

Al-Tawhid Islamic Front

AT A GLANCE

Overview

Organization

Strategy

Major Attacks

Interactions

Maps

HOW TO CITE

Mapping Militants Project (MMP). "Al-Tawhid Islamic Front." Last modified August 2015.

<https://mappingmilitants.org/node/320>

SUMMARY

Formed: July 1, 2001

Disbanded: September 1, 2001

First Attack: No Major Attacks

Last Attack: No Major Attacks

OVERVIEW

Al-Tawhid Islamic Front (TIF) was formed as a splinter group from the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan. TIF was only an independent group for three months in the summer of 2001. Being accredited with no major attacks, TIF merged with the Second Soran Unit to form Jund al-Islam in September 2001.

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

On July 1, 2001, Tawhid and Hamas in Iraq (not to be confused with the unrelated Palestinian Hamas), two violent splinter groups of the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (IMK), merged to form al-Tawhid Islamic Front (TIF).¹ The two groups were known for their brutal methods that targeted non-Muslims and foreigners.² Many Tawhid members were said to have been veterans of the Afghan insurgency and maintained contact with Osama bin Laden. Some allegedly returned to Afghanistan to ask for financial assistance.³ The relationship between Tawhid and Hamas developed due to their mutual opposition to the Mullah Abdul Aziz Islamic Unity Movement, one of the splinter groups of the IMK in Kurdistan.⁴ While there is publicly available information about Hamas and Tawhid, the two constituent parts of TIF, little has been reported about TIF itself. After three months of independent existence, TIF merged with the Second Soran Unit, also a splinter group of the IMK, to form Jund al-Islam.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A. LEADERSHIP

Abu Bakr al-Hawleri (Unknown to Unknown): Hawleri was previously a leader of Tawhid before the merger with Iraqi Hamas.⁵

B. NAME CHANGES

There are no recorded name changes for this group.

C. SIZE ESTIMATES

There are no recorded size estimates for this group.

D. RESOURCES

Its resources are currently unknown. While TIF members did have contact with Osama bin Laden, it is unlikely that they received any funding or arms from his group.

E. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS

There are no recorded geographical locations for this group.

STRATEGY

A. IDEOLOGY & GOALS

There are no recorded ideologies or goals for this group.

B. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

TIF did not take part in Kurdish politics. The groups that came to form TIF broke off from the IMK in part because they felt that taking part in Kurdish politics was fruitless.

C. TARGETS & TACTICS

While not much is written about the tactics of TIF, there is documentation of targets and tactics of the component parts of TIF, Hamas and Tawhid. Both groups were considered to be extremist factions of the IMK before splitting off.⁶ Both groups target civilian populations, carrying out attacks on ideological targets such as liquor stores and beauty salons.⁷

MAJOR ATTACKS

There is no publicly available information on the attacks or violent activities of Al-Tawhid Islamic Front.

INTERACTIONS

A. DESIGNATED/LISTED

Due to its brief lifespan, TIF was never placed on a designated list.

B. COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

TIF had a tenuous relationship with the community it controlled. TIF attempted to institute their strict interpretation of Islamic law, many times turning to violence in order to scare the community into submission.⁸

C. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER GROUPS

While no solid evidence has been found for major relationships with other groups, TIF merged with the Second Soran Unit to form Jund al-Islam in September 2001. Since TIF only existed as

an independent group for three months before this merge, it can be speculated that there was a close relationship with the Second Soran Unit. These two groups also share ideological and methodological similarities, particularly their violent Jihadi outlook.

D. STATE SPONSORS AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

Many members of TIF had ties with AQ in Afghanistan. While it is unclear if they received any funding, it is known that TIF leadership traveled to Afghanistan to meet with Osama bin Laden, the former leader of AQ. TIF fighters also traveled to Afghanistan to train in AQ camps.⁹

MAPS

- Iraq

¹ Rubin, Michael. "The Islamist Threat from Iraqi Kurdistan." Middle East Intelligence Bulletin. December, 2001. Retrieved on June 19, 2011 from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=580>

² Romano, David. "An Outline of Kurdish Islamist Groups in Iraq." The Jamestown Foundation. September 2007. Retrieved on June 25, 2011, from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20777907/An-Outline-of-Kurdish-Islamist-Groups-in-Iraq>

³ Romano, David. "An Outline of Kurdish Islamist Groups in Iraq." The Jamestown Foundation. September 2007. Retrieved on June 25, 2011, from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20777907/An-Outline-of-Kurdish-Islamist-Groups-in-Iraq>

⁴ Rubin, Michael. "The Islamist Threat from Iraqi Kurdistan." Middle East Intelligence Bulletin. December, 2001. Retrieved on June 19, 2011 from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=580>

⁵ Romano, David. "An Outline of Kurdish Islamist Groups in Iraq." The Jamestown Foundation. September 2007. Retrieved on June 25, 2011, from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20777907/An-Outline-of-Kurdish-Islamist-Groups-in-Iraq>

⁶ "Radical Islam in Iraqi Kurdistan: The Mouse the Roared?" International Crisis Group. February 7, 2003. Retrieved on July 5, 2011 from <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Iraq/B004%20Radical%20Islam%20In%20Iraqi%20Kurdistan%20The%20Mouse%20That%20Roared.pdf>

⁷ "Radical Islam in Iraqi Kurdistan: The Mouse the Roared?" International Crisis Group. February 7, 2003. Retrieved on July 5, 2011 from <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Iraq/B004%20Radical%20Islam%20In%20Iraqi%20Kurdistan%20The%20Mouse%20That%20Roared.pdf>

⁸ Romano, David. "An Outline of Kurdish Islamist Groups in Iraq." The Jamestown Foundation. September 2007. Retrieved on June 25, 2011, from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20777907/An-Outline-of-Kurdish-Islamist-Groups-in-Iraq>

⁹ Rubin, Michael. "The Islamist Threat from Iraqi Kurdistan." Middle East Intelligence Bulletin. December, 2001. Retrieved on June 19, 2011 from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=580>