the] different but equal needs for it to shift into the next phase and this is a natural characteristic of the phase that we are in.”**

**“6.) Adopting the method of equal justice and modernity when it comes to rights, as you must match your actions with your words. Equal justice is the pure practice of Islam. Modernity and equal justice in the practice of faith as well as in our behavior, and in jihad. Modernity when it comes to judging people, whether they are individuals, sects, or groups. Modernity in every aspect of the religion and life, as this Islamic nation is in the midst of all nations and its people are the purest and fairest among all.”**

**“7.) Equal attention to our work and jihad, as neither one should be pursued exclusively.”**

**“8.) Uniting around our method and practice, and not around individuals and empty titles.”**

**“9.) Knowledge, wisdom and experience come from individuals known for their truth and steadfastness and a history of purity in all fields.”**

**“10.) The group will carefully study knowledge and evidence in every matter... The group shall adopt what it sees as best for its own circumstances, and only then this will develop into a law governing over the group.”**

**“11.) Keeping time frame in mind when adopting the methods of our ancestors, as each era has different economic situations and traditions—and thus the application of fatwahas can change with time, place, traditions, and economic situations, and all of this comes from the religion of Allah.”**

**“12.) Stopping ourselves from rushing to stigmatize people as infidels before there is enough evidence. Even if there is evidence of disbelief, we cannot declare someone guilty until all the conditions have been meet. Moreover, not every infidel can be killed and others who are not infidels can be killed when all of the conditions of Shariah law are met, as has been laid out in our books of knowledge. But we do not kill a Muslim before taking into account all of the prevailing conditions including weakness, capabilities, war, and peace...”**

**“13.) Using the lessons of our predecessors, taking the positive and leaving the negative, and by evolving and focusing on their strong points.”**

**“14.) Keeping a dignified manner, starting with truthfulness and loyalty, and abandoning bad manners, as the worst sins are lying and betrayal. Faithfulness in correcting intentions, as it is at the base of all matters...”**

**“15.) Humility and modesty in the hands of almighty Allah, as all matters are in his hands. There is no place for arrogance in power or as a group...”**

**“16.) Keeping together the Muslim brotherhood and all its rights. Not to make allegations or use bad words about any group, small or large. Not to deny the efforts of others.”**



الجيش الإسلامي  
في  
العراق  
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إن الحمد لله حمده وتسبيحه وتستغفره . وتعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن سيئات أعمالنا . من يهده الله فهو مبين . ومن يضلل الله فليس له وليا مرشدا . وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له . وأشهد أن محمداً عبده ورسوله . صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلماً تسليمياً طيباً . (يا أيها الذين آمنوا اتقوا الله وتقبلوا قوله سديماً . يصبح لقد أفضأ الله وتغير لقد تفرقت ومن يتبع الله ويؤم الله ويؤم الله فقد فاز فوزاً عظيماً) . أما بعد :-  
قال الله تعالى يقول : (وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِحُكْمِ اللَّهِ وَخَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ اللَّهِ فِي خُضُوعٍ وَقَدْ خَرَّ سَبَّحًا) . (فاصبر إن وعد الله حق ولا يتخلف الدين لا يرفأه) (الروم: 60) . ويقول: (فاصبروا حتى يحقن الله بطننا وفؤادنا حتى نحقق) (الأنعام: 87)  
إنه نعمنا بغير الأسي والعجز . أنه كلما مر يرد على الناس . وهم يتربصون من نصر الله تعالى . وقد أرف رحيل المسلماتين وهم يجرؤن أنيل البيزية ويخرجون سد العزى والعز . كلما أزداد ترغ سباطين الأنا والجن . وكيفية لبيزة هو وبين المجاهدين . حيث يتكلمون قصارى جهدهم من إثارة الأعداء والضغائن . إلى استنارة دواعي العجب والتعجب . إلى محاولة تشتيت الصفوف . وتزويق الحجة . وتبديد القوة . وتزويق الظلمة  
ولقد كره يشغل المسلمون بصراع داخلي . يشقت لئام الجهاد المبرك . بعدما رفع الله راية المجاهدين وأتق أعداء العباد الأبيد والعزى المبين .  
ومعنا تأسيس جماعة الجيش الإسلامي في العراق وإلى هذا اليوم وهي تسير على خطى واضحة المعالم تمثل في :  
1) العمل الجهد المبني على الكفاية والسنة والسنن وسلف الأمة الذي يجمع بين الأصالة والتجديد في كل الميادين .  
2) استنارة كل الطقات لرد الأعداء الصائمين من الأمريكان ومن معهم من الإيرانيين والصفويين وعدم التقرب بأي جبه مشروعة تنفع في هذه المعركة .  
3) بيان كل الطقات واستنارة الجميع لجمع الكلمة على الحق ورفض الصفوف ولد الشمل لتصل جميعها إلى أهدافنا المنشودة في الدنيا والآخرة بيقان الله تعالى  
4) مراعاة الأولويات في العمل والتزويق على الهدف وعدم تشتيت الروية . في سنن ابن ماجه . عن خير الله بن مشهور قال سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: [إن جمل الخير هذا وأجداً هذا أقرب لله فلهذا قد نلتها ومن تشتت به الخيرة في أهوائها لم يقبل الله في أن أوتيتها] (صحيح الجامع 6189)  
5) الواقعية مع الفهم المتزايد لبيوع الأحمس والأعمال . بكل مرحلة لها وسائل مكافئة لمقتضياتها وحاجاتها . بحيث تسد إلى المرحلة التي قبلها وهذه من سمات ديننا الحنيف . وإن كان بعض الذين يسوقون التصور القرآنية لا يستشعرون بها على سطح هذا الدين في الجهد لا يراعون هذه السمة فيه ولا يتركون طبيعة المراحل التي مر بها هذا المنهج وعلاوة المتخلفة بكل مرحلة منها .  
6) اتساع مجال العمل وسيطة الحق بين الحق والجفاء فلا إفراط ولا تجرير في كل قول وعمل . قال تعالى : (وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ أَنَّهُ سَمَاءٌ يُقْرَأُ) خذوا على الناس ويقرؤن القرآن عظيم تنبيهاً (البقرة: 143)

