

# THE REALITY BEHIND THE ISLAMIC STATE GROUP



**By Nasirudeen Abdullah**

## Introduction- The Jihadi Movement

*In the name of Allah the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious. Peace and blessing be upon our Prophet, Muhammad, his family and companions.*

The Muslim Ummah has been suffering for almost a century from the absence of its rule on Earth. Its lands have been torn apart by the foreign occupation forces, with the help of the traitorous among the Ummah. They have brought down the Khilafah that had been the shield of this Ummah, divided our lands into petty states and appointed rulers over us who discard the Shari'ah of Allah and rule only for their own interest and the interest of their puppet masters. The wealth of the Ummah is being plundered, Muslims are killed and jailed unjustly and a war is waged in the media, aimed at removing Islam from the hearts of the Muslims.

All this is a result of the Muslims abandoning their religion, turning to the love of this world, having the hatred of death and abandoning Jihad in Allah's way.

Under these humiliating circumstances, the Ummah is left hunting desperately for leadership that will give it back the past honour that had once been bestowed upon them. As a result of this lack of leadership, many Muslims turn to any power which professes to support a Muslim cause.

An example of this can be seen in the fact that many Muslims, until recently, were fooled by Iran's claims of helping Palestine. Iran had used the issue of Palestine to gain support in the Muslim world, portraying itself the only power in the region that were willing to stand up in defence of the people of Palestine. Many Muslims believed that Iran was a power to be looked up to and would defend Muslim interest, choosing to ignore the fact that Iran is a Rafidhi Shia country and are thus classified as Kuffar according to the Ulama. It was only later that the ugly face of Iran was exposed when it supported the brutal war in Syria against the Muslims.

Regarding the events taking place in the Muslim world, there has been much confusion. Many Muslims realize that what has been told to them in the Western-controlled media may not necessarily be the truth, and is distorted to suit the agenda of the West. This makes it extremely hard for the average person to discern the truth from the falsehood.

But Allah has not left this Ummah in the dark. He has raised among this Ummah a vanguard of Muslims who will fight in defence of this Ummah and raise the banner of Jihad. They are those from this Ummah who prefer action over speech and refused to watch their Ummah in this pitiful state. They have sacrificed everything they own to raise the word of Allah once again on Earth.

This Islamic movement sought to remove the oppressive regimes in the Muslim world. In the 1970s and 80s this movement grew, fighting the Jews occupying Palestine and the tyrannical government in Egypt. This movement spread further into various Muslim lands such as

Libya, Syria and Algeria. However Allah had decreed that much of the members of this Islamic movement were arrested or exiled.

When many thought this movement had died down, Allah opened a new window for them: the land of Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan had refused to accept the imposition of communism in their land, and rose up to fight Soviet Russia and its puppets.

Answering the call of Jihad made by Sheikh Abdullah Azzam (ra), youth from different parts of the Ummah flocked to Afghanistan. This Jihad is where the Islamic movement of the different parts of the Muslim world met and exchanged ideas and experiences. Working in the field there taught them a valuable lesson- there was only one way to defeat the enemies of Islam- through Jihad.

The years went by. Sheikh Azzam was martyred. And Russia withdrew from Afghanistan in defeat. The Mujahideen began closing ranks and drawing up a plan for a Jihad that would free Aqsa from the Jews and the Muslim world from the clutches of the American-backed regimes. The result of this was the founding of the "al Qaeda Organization", under the leadership of Sheikh Usamah bin Ladin (ra).

The al Qaeda organization and the rest of the Jihadi movement continued on its path of Jihad which took it from Afghanistan to the lands of Bosnia, Kashmir, Chechnya, Philippines and many other parts of the Muslim world. Their experiences in these lands helped shape the movement and taught the Mujahideen valuable lessons.

On 11 September 2001, this war, which had previously been contained in Muslim lands, was taken to the head of Kufr, America. America was the power behind the corrupt regimes ruling over the Muslim lands. Not only that, but they provided full backing to the Jews in Palestine, and were a means of their success in invading and taking over Palestine.

Sheikh Usamah's plan was to bring America into the playing field, where it would not be able to hide behind its puppets; as well as expose it as an enemy of this Ummah and defeat it.

As did the Soviets in Afghanistan, America proudly poured its troops into the lands of the Muslims, first Afghanistan then Iraq vowing to defeat the Mujahideen. After years of failed attempts to put out the light of Allah, it looked for every way to escape at the same time saving itself of disgrace, its economy in tatters and unable to fight another war on the ground against the Mujahideen.

The Ummah began to awaken and its youth flock to the lands of Jihad from the Islamic Maghrib to Khurasan. After a decade of Jihad against America the people in many parts of the Muslim world rose up against the oppressive regimes ruling them.

America searched desperately for a victory and thought by killing the leader of the Mujahideen would lessen the tide of Jihad engulfing it. So at their hands did Sheikh Usamah bin Laden gain Shahadah (inshaAllah).

The reigns of the organization were then taken by Sheikh Dr Ayman Zawahiri, may Allah protect him. He took leadership of the organization whose branches included those in

Yemen, Islamic Mahgrib, Sahara, Somalia and Iraq after having been confined to Afghanistan before the American crusade against the mujahideen in Afghanistan.

### **Islamic State group**

The questions in many muslims minds who refuse to swallow whatever the western media says, are who are the Islamic State group (ISIS)? Where did they come from? What do the mujahideen who have been fighting all these decades to bring back the Khilafah think about them? Why are many Ulama against them?

I have compiled this booklet in an attempt to present this issue from the angle of the mujahideen and their Ulama, not claiming that it is a detailed study but rather a hastily arraigned facts and statements of Mujahideen and Ulamaa.

Please forgive me for the many errors that I am sure you will be able to find in this booklet. I hope that muslims will find it beneficial and help them find the truth in a time when the truth becomes lost in the ocean of falsehood.

We ask Allah to guide us, keep us firm on the correct path and open our hearts to the truth.  
Aameen.

# **A brief history of the IS (ISIS) group and the events surrounding it**

## **The Iraqi Jihad**

In 2003 America and its allies invaded Iraq. They entered with a great show of force and Saddam Husain's Arab nationalist army crumbled, abandoning their bases and weapons in some areas even before the American's arrived. Saddam himself went into hiding. He was captured and later executed. The American's began building a new Iraqi army and government consisting mainly of the Shias of Iraq. In America's eyes everything was going well and as planned.

But Allah willed otherwise. Many of the Ahlus Sunnah had armed themselves and got began fighting the invading forces. Even before the American invasion there was a group of Mujahideen in the Kurdistan region of Iraq who had been fighting for Shariah. They were known as Ansar al Islam. A Jordanian mujahid who had fought in previously Afghanistan had taken refuge by them. He was known as Abu Mus`ab al Zarqawi.

Sheikh Abu Mus`ab left the mountainous Kurdistan region of Iraq and began organizing a group that was in the forefront of the resistance to the American invaders.

Not a few months had even past after the Americans declared 'Mission Accomplished' when the fighters from Ahlus Sunnah began attacking them at every place they imaginable. The mujahideen developed new way of urban guerrilla warfare that was never used before. The world's most advance army was almost powerless against the daily IED (improvised bombs) attacks, martyrdom operations, sniping and ambushes.

## **Al Qaeda in Iraq**

Sheikh Abu Mus`ab Zarqawi and his group pledged allegiance to Sheikh Usama bin Laden who was the head of Al Qaeda organization and the central figure in the global Jihad. Sheikh Abu Mus`ab said that the only reason he did this was for the sake of unity of the mujahideen. He stated that he did not pledge allegiance to them so that he will receive men or money from them but rather out of love for them and so that the mujahideen worldwide would be united under a single leadership.

The Shia militias in Iraq also began a brutal campaign against the Ahlus Sunnah, trying to ethnic cleanse many areas. The mujahideen responded to their aggression. Many times the Shia militias and the newly formed puppet Iraqi Army worked hand in hand against the Ahlus Sunnah.

The Americans began to lose their grip on the areas of Ahlus Sunnah in Iraq. There were hundreds of local groups and battalions fighting the Americans. Even the so-called Green Zone in Baghdad was a target of almost daily rocket and mortar fire.

It is worth noting that the Ahlus Sunnah as whole was resisting the Americas but were divided into diverse groups with varying ideologies. Some groups tried to keep alive Arab nationalism which they had been taught under Saddam Husain. Most others began turning towards Islam and the Shariah as an ideology. Among the major groups were the Islamic Army in Iraq, Ansar al Islam', Jaish al Mujahideen and Al Qaeda in Iraq, although small but it was one of the most effective groups in the resistance.

