

Annual Report on Online Jihadist Propaganda Published



Cornelia Riehle

News

On 13 August 2021, Europol published the third edition of its [annual report on Online Jihadist Propaganda](#). The report provides a comprehensive analysis of major trends and developments in the online propaganda of the most prominent jihadist organisations, namely the Islamic State (IS), al-Qaeda (AQ), and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) for the year 2020. Last year was a critical moment in the development of the IS and AQ, with both groups striving to remain relevant, striving for online resilience, and being on a collision course with each other.

According to the report, the IS is displaying increasing insurgent activity – under its new leadership – in its traditional heartlands. The terrorist organisation is also extending its global reach, and the report highlights Africa's importance to the overall objectives of the IS. The group seems focused on attempting a resurgence in Iraq and on expanding its international presence by further empowering its global network of affiliates. A look at its official propaganda reveals that limited capabilities combined with the loss of infrastructure and personnel seems to have reduced its media production capabilities, resulting in dwindling official propaganda. Nevertheless, the IS is still successful in maintaining an online presence.

As regards AQ, the report confirms that the group has weathered a series of major blows and lost a number of important senior leaders. Nevertheless, it continues to capitalise on current events to advance its ideological leanings. While Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) seems keen on demonstrating that it is still capable of carrying out external operations, even if events seem to suggest a decline in abilities on the ground, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) tend to engage in negotiations with local governments, following the Taliban approach.

Lastly, HTS seems to be working towards its goal of expanding and consolidating its control over Idlib/Syria. The HTS' jihadist agenda is pursued locally, but the group aspires to be recognised internationally and has political pretensions.

AUTHOR

Cornelia Riehle

Deputy Head of Section
Academy of European Law

ISSN: 1862-6947

<https://euclid.eu>



About euclid

euclid is the leading journal which regularly informs about current developments in European criminal and "criministrative" law.

All news items are freely accessible at: <https://euclid.eu/news/>

Stay informed by emailing to euclid-subscribe@csl.mpg.de to receive alerts for new releases of issues.

The project is co-financed by the [Union Anti-Fraud Programme \(UAFP\)](#), managed by the [European Anti-Fraud Office \(OLAF\)](#).



Co-funded by
the European Union