IAI: "A Letter in Response to Abu Omar al-Baghdadi" (issued on April 5, 2007)

**“...Mistakes are something normal, and rising above them should be a very easy process for us, unless they become habitual and then it becomes a sin. Or, [unless they are] mistakes relating to the misinterpretation of Islamic jurisprudence, the origin of the faith, and what is most sacrosanct, such as Muslim blood, money, and behavior—an example of which was demonstrated by the brothers from Al-Qaida’s network in Iraq.”**



# Global Terror Alert



© 2007 Evan Kohlmann (<http://www.globalterroralert.com> – [info@globalterroralert.com](mailto:info@globalterroralert.com))

**“Thus, even though many people have blamed the mujahideen in general—and the Islamic Army in Iraq in particular—of sinning by keeping silent about the unlawful practices of the brothers from Al-Qaida, we respond by saying the following: We have been busy fighting the enemies of Allah, the Americans, the Safawi [pro-Iranian Shiites], and everyone allied with them; [We have been] keeping together our religion and our Islamic brotherhood with all of the mujahideen; [We have been] safeguarding the jihad project, as it is owned by the entire Islamic nation; [We have] been careful not to be manipulated by the enemies of Islam and Muslims; and, [We have] offered them abundant opportunities to return to the righteous path.”**

**“This is why we chose to deal with them with patience and wisdom and by giving them good advice. However, this failed to work, as they became determined to harm our holy movement in every way. Some examples of [what they have done]:”**

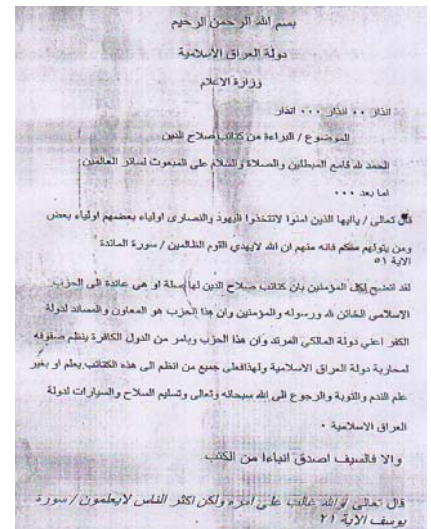
**“1.) Accusing the group of various false charges, such as it being affiliated with the Baathists. They know, and so does everybody else, that this group [the Islamic Army in Iraq] has no Baathists in it, and there is no connection in any way between our group and the Baath Party, nor the Baathist ideology, nor the organization, nor its field activity. They [Al-Qaida] accused our group of participating in different ideologies and Islamic parties. All of this is a lie. And, on another occasion, they said that our group belongs to the intelligence agencies, and each time Allah reveals the truth from the lies... Their duty should be to pray for us and call for a good outcome, as we do for them in public and secret.”**