Among the most famous and heaviest battles fought between the Americans and the mujahideen were the two battles of Fallujah. After the battle Sheikh Abu Mus`ab narrated many miracles that had occurred during the battle. Indeed the whole battle itself was a miracle as it was between very lightly armed mujahideen and the mightiest army in the world, face on!

Sheikh Abu Mus`ab Zarqawi won over many of the local Iraqis and was a wise commander. He was an example of one who was very stern with the disbelievers but lenient and soft with the believers.

Al Qaeda in Iraq joined a council called the Majlis Shura Mujahideen. This was a council that united a number of groups.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2006 Sheikh Abu Mus`ab Zarqawi was killed, joining the caravan of Shahadaa that had left before him. We ask Allah to accept him into the highest Jannah!

The leadership of al Qaeda in Iraq was taken over by Sheikh Abu Hamza al Muhajir (Egyptian).

### **Announcement of a State**

Majlis Shura Mujahideen decided it was time to declare an Islamic State in Iraq as much of the areas of Ahlus Sunnah was out of the American and the puppet Shia government's control.

In October 2006 Majlis Shura Mujahideen and a few other minor groups declared the Islamic State of Iraq and Abu Umar al Baghdadi as ameer.

It is worth noting that:

- The other major groups such as Ansar al Islam and Jaish Mujahideen did not join.
- Al Qaeda senior leadership (Sheikh Usama and Dr Zawahiri) were not consulted.
- The Iraqi tribes, who were very powerful, did not join.
- The Ulama outside Iraq were not consulted.

The leadership of Al Qaeda then did not comment on the announcement in public but rather contacted Abu Hamza al Muhajir who was known well to Sheikh Zawahiri.

At first Sheikh Usama hesitated to support this newly announced project but Sheikh Zawahiri was reassured by Abu Hamza that all the correct procedures had been followed. Al Qaeda announced its support for the project and the Islamic State of Iraq leaders sent letters to al Qaeda leadership confirming that they had kept their allegiance with Al Qaeda.

At the time Al Qaeda did not make the fact public that they were not consulted nor did they express their unhappiness at the way the State was announced possibly because making it public would cause a big stir. The enemies would blow this disagreement out of proportion and muslims all around the world would get the impression that the mujahideen were disunited and breaking up.

### **Complaints of Sheikh Abu Sulayman Utaybi**

Sheikh Abu Sulayman al Utaybi, who was the head Judge (Qazi) of ISI complained to the al Qaeda leadership of certain issues which had began to creep into the movement. He also stated that most of these problems were caused by the Iraqi groups who had joined them but had no strong affiliation with Jihad and Ulama and had no deep understanding of religious affairs. When ISI was announced many of these groups joined, some of them comprising mostly of former officers and soldiers of the former Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussain.

He stated in his letter to al Qaeda leadership:

*"People think that the State rose after the groups of the Majlis Shura pledged allegiance to Al Qaeda and then the tribal leaders pledged allegiance. which is not true! Rather it's the leaders of these groups like Saraya al-Jihad , Saraya al-Ghuraba , Jaish Ahl al-Sunnah and Kataib al-Ahwal.*

*And these are people who have no relationship to the real Jihad in the arena and some of them have never carried a weapon in their life.*

*And some of them don't have any followers, rather these are just names who pledged allegiance and have said directly and indirectly they want positions in this State."*

He also stated regarding some of the derivation that he had seen:

*"And some of the problems concerning the Aqidah: The wrong understanding of the conditions of the final hour. And if this was the only issue it would be easy to solve but the problem is that it entered the Jihadi work in the arena.*

*Like when they believed the Mahdi would appear in less than a year in Ramadan 1427. So they believed we would rule Iraq within three months.*

*So an order was issued to deploy and not withdraw from it for an entire week until an order comes which was very dangerous for the brothers. Writing this letter, a year later, we have no control over Iraq nor has the Mahdi appeared."*

After failing to see any improvement in the situation, Sheikh Abu Sulayman al Utaybi left for Afghanistan where he was martyred (*inshaAllah*) in an American airstrike.

Sheikh Utaybi was not the only one who wrote to the Al Qaeda leaders about ISI. Ansar al Islam also complained to al Qaeda about the behaviour of ISI towards their fighters.

### **Awakening Councils**

As the Jihad continued, the Americans looked desperately for a way to get out of Iraq. But how could they leave Baghdad to fall to the mujahideen?

Allah willed that the Americans find traitorous allies among the muslims. They were the so-called Awakening Councils. They were tribal fighters who native to the lands which the mujahideen controlled. Americans funded and trained them to take on the mujahideen. This was the most difficult stage on all the mujahideen groups. Those groups with false ideologies such as nationalism joined the Awakening Councils and turned on the Mujahideen. Many mujahideen were captured and killed.

The mujahideen also managed to strike heavy blows the traitors. A martyrdom operation killed the head of Awakening Councils, Abdus-Satar Risha not long after having met with George Bush.

Some of the mujahideen, withdrew to the deserts. Others were ordered by the commanders to hide their weapons and mingle into the cities so as to preserve the strength of the mujahideen and strike back when the situation was improved.

In April 2010 both Abu Umar al Baghdadi and Abu Hamza al Mujahir were killed. May Allah forgive them and accept them among shuuhada.

### **Abu Bakr al Baghdadi**

With much of the leadership of the mujahideen killed or captured, the lower ranking commanders who had joined ISI at the time of the announcement of the State began to fill in these positions. They declared that the new leader of ISI was a field commander by the name of Abu Bakr al Baghdadi.

The leadership of al Qaeda did not have any knowledge of Baghdadi prior to this. Baghdadi sent letters to Sheikh Usama bin Laden reassuring him that ISI were his soldiers and under his command. Some of these letters were released by the Americans after the martyrdom of Sheikh Usama. Sheikh Zawahri later confirmed that the letters released by the Americans were indeed the letters of Baghdadi to Sheikh Usama.

The Americans rejoiced in having a chance to withdraw, and did so hurriedly. They had received a bitter lesson in Iraq and their pride was damaged.

### **Post American Withdrawal**

All areas of Iraq came under control of the Shia government of Nuri al Maliki and the Kurds were given a semi autonomous state in the north Kurdish region. Now the hateful Shia had



full control over the areas of Ahlus Sunnah. Mujahideen continued their guerrilla attacks against the army but it was on a small scale. Nevertheless the resistance by some mujahdeen groups did pick up slowly. Islamic State of Iraq, Ansar al Islam and Jaish Mujahideen are the notable groups that continued operation. In 2010 and 2011 ISI began to launch some daring raids from the desert, and established presence in the former Awakening Council heartland of Anbar.

*We have mentioned here some of the mistakes and derivation in Manhaj (methodology) that has crept into some of the groups such as ISI but it is important to note that some groups, notably, Ansar al Islam have been clear and firm on the manhaj of the global jihadi movement and have always taken the guidance of the ulama of Haq. We ask Allah to keep them so.*

### **Arab Spring**

At the beginning of the year 2011 uprisings and protests began in many Arab countries against the despotic regimes, funded by the west, have ruled for decades. This movement had a great effect on the worldwide jihadi movement and eased up pressure on the mujahideen in many countries for example Yemen, where the uprising allowed the mujahideen to take much territory completely from the government. In Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and other places, thousands of mujahideen had been released from jail.

### **Syrian Revolution**

Syria was a country which was ruled by the minority *Nusayriya* (Alawite) sect for over four decades. When the Syrian regime observed the events in other parts of the middle east, they were worried about the probability of such an uprising happening in Syria as they had already been limited uprisings by the Ahlus Sunnah, notably in 1982. The 1982 uprising had been crushed by Hafiz al Assad, father of the current tyrant Bashar. It had resulted in tens of thousands dead and the almost complete destruction of the city of Hamah.

The Syrian regime began forming militias known as the Shabeeha. They were made up of Nusayyri (Alawite) youth, many of who were thugs and recruited from prisons.

In March 2011, in the southern city of Dar`ah, the Syrian regime arrested some children for writing anti regime slogans on a wall. Locals gathered calling for the release of the children. The regime released them, but dead, with signs of severe torture. Protests broke out all over Dar`ah and followed by many other Syrian cities.

The regime responded with extreme brutality and fired live bullets at unarmed protesters and arresting thousands however the protests grew even stronger. The wall of fear had collapsed. The slogan of the Syrian people was *"We will not bow down to anyone but Allah!"*

As clashes between the regime and unarmed protesters continued, a group of sunni soldiers from Assad's army defected and joined the protesters. This became a trend everywhere in Syria and many soldiers defected. They formed fighting units in their respective towns. These became known as the Free Syrian Army (FSA). The coordination between these groups were weak and the FSA had no strong central leadership.

Many Syrians civilians joined these battalions in order to defend themselves and their towns.

### **Jabhat an-Nusra**

At the end of the year 2011, a group of Syrian and Iraqi mujahideen who had been fighting alongside the Islamic State of Iraq left Iraq to help the Syrian people. They were given permission to leave by the leadership of ISI.

The leader of this group was Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Jawlani who is a Syrian and with him came Sheikh Abu Mariyah al Qahtani, an Iraqi. They announced themselves as *Jabhat an-Nusra li ahlish-sham* meaning '*Front for the Assistance of the People of Sham.*'

Jabhat an-Nusra carried out many guerrilla attacks killing many of Assad's soldiers, sometimes hundreds in a single attack. They successfully used tactics they had learnt while fighting in Iraq on Assad's army which was unprepared for such kind of warfare.

Not even a few months past and Jabhat an-Nusra became one of the strongest forces in Syria, despite its small numbers. What was remarkable about Jabhat an-Nusra was able to gather wide public support, not only of the civilian population but of the other fighting battalions too.

At this stage many Islamic groups were being formed including Ahrar ash-Sham. Many battalions stopped looking towards the west for help and announced that they intended to rule by Shariah.

Abu Mariah al Qahtani lead Jabhat an-Nusra in the eastern region of Der az-Zour. There Jabhat an-Nusra had the best relationship with the local battalions and tribes. Most of Der az-Zour province fell out of Assad's control.

Some operations and battles carried out by Jabhat an-Nusra was the storming of Defence Ministry building in central Damascus by martyrdom operators and taking part in the battles of Aleppo city and battles for Idlib and Aleppo airfields and major army bases.

According to Sheikh Jawlani, Jabhat an-Nusra also sent much needed supplies back to Iraq to help the Islamic State of Iraq in its fight against the Shia regime.

### **Uprising in Iraq**

After years of abuse by the Shia regime, the Ahlus Sunnah of Iraq began an uprising in which they demanded their rights and the release of prisoners. This uprising was centred in the Anbar province. The presents of the Shia government was weakened in the areas of Ahlus Sunnah which lead to the easing on the hard situation facing the groups that were fighting the government.

### **Terrorist Designation**

In early December 2012 the Americans announced that they had designated Jabhat an-Nusra as a terrorist organisation. This move was extremely unpopular in Syria there was

deep public support for Jabhat an-Nusra. Many felt that the whole world had watched them being killed and none had helped, not the Americans or anybody else besides the Muhaireen who had come to their land. Now these very people were labelled as terrorist. The people all around Syria came out in protest with the slogan “We are all Jabhat an-Nusra”. Over 100 factions signed a document in protest against the American move. Many observers recognized that this was an unprecedented success for the Jihadi movement which was not able to gather such large public support before.



### **The First *Fitnah***

In April 2013 an audio by Abu Bakar al Baghdadi was posted on the Jihadi forums. In it he announced that Jabhat an-Nusra no longer existed and was part of his new announced State called the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS).

The next day Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Jawlani released an audio message stating in it that he had no prior knowledge about the so-called state announced by Baghdadi.

He also refused to join this ‘State’ as this was an announcement of a State without the consultation of the relevant people of Syria. Especially in Syria where there were hundreds of battalions also fighting for Shariah. Sheikh Jawlani considered it not permissible to announce a State while excluding the vast majority of the Mujahideen and without the consultation of the Ulama.

Sheikh Jawlani publicly pledged allegiance to Dr Ayman Zawahiri and requested him to solve the matter between him and Baghdadi.

### **ISIS move to Syria**

Despite Jabhat an-Nusra’s refusal to join the newly announced “State”, ISIS fighters and commanders crossed over from Iraq to Syria and began speaking to lower ranking commanders of Jabhat an-Nusra convincing some to join their ranks. Some joined as Baghdadi was considered a higher ranking commander than Jawlani and the correct stance would be to obey him. Others chose to await the decision of Dr Zawahiri, the leader of the movement.

ISIS began moving around Syria calling on groups to join them. A well known group called the Muhajireen wal Ansar brigade joined them. The group was lead by Umar Shishani.

ISIS began opening branches in almost every front in Syria and began gaining strength.

### **Dr Zawahiri's letter**

Sheikh Abu Sulayman al Muhair who was a negotiator at the time between ISIS and Jabhat an-Nusra says:

*"Concerning the issue of the conflict between Jabhat Al-Nusra and Jamaat al-Dawla and it being referred to Shaykh Ayman to judge in it. And I mention here another incident which happened during my first mediation. Al-Baghdadi said to me when we were discussing how to solve the problem:*

*"If Shaykh Ayman commanded me to assign the issue of Sham to someone else I would do so." [End of his quote.]*

*The matter of waiting for the response was known and spread among the people and all the Mujahideen kept thinking about it; "when will the response be released.""*

After a delay of approximately two months, the letter of Dr Zawahiri reached Sham. In it he gave his order on the matter.

Here is an excerpt from the letter:

*When the dispute emerged between the two Jihadi groups, I sought to resolve the dispute by sending a message on 1st Jumada in 1434 to sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and to Abu Muhammad al Jawlani for freezing the dispute at the point preceding its breakout, prior to finally resolving it.*

*I received messages from both sides and from other sides. Accordingly, after holding consultations with my brothers in Khurasan [Afghanistan] and outside of it, after asking Allah for guidance, and for support to make me capable of putting out the fire of sedition and dispute between the two sides, I resolved the issue, by the help of the Almighty, as follows:*

- a. *Sheikh Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was wrong when he announced the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant without asking permission or receiving advice from us and even without notifying us.*
- b. *Sheikh Abu Mohamed al Jawlani was wrong by announcing his rejection to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, and by showing his links to al-Qaeda without having our permission or advice, even without notifying us.*
- c. *The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant is to be dissolved, while Islamic State in Iraq is to continue its work.*
- d. *Jabhat al-Nusra, is an independent entity for Qaedat al-Jihad group, under the (al-Qaeda) general command.*
- e. *The area of operation for the Islamic State in Iraq is in Iraq.*

*f. The area of operation for Jabhat al-Nusra for the people of al-Sham, is in Syria*

Dr Zawahiri also appointed Sheikh Abu Khalid as-Suri to be his representative in Syria:

*Sheikh Abu Khalid al-Suri, is the best of men we had known among the mujahideen, so we have chosen him as our delegate in al-Sham as regards the following issues:*

*Firstly: Any dispute arising from the interpretation of this ruling would be resolved by him.*

*Secondly: In case any side attacked the other side, I hereby authorize him to set up a Sharia justice court for giving a ruling on the case.*

*I hereby obligate all my brothers in Qaedat al-Jihad group, and I call upon all my Muslim brothers and the Mujahidin, to stop arguing over this dispute and to stop sedition among the Mujahidin and to seek harmony and unity, along with winning hearts and uniting ranks among Muslims and the Mujahidin.*

The immediate effect of this letter was that many of those that had joined ISIS left it and re-joined Jabhat an-Nusra.

At this point it seemed that the *Fitnah* was over and ISIS would cancel its expansion into Syria as commanders in ISIS had promised that they would obey Dr Zawahiri's order when it came.

However shortly Abu Bakar al Baghdadi release and audio message stating in it:

*The ISIS will remain in existence at all costs and we are not giving it up. It is a state that was founded by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and sheikhs like Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Hamza al-Muhajer. This state will not abandon the territory it gained. We did cross the borders that the evil hands had drawn in order to divide the Ummah and we vow to get rid of what remained of Sykes-Picot Agreement. Concerning the message ascribed to sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, we found many faults with it, some of which are methodical and some are related to Sharia law. We were given a choice; either obeying God's orders or disobeying them.*

Baghdadi did not go on to explain what were the orders in the letter Dr Zawahir's that were according to him, against the Shariah.

The problems between Jabhat an-Nusra and ISIS negatively affected the fight against the Assad regime, however the Jihad continued in intensity.

ISIS were allowed to take part in all joint operations against the Assad regime and most Syrian groups did not even consider them different from Jabhat an-Nusra. In most areas they were welcomed by the oppressed locals.

As people got more exposed to ISIS they realised that their behaviour was different to the other mujahideen that had come to Sham. Many of ISIS fighters were acted arrogantly towards the local population.

There were increased incidents of battalion commanders being captured by ISIS. Many activists who spoke against them were also arrested. At this stage ISIS did not begin fighting with any of the major groups.

There was a major mujahideen offensive against the Latakia strongholds of Assad. This battle was known as "*Battle of Mother of the Believers*". ISIS also joined the mujahideen coalition and has a big part in fighting the regime there. However at the end of the battle many of the mujahideen groups accused ISIS of usurping the booty that was gained.

ISIS continued fighting alongside other groups until the end of 2013. However there was increase hatred for them among the civilian population and the fighting groups.