**“2.) Accusing the commanders of our group of empty lies.”**

**“3.) The threat of killing some members of our group if they refuse to accept the name of Al-Qaida, or the various other names it uses. We were paying them heed only to stop their evil, to limit the struggle with our enemies, and to avoid acquiring additional enemies any time we can. We did this so we would not humiliate ourselves in front of our enemies.”**

**“4.) These people went so far as to even kill some of the brothers from our group with no justification, by this point the count stands at 30. And they refused to stop doing this. They made other jihadist groups into their enemies too. This rift changed into confrontation with other groups like the 1920 Revolution Brigades, which is still continuing now between them in Abu Ghraib. One of the incidents was the killing of one of their field commanders, brother Harith Tahir al-Dari. They also killed some of the personnel from the Mujahideen Army and some of the members of the Ansar al-Sunnah Army, and they have threatened the Iraqi Islamic Resistance Front (JAAMI), despite the burden undertaken by these groups to maintain the jihadist project and to keep it on target. But our patience [with them] has only made them more aggressive, and they have allowed the killing of Muslims, especially easy targets like**

**the muezzins [callers to prayer], and civilians—some of whom are from the Association of Muslim Scholars. It has become normal for them to target average Sunnis, especially the rich. Either they pay or they will kill them. Also, they will try to kill anyone who critiques them, disobeys them, or points to their mistakes, as it has become a simple matter and easy to explain. It has become the norm to rob people and take their money. It has become the norm to stigmatize people with the label of ‘infidel’ and ‘apostate.’”**



A notice posted in a Baghdad neighborhood from Al-Qaida’s Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) threatening fellow Sunni insurgents from the Iraqi Islamic Resistance Front (JAAMI), January 2007.



# GlobalTerrorAlert



© 2007 Evan Kohlmann (<http://www.globalterroralert.com> – [info@globalterroralert.com](mailto:info@globalterroralert.com))

***“[We] do not accept the two statements of Abu Hamza [al-Muhajir] and Abu Omar [al-Baghdadi] that demonstrated their mistakes in the midst of their accusations, even as they transgressed the book of Allah and the path of the Prophet—and they have become deeply involved in dividing the Salafi ideology. We did not rush to answer these accusations because we have been waiting for Allah to bestow his guidance upon them, and for them to realize their mistakes and the misinterpretations of Islamic jurisprudence cited in their last statement—in order to deny giving opportunities to our enemies, the Americans, the Safawi, and their allies. But because our Imams have not said anything, we are now forced into clearing up some of these issues so that we leave no room for misunderstanding or accusations.”***

***“Some will say, ‘What would the situation of jihad be in Iraq if there was no Mujahideen Shura Council (MSC) or Islamic State? How would things be if the soldiers of the Islamic State lay down their weapons and stopped their jihad?’ The answer is well known. Allah did not waste any prayers on the faithful in Jerusalem before assigning the qiblah to Mecca, as Allah considered it a duty. So, do you think that generous Allah will not safeguard four years of continuous jihad filled with sacrifices? What can explain this arrogant behavior over the Muslim mujahideen and the attempt to negate the efforts of others unless they follow them in their unacceptable actions?”***

***“Al-Qaida has also challenged the mujahideen to execute a single attack on an American base... All of our friends and enemies know [us] well and can bear witness to the great deeds achieved by the Islamic Army in Iraq, including hundreds of attacks on military bases, some of which were completely destroyed, by the will of Allah. For example: the two big bases, the first of which was the ‘Golden Base’ in Jurf al-Sakher which took place in 2003, even before Al-Qaida’s network was established in Iraq. The second: the ‘Falcon Base’, which [took place] in 2006. Another example: the bases of the Ukrainians, who fled back to their homeland with their tails between their legs. [We have also carried out] many other operations, a thousand each month on average, and we ask Allah for acceptance and guidance. We have not mentioned this before because we prefer action over words. One cannot simply ignore other groups who are executing numerous blessed operations which have been seen and heard by everyone. How can all this be erased?”***