Some incidents that caused friction between the fighting groups and ISIS:

- In the Latakia region, there was an incident that almost sparked a war against ISIS. The Amir of ISIS in the area, Abu Ayman Iraqi, shot and killed a local battalion commander named Abu Baseer. Some of senior commanders and ulama came to the area and tried to de-escalate the situation. ISIS agreed to be taken to an independent Shariah court. However when the mujahideen requested for Abu Ayman to be presented they claimed that he no longer was with ISIS.
- Abu Ubayda Binshi who was a leader of Ahrar ash-Sham was killed at a ISIS checkpoint. Ahrar sh-Sham requested that ISIS be brought to an independent Shariah court to resolve the matter.
- A well known Mujahid of Ahrar ash-Sham in Aleppo named Abu Faris was beheaded by ISIS fighters while he was injured. They paraded with his head on the streets. The video of this was posted online. A Muhajir Sheikh called Abdullah al Muhaysini, who did not belong to any group, tried to get the matter to court. ISIS claimed that Muhammad Faris was saying words like "*Labbaik Ya Husain*" which is a Kufr slogan of the Shia. This claim was never proven.
- Many Jabhat an-Nusra leaders and fighters were kidnaped but Nusra did not make it public at the time in the fear of increasing the fitna.
- Many media activist and various commanders of small battalions were being detained by ISIS who opened jails in all their bases.
- In December 2013, Dr Abu Rayyan of Ahrar ash-Sham was sent to negotiate with ISIS. He was arrested and his body was returned later to his family with signs of severe torture and evidence that he was killed in a brutal manner. As news and

pictures of Dr Abu Rayyan's body spread, tensions between the factions and ISIS increased dramatically after this incident.

## **Second Fitna**

In the first week of January 2014, ISIS entered Atareb village in Idlib seeking to arrest a person from a local battalion. The fighters refused hand over this person. The next day the wanted person was found dead.

Clashes broke out between ISIS and local group which lead to ISIS withdrawing from the town. After the withdrawal, ISIS attacked a former army camp outside Atareb known as Fouj 46. This base was shared by fighters from different groups. In the attack many were killed including 10 fighters from Jabhat an-Nusra.

After this, fighting between the various battalions and ISIS spread around Idlib, Hama and Raqqa.

All those who had grievances against ISIS began attacking them. ISIS began reinforcing the areas where clashes were taking place with more fighters. Some brigades in Aleppo refused to allow ISIS to pass their territory in a effort to prevent further infighting, however ISIS began to use force to pass territories of other brigades. This widened the infighting to a greater extent and fighting began in all places that ISIS was present.

Events became extremely confusing and many criminals and gangs took advantage of the situation by attacking base of ISIS too.

ISIS began to respond by sending suicide bombers against those fighting them. Many of these bombs only harmed civilians who were uninvolved in the conflict.

At this stage, despite ISIS killing a number of mujahideen from Jabhat an-Nusra, there was not yet all out open hostilities between the two groups.

In areas where the infighting was taking place, Sheikh Jawlani ordered that Jabhat an-Nusra forces rush re-enforcements on all frontlines against Assad to prevent Assad from retaking the freed territory. Much of Aleppo frontline was then held by Jabhat an-Nusra.

Jabhat an-Nusra also offered all those who did not wish to be involved in the infighting refuge in their bases. Thousands of fighters of ISIS took refuge in bases of Jabhat an-Nusra and special teams were set up to assist any fighter to leave the areas of fighting. Jabhat an-Nusra was able to remove at least 2000 muhajireen in Aleppo alone and take them to safety. Most of these chose to stay with Jabhat an-Nusra or return to Turkey.

## **Peace Initiatives**

As infighting grew, many ulama in Sham and abroad launched initiatives to stop the infighting. Among them were:

- Sheikh Yousuf al Ahmad

- Dr Abu Abdullah ash-Shami
- Sheikh Saqr
- Sheikh Abu Ahmad al Maghribi
- Sheikh Abu Abdul Aziz Qatari. He was leader of an independent Jihad group in Sham called Jund al Aqsa. He was also an experienced commander with many years of jihad to his credit in various lands. In his effort to stop the infighting he met with fighters from a FSA group who's commander is known as Jamal Marouf. The FSA commander has known links to Western intelligence agencies. Sheikh Qatari went missing after going to talk with this group. It is presumed that they had killed him.
- Abu Hummam as-Suri. He is the military commander of Jabhat an-Nusra and tried to mediate a ceasefire between the factions and ISIS . He says:

*"I was among the delegation which was striving for a ceasefire between Dawla and the other armed groups. We couldn't reach a commander in Dawla who is a decision-maker, until we reached Abu Ali al-Anbari. We asked him for a decision-maker, he said: "I'm a decision maker and my decision is binding to everyone in the Dawla (ISIS), even al-Baghdadi."*

*We said: "Good. We have a representative from each group." Al-Jabha was given authority by some parties to represent them in negotiations. We talked a lot with Abu Ali al-Anbari, but we didn't reach a resolution. We said to him: "Be careful now, the people have revolted against you."*

*He said: "No, they didn't revolt; on the contrary the people love us."*

*I said: "You don't know what is happening in reality. The people have taken up arms to fight you."*

*He said: "We will fight whoever carries weapons against us."*

*I said: "The armed groups [Mujahideen] and the people, and those who have claimed that you have done injustice towards them."*

*He said: "We will fight them all. We will wipe them out. We will either eradicate them or they us! We will eradicate all who take up arms against us, against the Dawla..." During his speech he was repeating: "They are Sahawat. They are Murtadeen. We will exterminate them!" And we left the meeting with him, achieving nothing.*

*We came to discover that he is not a responsible person, someone in such a high position (the second man in the Dawla) wants to exterminate the people. Wanting to exterminate all those who carry arms against Dawla.*

*Even when the mediator says to him: "All the groups and the battalions will succumb to an Islamic Court."*

*He replied in front of me, and Allah is witness to what I say: [He said:] "When we finish [killing everyone], then, let there be an Islamic Court."*



- Dr Ayman Zawahiri. He released an urgent message to the mujahideen of Sham in which he stated:

*“Brothers, Mujahideen of Islam in all the jihadi groups in the Sham of resistance and jihad, our hearts and the hearts of the Ummah – whose hearts are connected with you – bled from the Fitna of [in]fighting, which spread amongst the Mujahideen of Islam. And so we call upon all of our brothers in all the jihadi groups, and we call upon the gracious ones from the people of al-Sham, from the scholars, advocates, figures, tribal chiefs, professionals, traders, writers, journalists, media men, and [public] opinion enforces, and every free, honorable one in al-Sham who seeks to bring down the Assad secular, sectarian, criminal ruling and establish [in its place] a just Muslim government, to seek to halt this Fitna [infighting], which only Allah know where it will lead*

*We invite them all to seek to stop this fighting between the brothers if jihad and Islam immediately, and to establish a Sharia ruling committee that would rule between the various groups regarding the injustices each group claims against its jihadi sister group, and to form a method to oblige everyone with its rulings”*

- Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Jawlani. He released an urgent audio message titled *“Fear Allah, Fear Allah regarding the field of Sham”*. In it he called for the immediate stop fighting and that all groups should come together and set up an independent court that would solve all the issues by the law of Allah.
- Sheikh Abdullah al Muhaysini. One of the most important initiatives to stop the infighting was that of Sheikh Abdullah Muhaysini called *“Mubararah al Ummah”*. He also proposed setting up a shariah court that would solve the problems.

Hundreds of Ulama and intellectuals in and out of Sham supported the ‘Mubardarah’ of Sheikh Muhaysini. More importantly he was also able to gain support for the ‘Mubadrah’ from almost all major factions in Syria besides ISIS. They all agreed to have the issues brought to an independent court.

Finally ISIS released a statement regarding the Mubarada of Muhaysini. In it they refused to be part of it till all groups in it should declare that they believe the governments and SMC (Western backed Syrian oppersiton) are kuffar. This is a position held by Jabhat an-Nusra and ISIS but not all other groups hold the same position. So after ISIS rejection of the Mubadara, Sheikh Muhaysini made another proposal. He later said in an audio message:

*“After ISIS refused the initiative, I suggested famous Ulama to be the Judges in the Shariah court between the brigades, such as Shaykh Sulayman Al-Alwan or Shaykh Ibrahim Al-Rubaysh or others, But they refused. So i offered that the judge be from the students of knowledge in Bilad al-Sham who have come from Khorasan. And they refused.”*

In short all efforts to mediate between ISIS and the groups fighting them led in failure.

### **Testimony of Sheikh Abu Firas and Case of Abu Sa`ad al Hadrami**

During the infighting many muhajireen from ISIS who did not want to take part in the infighting took refuge in the bases of Jabhat an-Nusra as it was not involved in the infighting. In Aleppo alone, Jabhat an-Nusra was able to rescue 2000 muhajireen and give them shelter many with their families.