***“Another thing Al-Qaida has done is to accuse us of conspiring with the journalist Yosri Fouda and the Mossad. None of this is true. By chance, the same journalist [Fouda] actually met Al-Qaida’s commanders and he made programs and videos for them—he even went to their hiding places and headquarters. So what was he doing? Are those commanders thus also conspiring with the Mossad—for example, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi Binalshibh, may Allah free them? Are we the only ones who can be accused of serving the Mossad? We deal with every individual journalist and network and in whatever way it can serve our cause, especially the cause of jihad in Iraq—regardless of who they are. What counts for us is that there are no security breaches, neither for our group, nor the mujahideen, nor even any Muslim who is dealing with us. Discussing the small numbers of men and revealing the ways that the mujahideen enter—which everyone knows—is not a secret. What does Al-Qaida have to say about all their communiqués and videos featuring their knowledge and statements by their leaders which also reveal all of these important details? Is this also considered conspiring with the Mossad?”***

***“We do remind those brothers to observe Allah in their words and actions and not to jeopardize their relationship with Allah. Regarding their allegations of us being the ‘Saudi Hizballah’, we respond, praise be to Allah, that we have never followed any government or party, domestically or internationally. We have suffered as much as our Salafi brothers in Iraq from accusations of having ties to the Wahhabis and the Saudis, and this is why it is surprising to us that they have added the Mossad to that list. By the will of Allah, up to this moment, we have never received any support from***



# Global Terror Alert



© 2007 Evan Kohlmann (<http://www.globalterroralert.com> – [info@globalterroralert.com](mailto:info@globalterroralert.com))

***any government—not from Arab governments nor the Iranians—as we did not seek support for the jihad from any Arab state, unless it was general support for the Muslims in Iraq. All these [Arab] governments take one step forward and then a thousand backward while waiting for permission from the Americans to support the Sunnis in Iraq. Concerning the oil money, we have not received any of it for the mujahideen—not from Iraqi oil nor the oil of any other state, directly or indirectly.”***

***“...If this was the only thing that had occurred, we would not need to reveal the facts, but brother Abu Omar [al-Baghdadi] has transgressed against the entire Islamic nation and against the platform of the ancestors of our ummah and its clerics by making strange laws and verdicts. An example of this is him treating all Muslim lands as controlled by infidels, and [deciding that] we have the same obligation to fight Arab armies as fighting the occupying crusaders... And his verdict about the entire jihadist movement being ‘disobedient’ without any explanation, and his suggestion that they [other insurgents] have called upon their tribes to rest and not to fight. In the name of Allah, is there anywhere in Iraq to rest and not to fight? Then, he accused the [insurgent] groups of desiring a truce with the Americans, and thus, obviously, he does not understand the difference between conditional negotiations and surrender. With regards to our Islamic Army movement, we say that it is permitted to negotiate with the enemies, even though we have not negotiated with the Americans and Safawi until now... and we do not know of any jihadist faction that has negotiated with the Americans.”***

***“What makes all of this even worse? When brother Abu Omar made... the covering of the women faces one of the nineteen essential customs, he issued this order knowing well that, in Iraq, veiled women face increased harassment, searches, and seizures—whether it be by Allah’s enemies from the pagan [Iraqi national] guard or the Safawi policemen, as has happened on many occasions in Baghdad and its southern suburbs—which pushed our sisters to abandon the veil in [these] areas... But if this had happened in a safer country, then it would be a different story.”***

***“In this situation, we are issuing several urgent calls:”***

***“Our First Call: To the Imams of the Islamic nation to adhere to their religious duty, to save the jihad project in Iraq (as well as saving the blood of Muslims) by issuing a fatwah about these important matters after learning all of the facts, and not to be silent about these new issues...”***

***“Our Second Call: To the commanders of Al-Qaida, especially mujahid Shaykh Usama Bin Laden—may Allah protect him—who is well-known to be careful with the blood of Muslims, as well as his charity and his fear of the Day of Judgement—to adhere to his religion and execute his judicial and organizational responsibility as the commander of Al-Qaida, to make sure that all the facts have been revealed before judging anyone. He [Bin Laden] and his Al-Qaida field commanders are solely responsible for every action taken by their followers on the Day of Judgement. As words are not sufficient anymore, then, action must be taken to correct their path.”***

***“Our Third Call: To all the members of Al-Qaida in Iraq, to re-examine yourselves and to fear Allah for what you have done, and those who have sinned should rush to redeem themselves before Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.”***

***“The Fourth Call: To all the [insurgent] groups and mujahideen brigades, to offer advice to their brothers in Al-Qaida, as this is a religious duty, in order to maintain the honor of our jihad...”***