Sheikh Abu Sa`ad al Hadrami was the leader of Jabhat an-Nusra in Raqqa. During these events he went missing. Jabhat an-Nusra claimed that they had asked leaders from ISIS in Raqqa about the whereabouts of Abu Sa`ad and they had professed that they had no knowledge as to where he was.

A senior leader of Jabhat an-Nusra called Sheikh Abu Firas who was part of the efforts to mediate peace, narrates the following:

*"Since the conflict began between them and the other groups and since the first day that we tried to bring them all to reconciliation and sort all the problems out, we went to Jamaat al-Dowla to strive to reconcile and to solve the issue, and during that first meeting, Abu Ali al-Anabari said: "What do you want?"*

*We said to him we propose three points as one [solution];*

*Firstly: to cease firing [stop the fighting],*

*Secondly: exchange the prisoners,*

*Thirdly: establish Islamic courts to judge in all the cases of the conflicts.*

*But he [al-Anbari] rejected this offer.*

*And that was in front of the committee which was formed of four from Jabht al-Nusra, Abu Hasan Taftanasi, myself, Abu Hammam al-Shami , and Abu `Ubaida al-Tunisi, the Shari in the military office (of Jabhat Al-Nusra).*

*Also present was Abu Abdullah from Al-Farouq , and brother Mansor from Ajnad al-Aqsa ,and Shaykh Abdullah al-Mohaisni.*

*He [Abu `Ali al-Anbari] reprimanded us for reconciling between them and the 'murtadeen' [apostates].*

*We said: "We do not consider them murtadeen"*

*He said: "This is a disagreement between us and you." [meaning the ruling as to whether they were Muslim or murtad.] and he insisted that we shouldn't be mediators between them and the "murtadeen."*

*After a long discussion about this matter he said: "Let me consult [my superiors]". Then he came back after an hour and a half, he said: "We will tell you our decision on the morning." The next morning, we came to him, and they [Dawla] had announced that they had killed*

*Abu Saa'ad al-Hadrimi, the Amir of al-Raqqa from Jabhat al-Nusra.*

*But we let it pass [this transgression] and did not discuss it, in order that we could focus on the reconciliation, but he [Abu 'Ali al-Anbari] asked to meet the members of Jabhat al-Nusra alone, so we went into another room, he said: "What did you do?"*

*We said: "What?"*

*He said: "What are you doing? Don't you know what you are doing?"*

*We said: "What did we do? You tell us."*

*He said: "How dare you raise your flag over our base in Darit Azza?"*

*We said: "We raised our flag over your residence in Darit Azza to protect your soldiers because the FSA was about to raid the base and imprison all your members there or kill them, but the Amir of Jabhat al-Nusra in that area entered and prevented the FSA from doing that. And took the brothers [the soldiers from Jamat al-Dawla] and sent them to you safely with all respect and good manners."*

*He said: "We don't accept [this], even if they [the soldiers from Dawla] all died, we don't need your mediation, and raising your flag over our base is not acceptable."*

*We said: "They are your brothers, do you sacrifice your soldiers for not hoisting a flag over your residence? We can now lower the flag down, and you send back your soldiers."*

*Then I said: "The situation requires wisdom"*

*He said: "We don't care, either we eliminate them or they eliminate us."*

*I said: "Ya Shaykh, the situation needs to be handled with wisdom. I am asking you a question, is it wise to announce that you killed Abu Saa'ad al-Hadrami the Amir of Jabhat al-Nusra in al-Raqqa?"*

*He said: "We don't care. It's not important to us."*

*I said: "Leave it aside if it's important or unimportant to you. I am asking you is it wise to announce that you killed him?"*

*He said: "We don't care."*

*Then brother Abu 'Ubaida al-Tunisi asked him: "Why did you kill him?"*

*He [Abu 'Ali al-Anbari] said: "Because he is a murtad, and admitted that he is a murtad."*

*Abu 'Ubaida replied: "What made you consider him a murtad?"*

*He [al-Anbari] said: "He is taking the Baya'a from the FSA."*

*I said: "Ya Abu Ali! Is taking the Baya'a from the FSA considered as Rida? He is bringing the people to Jihad, it is a righteous [praiseworthy] thing."*

*He [al-Anbari] said: "Yes he is a murtad for taking the Baya'a from the FSA."*

*This Takfeer is not based on minor or major sins. This Takfeer is based upon righteous deeds. And he said that in front of Abu 'Ubaida al-Tunisi, Abu al-Hassan Taftnaz, and me.*

*And I swear on this, and I'm ready to bear witness on this in front of Allah and all of His creations.'"*

### **Territory captured in Iraq**

After months of heavy fighting between mujahideen groups, tribes and ISIS against Shia government forces, the government's forces began withdrawing its troops from major parts of Anbar. Local tribesmen and mujahideen factions took Falluja and Ramadi from the Shia

forces. ISIS also arrived into the cities after having fought and lived in the deserts for a period.

### **Al Qaeda disowns ISIS**

After the events that had occurred in Syria, the al Qaeda leadership of Khurasaan (Afghan/Pak) released a statement in which they disassociated themselves with ISIS. The statement emphasized that the al Qaeda organization had not commanded ISIS to be established nor were they consulted.

This stance made it clear to the mujahideen around the world that ISIS had no connection to the global jihad, rather they were a group not linked to the mujahideen worldwide.

### **Eastern regions and Der az-Zour region**

As stated previously, Jabhat an-Nusra had very good relations with local groups and tribes in Der az-Zour province. When fighting between the groups and ISIS began, ISIS responded by fighting all groups in the region including Jabhat an-Nusra.

This was the only region at the time in which much open fighting took place between ISIS and Jabhat an-Nusra.

ISIS was expelled from most of Der az-Zour.

In the eastern province of Hasakah, ISIS and other groups reached an agreement to focus on fighting the enemy and not to bring the infighting to the province but it was not long before ISIS surrounded bases of Jabhat an-Nusra and Ahrar al Sham in Hasakah and forced them to hand over their weapons or withdraw.

ISIS also withdrew from Idlib, Latakia and western Aleppo however they took complete control over the city of Raqqa.

### **Abu Khalid as-Suri**

Sheikh Abu Khalid as-Suri was an experienced commander from decades of Jihad in many countries. He had fought in Syria against Assad in the 80s and was the companion of Sheikh Abu Mus`ab as-Suri who is known as the strategist of the Jihadi movement. Abu Khalid was arrested in Pakistan while involved in the Jihad against America in Afghanistan. He was then handed over to the Assad regime where he was jailed for many years. Upon his release he joined Ahrar as-Sham and became the leader of the group in Aleppo. As stated previously, Dr Ayman Zawahiri appointed him as his representative in Syrian and as an arbitrator between ISIS and Jabhat an-Nusra.

While he was residing in a mujahideen base in Aleppo, suicide attackers attacked and killed Sheikh Abu Khalid and number of Mujahideen. May Allah have mercy on the Sheikh.

Blame for this action immediately fell on ISIS as they were the only group that was fighting the mujahideen and used suicide bombers.

Dr Ayman Zawahiri was extremely close to Sheikh Abu Khaild and so were many mujahideen around the globe who had been trained at the hands of this veteran sheikh.

Not long after the incident, Dr Zawahiri released an audio message in which he said:

*"To all the Muslims everywhere, Salam alaykum. Today I congratulate and send condolences the Muslim Nation. As for the congratulation, it is for Martyrdom of Abu Khalid. As for the condolences it's for this blind Fitnah that befell on Sham. And for this poor offender (suicide bomber) who was deceived, pushed for the sake of ignorance and Hawa and aggression & greed for power. greed for power to kill a Shaykh of Shuyokh of Jihad, who spent prime of his youth a Mujahid, trainer, a Muhajir & spreader of the Truth. And patient on imprisonment and he did not waver, nor back down despite the severity of what he was facing.*

*I knew him since Jihad against Russians & knew him to be a companion of Abu Musab al-Suri, until he (Abu Khalid) was captured in Pakistan. The last message I received from him was before 10 years, before his arrest, and he supported me in a speech I wrote. I said in it that victory was just a matter of patience, then he was arrested and the link between us was cut off. Until the blessed Syrian revolution started, and the flag of Jihad was raised and the pursuit to establish the Islamic State was raised. The Islamic State that rules by Shariah, spreads Justice, has Shura and will free Jerusalem and all the occupied Muslim lands and will help the oppressed and will get rid of foreign dependency. And will cleanse the Lands of the corruption.*

*Then Allah made it easy for us to establish contacts after he saved him from imprisonment by Nusayris .& he was for me a good adviser. And he told me he spent 7 years with his teacher & companion Abu Musab al-Suri until they were separated. May Allah free Abu Musab. And he told me that he saw in Sham the seeds of Fitnah that he witnessed in Peshawar. The Fitnah of ignorance , Hawa and injustice. The one that allows blood to be spilled and rights be violated based on suspicions and hawa and greed.*

*This reminds me of a funny yet sad story that happened to me in Peshawar where I met the beloved brother Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. I said to him: There's a group out there that makes Takfir of me for not making Takfir of the afghan Mujahidin. So he laughed and said: Don't you know they made Takfir of me for not making Takfir of you. It's this Jahl (ignorance) and Hawa and greed that did not even respect the sanctity of Uthman bin Affan. And they did not care for the sanctity of Ali bin Abi Talib, so one of them stabbed him as he was praying the Morning prayer.*

*This Fitnah is what Abu Khalid saw and started warning about it - until God decreed that he would be one of its Martyrs. This Fitnah does not care for any sanctity or old age or precedence or Jihad or Hijrah or patience in prison or steadfastness on truth. And this Fitnah needs all Muslims to repel it and that they form a public opinion against it And against anyone that does not accept Independent Sharia court, and I stresson "independent" As there is no lesson/example (wisdom) where the judges are chosen by opponents And it is a must on every Muslim and Mujahid to distance himself from anyone who refuses that.*

*And it's on every Muslim and Mujahid to not get involved with the blood of the Mujahidin And he should refuse to blow up their headquarters and kill their Sheikhs, who made tired all the criminals seeking ways to kill them so these extremist fools came and spilled Haram blood. And it's a must on Muslims to not support those who blow up Mujahideen bases And sends **car** bombs to them and human bombs (suicide bombings) and that they should stop supporting them in any way And whoever falls in this sin should remember that he's achieving something for the enemies of Islam which they could not have.*

As criticisms from many quarters grew, ISIS finally released a statement in which they mentioned in it that “*they had not ordered*” the killing of Abu Khalid however they did not come out clearly denying that their fighters had carried out the bombing.

Later, Ahrar as-Sham claimed to have caught a person who had harboured the attackers. He was a member of ISIS.

### **Jawlani's response**

Soon after the killing of Sheikh Abu Khalid, Sheikh Jawlani spoke in an audio message in which he spoke emotionally about Abu Khalid who had been an advisor to all the mujahideen regardless of groups. Sheikh Jawlani also demanded that ISIS present itself to an independent Shariah court. He threatened that if ISIS did not present itself before the law of Allah within five days, then Jabhat an-Nusra would fight them until they submitted to shariah as a judge between them.

Sheikh Abu Qatada al Finisteeni, a well respected and known aalim among the mujahideen contacted the mujahideen and advised him not to fight ISIS except in self defence. Jawlani agreed.

### **Siege of Der az-Zour**

At the time, there were open hostilities between Jabhat an-Nusra and ISIS only in the Der az-Zour province and some areas of Aleppo. After ISIS withdrew from most areas of Der az-Zour, they took strategic areas connecting Der az-Zour to the other provinces effectively leaving the mujahideen of Der az-Zour sieged, from one direction by the Assad regime and the other by ISIS.

Sheikh Abu Maria al Qahtani led Jabhat an-Nusra in the region. While in this siege, they still continued operations against the Assad forces and guarded the frontlines. Almost all the factions and tribes united under the siege.

### **In other areas of Syria**

Raqqa city, the only city that had been fully liberated by the mujahideen was in ISIS hands. So was most of Raqqa province and cities in Aleppo province such as Manbaj, Al Baab and a number of others.

Outside Raqqa city was a large Assad base called Brigade 17. ISIS did not attack it but rather directed its forces at trying to take Der az-Zour from the mujahideen.

Aleppo city was divided between mujahideen/ FSA and Assad forces. The mujahideen launched a massive attack on the Aleppo Central Prison in an attempt to release prisoners held there. The mujahideen were not able to liberate the prison however they killed many Assad troops in the battle.

In the Ghouta area around Damascus fighting continued against Assad, and so in Qalamoun mountains, Hama province, Idlib province, Aleppo province and the mujahideen kept their positions in the mountains of a small area of Latakia province.

In the south, Dara and Qunaitira districts, the mujahideen kept up slow but steady advance of Assad troops. Jabhat an-Nusra also lifted the siege on Nawa city which been surrounded by Assad troops for months.

In March 2014 a large offensive was launched in the Latakia region against Assad's Nusayri sect heartland. The objective of this campaign was to draw Assad's troops who were fighting in different areas in Syria to defend their homeland. Some of Assad's senior officials were killed in the battle. Assad also withdrew many of his troops from other fronts to help protect Latakia from the mujahideen.

### **Mosul captured**

On June 6 2014 the city of Mosul in northern Iraq was captured by a joint assault by tribesmen, some mujahideen factions and led by ISIS. Ansar al Islam and ISIS had long fought a guerrilla war in the city and its surroundings. The taking of the city was welcomed by the Ahlus Sunnah who has suffered severely under the Shia regime.

Soon after the taking of Mosul, Shia soldier fled and were pursued by ISIS fighters who took large territory from government forces. ISIS and other factions battled the Shia forces in Nainawa and Diyala provinces.

Then another important town on the road to Baghdad, Tikreet fell into the hands of ISIS. The Shia regime tried desperately to launch a counter offensive but failed in several attempts to take the town of Tikreet.

### **Claim of Khalifah**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of Ramadan (2014), ISIS declared that it had decided to appoint Baghdadi as Khalifah of all muslim worldwide. Adnani, the spokesman of ISIS said:

*"Thus, he [Baghdadi] is the imam and khalīfah for the Muslims everywhere. Accordingly, the "Iraq and Shām" in the name of the Islamic State is henceforth removed from all official deliberations and communications, and the official name is the Islamic State from the date of this declaration"*

Adnani urged muslims to unite under the newly declared “*Khalifa*”.

Adnani also stated regarding those who “break ranks”:

*“Be very wary of breaking the ranks. For you to be snatched by birds would be better for you than to break the ranks or take part in doing so. And if anyone wants to break the ranks, split his head with bullets and empty its insides, whoever he may be, without dignity”*

Baghdadi then made his first public appearance in the central mosque of Mosul. He addressed in a sermon in which he claimed to post of Khilafah to himself.

### **Fall of Der az-Zour**

After a long and hard siege on the people of Der az-Zour, many of the tribes and factions began to lose hope and weaken. IS brought in heavy weapons captured in Mosul to Der az Zour. Over 100 000 people were displaced by the continuous raids by IS and fighting between the two sides. Many times IS blocked even aid supplies to some areas demanding that the people should pledge allegiance before any aid would be allowed in. Some tribal elders gave the pledge of allegiance to IS and allowed IS into their areas in exchange of lifting the siege on them.

As IS began taking villages along the Euphrates river, Jabhat an-Nusra and the locals factions all under the leadership of Sheikh Abu Maria fought back hard.

But the hardships showed the true colours of some. A commander of Jabhat an-Nusra in Bukamal city, which is one of the major cities of Der az-Zour, defected to ISIS and invited IS into this important town. IS infiltrated deep into mujahideen territory and most of the tribes panicked. The Shaheel tribe, one of the biggest in the area pledged allegiance to IS. Soon after this the rest of the tribes pledged their allegiance to IS and negotiated surrender. The only tribe that refused was the Sha`eetat tribe.

The agreement between IS and the tribes included that all heavy weapons of the tribes will be handed over to IS but the tribesmen would be allowed their personal weapons. IS also put a condition that the tribes men would have to leave their villages for a specified amount of time. This was a hard condition as tens of thousands of people with their families had to leave their houses and stay in the desert while IS searched their homes and destroyed homes of mujahideen leaders.

After much pressure, the Sha`eetat tribes also surrendered too.

Sheikh Abu Maria and a large group of core mujahideen withdrew from Der az-Zour as they had they had no territory to fight from. Sheikh Abu Maria led the convoys of mujahideen to join Jabhat an-Nusra in Dar`a. Other convoys left for Aleppo and Qalamoun mountains and joined up safely with the rest of the mujahideen.

### **Sha`eetat rebellion**



According to tribesmen of Sha`eetat, IS began violating the surrender agreement by confiscating their personal weapons.

This was followed by an incident in which IS attempted to arrest a member of Sha`eetaat in the village of Abu Hamam. The locals tried intervene which led to a clash. A few tribesmen were killed. This caused the a rebellion in the area and local fighters raided IS headquarters in Abu Hamam and expelled IS from the area. The rebellion against IS spread throughout the areas inhabited by the Shaheetaat tribe and IS was expelled from the area.

IS declared the Shaeetaat as '*Murdadeen*' (Apostates) and sent large convoys to counter the rebellion and surrounded the area for weeks. Then they stormed the area and regained the areas which they had lost to the tribe.

IS took full control of the area and confiscated all weapons. The Sha`eetaat tribe awaited the ruling that would be passed against them for rebelling.

The '*Shariah board* ' of IS passed a ruling in which all non-fighters of the tribe were compelled to move out of their villages. It also ruled that all the able-bodied men were to be executed.

The women and children of the Sha`eetaat tribe were forcefully moved to other areas of IS control. Many went as refugees to Turkey.

IS then began carrying out on the men what they called "*The ruling of Banu Nadhir*". Approximately 700 men and youth of the tribe were killed on the first day. The following days IS continued to massacre them and an unknown number were executed. IS published photos of some of these massacres calling it execution of apostates. Finally the heads of the other tribes of Der az-Zour who had already pledged allegiance to IS formed a delegation and interceded on behalf of the Sha`eetaat tribe. Fearing a wider uprising, IS slowed down the killings after at least a thousand muslims had been executed.

Photos posted by IS members continue to emerge of the massacre that transpired to the Sha`eetaat tribe...

### **IS launches war against regime**

When the war between IS and the factions began, IS ceased fighting the regime in most areas. Frontlines held by IS against the regime were at a standstill. The regime avoided confrontation with IS as they considered it wiser to allow the war between IS and other factions to intensify.

IS on the other hand also avoided attacking the regime. After all they considered the factions no better than the regime and the factions were considered a priority to fight them to secure territory.

IS had secured territory in Eastern Syria in the provinces of Raqqqa, Hasakah and Der az-Zour. After clearing out other factions from these areas, they attacked Brigade 17 of the regime which was located just outside Raqqqa city. Raqqqa city had become the practical capital of IS however for months they refrained from attacking Brigade 17. This led many to believe that IS was co-ordinating with the regime.

Brigade 17 had been partially captured by Ahrar ash-Sham but it had been lost to regime when the infighting began in January.

In July IS began its war against regime. They began by attacking a gas field in rural Homs province. They was followed by the storming of Brigade 17. It was apparent that IS had turned on the regime and was attempting to clear out the regime remnants in the provinces which were IS strongholds.

This was followed by storming of another important base, then the storming of Tabaqa airport. This campaign left Raqqqa province firmly in IS control.

### **Attack on North East Aleppo**

After these successors against the regime, IS turned began a campaign against the factions including Jabhat an-Nusra, Islamic Front and the local factions in North East Aleppo. This area is the gateway to the heartland of the mujaideen which is Idlib, Aleppo, Hamaa and Latakia where many factions are locked in battle against the regime.

IS captured a few villages but failed to capture Azzaz as many factions sent re-enforcements to defend the areas from IS attack.

Islamic Front and local FSA battalions formed a joint operations room to defend the area which Jabhat an-Nusra refused to co-operate with them in the battle and chose to fight the IS attack independently.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Jawlani led Jabhat an-Nusra in a large offensive against the Assad regime in Hamaa province.

IS advance into Aleppo province was halted while on the other hand regime forces suffered a string of bitter defeats in Hamaa and Idlib provinces at the hand of the joint effort of all factions.

By September, mujahideen made advances in the Southern province of Qunaitira capturing most of the Syrian border with Israel. They also managed to break the siege on some of the suburbs of Damascus that were surrounded.

## **Who are the leaders of IS?**

Not much information is known about the history of most IS leaders, particularly about former Saddam regime officers who are leading IS.

### **Abu Bakr al Baghdadi**

Born in Samarra, Baghdadi reportedly took up Islamic studies in the University of Baghdad. He was arrested in 2004 by the American occupation forces. Upon his release, he joined the resistance and led a unit of Iraqis that fought against the US occupation called JaishAhl us-Sunnah. He was known as Abu Duaa.

JaishAhl us-Sunnah joined the Majlis Shura Mujahideen. When it announced the Islamic State of Iraq, Baghdadi became a member of the Shura council. Upon the martyrdom of Sheikh Abu Umar al Baghdadi, the leader of ISI, and Abu Hamza, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi assumed leadership of ISI. After expanding to Syria, IS claimed that Baghdadi was the Khalifa of all muslims.

Sheikh Abu Abdullah Mansoor, a mujahid commander from Iraq says:

*"As for me, then I make my witness Allah besides whom none has the right to be worshipped, due to what I know closely of this claimant who has named himself Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and he studied from me alongside a group virtuous [brothers] a little bit from the book "Zadul Mustaqni'" in the year 2005, and then the study discontinued because of my arrest. I've come to know him accurately, he was of limited intelligence, slow at grasping and dim witted, he's not from the intermediate students of knowledge and his study is that of an academic study in the state universities, those of which the levels [of study] are ridiculous and have no relation in forming a student of knowledge, let alone a scholar."*

### **Abu Ali an Anbari.**

Anbari is reported to be a former high ranking officer in Saddam Husain's Bathist regime. He is deputy of Baghdadi and runs IS operations in Syria. He is one of the leading minds behind IS and holds much authority.

### **Abu Muslim Turkmani.**

He previously served in the military intelligence of the former Bathist regime and then him the Special Republican Guard.

Turkmani became one of Baghdadi's deputies and was leader in charge of Iraq. Anbari and Turkmani were considered the two most powerful leaders in IS.

### **Haji Bakr**

A former air force colonel in the Bathist regime, he was noted as a brilliant military strategist. He was arrested by the Americans after the invasion of Iraq. He joined the resistance and was a member of ISI. Upon the martyrdom of Abu Umar al Baghdadi he was one of those who facilitated the rise of Abu Bakr al Baghdadi. It is alleged that he was he was the mastermind of a string of assassinations targeting commanders opposed to Abu Bakr al Baghdadi and that he was the chief architect of Baghdadi's rise to leadership.

When Jabhat an-Nusra was founded he went to Syria as one of its military leaders. When Baghdadi announced the State in Syria, he defected and re-joined ISIS.

### **Abu Ayman Iraqi**

Another former officer of the Bathist regime, according to a report, Abu Ayman held position of Lieutenant Colonel. He was one of IS key commanders who helped recruit many fighters that formed its foundation in Syria. He led its fighters in many parts of Syria notably in Latakia area before IS withdrew from that front. He then went to Der az-Zour where he led battles against the Mujahideen.

According to Sheikh Saqr (who was a companion of Sheikh Azzam and Usama), Abu Ayman said the following words to a group of commanders who called a meeting with him "*We want the Shariah of the jungle*". Salman al Arjani who himself has joined IS has confirmed that he heard the statement from Abu Ayman. He is also notorious for personally killing a commander called Abu Baseer.

### **Umar Shishani**

Born and raised in Georgia, he joined the army and served in it for many years. He fought in the brief 2008 war between Georgia and Russia. He was later dismissed for health reasons. He was arrested in 2010 on charge of illegle weapons. In 2012 he went to Syria and let a faction called Muhajireen Brigade. He later pledged allegiance to ISIS and became its military commander. At the start of the infighting, he was reluctant to fight other factions but he later led battles in Der az-Zour against the mujahideen.

## **Why is the IS group called extremist in takfeer?**

The IS group has official policy of takfeer (declaring kaffir) against most factions fighting in Syria for example, Islamic Front, Jaish Muhahideen and Eastern branch of Jabhat an-Nusra. These are views that have been released officially by IS media outlets.

In a statement entitled "Shariah committee statement regarding Islamic Front", IS declared Islamic Front as committers of apostasy. Islamic Front is the largest single Islamic body in Syria fighting against Assad and has a stated goal of establishing Shariah. It includes groups such as Ahrar al Sham.

ويحكي ههنا منهجها، ونسب إلى الله إلا أن يفصح سوء نواياهم ويحسف حبب طواياهم في نص قول أمراء الذين لا يرون حرجاً في أن يتخذوا كل ما يقع تحت أيديهم من الوسائل الفاسدة في طريق الوصول إلى ما يدعونه من السعي لتحكيم الشريعة، ولقد نظرت الهيئة الشرعية في المناطق التي احتلت بأحوال أمراء ما يسمى بالجيبة الإسلامية، وخلصت إلى تقرير الآتي:

#### حال أمراء الجبهة الإسلامية قبل تشكيل جبهتهم وبعدها:

إن أمراء ما يسمى بالجيبة الإسلامية قد تلثموا بمناطات كفرية قبل إنشاء جبهتهم وبعدها، ومن أهمها: تقرير وتصحيح مذهب الكفار فضلاً عن تولي المرتدين في هيئة كفرية، وهي هيئة الأركان التابعة لهيئة الائتلاف؛ لذلك كان لا بد من الابتداء ببيان حال الميثنيين، وبيان حكم الشرع فيهما

فقدنا ل... والله اعلم

Some of their shariah officials are known for their takfeer of muslims. For example Abu Ja'far at-Tunisi. He was a member of Ansar al Shariah Tunisia but was expelled from that group due to his extreme views. He joined IS and was given a senior position and is a leading Shariah advisor in IS.

Here is two examples of takfeer of muslims by IS leaders who use twitter. These twitter accounts are approved and confirmed by IS official media:

- A leader of IS in Raqqa, Abu Layth aDayghami calls the aalim, Sheikh AbdulAziz Tareefi an apostate on his official twitter account. Sheikh Tareefi supports the Jihad and is looked up to by mujahideen. Here is the words of Abu Layth calling him a murtad:

د1 @abo\_aleeth أبوليث الضيفمي  
مفتي الدستور الوثني المرتد الطريفي يناصر دولة  
ال سعود ويأمر بالإنشقاق من دولة الإسلام ماذا  
يريد هذا العميل #الطريفي\_يفتي\_بالإنشقاق



*"Mufti of the pagan constitution, the apostate Tareefi is helping the Saud family and gives orders for defection from Islamic State. What does this agent want?"*

- An IS commander in Iraq who goes by the name "Ghareeb" wrote on his twitter account regarding Sheikh Abu Maryah of Jabhat an-Nusra:

*"By Allah I don't doubt even by a hair that al-Harari (Abu Mariya) is an apostate. In fact he is a wicked Taghout (false idol)."*

In other tweets he also attacked Sheikh Ayman Zawahiri and hinted at his apostasy.

The above to comments are typical of what was heard by hundreds of mujahideen and fighters of IS who have left their ranks.

## **Who are the Ulamaa of Jihad who are supporting IS?**

When this issue is brought up , the supporters of IS produce a list of Ulama that purportedly support them. Let us examine some these names keeping in mind that an Aalim is who other ulamaa state that he is an Aalim.

**Sheikh Abul-Munthir ash-Shanqiti.** IS supporters claim that he has signed a document supporting IS. He has publicly declared that he is innocent of the document and of supporting the so called "*Khilafah*".

**Sheikh Turki Benali.** A student of Sheikh Maqdisi , Sheikh Umar Hadoushi and Sheikh al Muhaddith Sulayman Alwan. He voiced his support for Baghdadi and joined IS becoming it's to Sharia judge and Mufti. He was denounced by his teacher, Sheikh Maqdisi who said: *"..He possesses no intellect, no knowledge, no understanding, nor sight, nor feels no anguish over the blood of the muslims "*

Turki Benali wrote a book in which he stated that it was incumbent for muslims to pledge allegiance to IS. When his teacher, Sheikh Hadoushi was asked regarding this he said:

*"What is for him is that he gains some knowledge, not that he writes anything (books etc.), what is for him is that he stay silent not that he talks."*

**Ma'moon Haatim.** Member of al Qaeda in Yemen. He has voiced support for IS and was glorified by IS members who claim that he is a learned scholar. None have produced his scholarly credentials (Ijaaza) and where he had studied. It is reported that the leadership of al Qaeda had requested him to stay silent on the issue of IS.

**Sheikh Husayn bin Mahmud.** The Sheikh had written an article in support of IS but soon after the announcement of the “Khilafah”, he wrote against Baghdadi’s move and retracted his support.

**Dr Jazouli.** He is an intellectual and speaker from Sudan who initially supported IS. He also retracted his support after the announcing of the “Khilafah”.

**Abu Hudhayfah al-Leeby.** IS supporters claim that he is an aalim. He has declined to produce names of Ulama that he has allegedly studied under for “security reasons” so we cannot find any aalim that can vouch for him.

There are some other names in this list, most of them do not even claim to be ulamaa. By producing such a list, IS supporters in fact expose that IS has no credible scholars that support it.

## **Who are Jabhat an-Nusra and its leaders?**

Jabhat an-Nusra, or otherwise known as *al Qaeda in the land of Sham*, is a branch of the Al Qaeda organization that is led by Sheikh Ayman Zawahiri. Al Qaeda organization has a pledge of allegiance to Mullah Muammah Umar, the leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban).

Jabhat an-Nusra in Syria is led by **Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Jawlani**. He is a Syrian who has previously fought in Iraq and was captured and imprisoned by the Americans in Iraq. He spent time in the ‘*school of Yusuf (as)*’-prison, revising and studying the jihadi movement. He carefully studied the mistakes in the previous jihads and the causes of their failures and

successes. On being released he returned to the jihad in Iraq. After the revolution in Syria, he returned to Syria with a handful of individuals and founded Jabhat an-Nusra.

Some other prominent leaders are:

#### **Sheikh Abu Firas as-Suri.**

Born in 1949, Damascus. He joined the military academy and left because of his Islamic views. He was a trainer between 1977-1980 to the *Mujahideen* in *At-Tali'a Al-Muqatila* and he participated in many operations against the [Syrian] regime between the years of 1979-1980. In 1980 he moved to Jordan and the following year he left for Afghanistan where he trained the *Mujahideen* in several military sciences at various training camps in Khorasaan.

While in Afghanistan, Shaykh Abu Firas met the two Shaykhs, Shaykh Abdullah 'Azzam and Shaykh 'Usamah ibn Ladin (in 1983), he continued to train the *Mujahideen* in specially prepared camps to carry out operations in; India, Indonesia, Burma and Iran.

Shaykh Abu Firas participated in military operations in Khost and Jalaabad and he was active in participating in the Shura charged with reconciling the differences among the *Mujahideen* of Afghanistan.

He also had a leading role among the mujahideen in Afghanistan and Pakistan where he met Sheikh Abu Mus'ab Zarqawi. At the time of the American invasion he was tasked of securing the families of the mujahideen. He migrated to Yemen where he remained until migrating back to Sham to participate in the Jihad. He is currently the spokesperson of Jabhat an-Nusra and a senior Shura council member.

#### **Sheikh Sami Uraydi.**

He was born 1973 in Amman, Jordan. He received his Bachelor's degree in Islamic Shari'ah from the University of Jordan in the year 1994 and received a Magistrate degree in Hadith in the year 1997 from the same university. He then received Doctorate in Hadith in the Islamic University of Baghdad, Iraq. He is currently serving as head Sharia advisor in Jabhat an-Nusra.

#### **Sheikh Abu Maria al Qahtani**

Real name, Maysara al Juburi from the village of Harar in Iraq. He participated in the Jihad of Iraq and was imprisoned. In prison he studied under the Ulamaa. He was from the first group of Mujahideen that crossed over from Iraq to Syria alongside Sheikh Jawlani. Abu Maria was one of the founding members of Jabhat an-Nusra and was the second most powerful person in the group.

He served as head of Sharia affairs but later handed over the job to Sheikh Sami Uraydi. He led the mujahideen in the eastern Der az-Zour region but after its fall he is relocated to Dar'a province.



**Commander Abu Humam as-Suri** aka Farooq as-Suri.

He travelled to Afghanistan in the nineties, between the years 1998-1999 he joined the Al-Ghuraba training camp of Shaykh Abu Musa'ab al-Suri for a year before moving on to Qandahar's famous Al-Farouq training camp, he graduated as one of its best.

Abu Hamam also worked as a trainer in Al-Farouq camp, where he gave Baya'a to Shaykh Osama bin Laden by shaking hands with the Shaykh may Allah have Mercy on him and accept him.

Abu Hamam was made responsible for the Muhajireen from Sham in Afghanistan and was the one who watched after their affairs in Khorasan. He participated in most of the battles which occurred and took place after the Crusader's invasion of Afghanistan.

He was with Shaykh Sayf al-Adl until Shaykh Mustafa Abu al-Yazid ordered him to work in Iraq before the fall of Baghdad, where he stayed for about four months, as an official representative of Tandheem Qaidat al-Jihad from the leadership in Khorasan.

During that period, he met Shaykh Abu Musa'ab al-Zarqawi, and Shaykh and Abu Hamza al-Muhajir. While in Iraq, the Iraqi intelligence arrested him and handed him to the Syrians who later released him as nothing was affirmed against him.

After the beginning of Jihad in Iraq, he was assigned as the military leader in the office of Mujahideen services, Abu Musaa'b al-Zarqawi used to send his Amirs to receive training from Abu Hamam before returning to him.

After the beginning of the brutal campaign of arrests in Syria in 2005 at the hands of the Nusayris, he went to Lebanon, then to Afghanistan per the order of the mashayekh there. He was ordered by Shaykh Atiyat Allah, who was responsible for all foreign operations then, to work inside Syria and directly report to Al-Qaeda.

He was arrested in Lebanon and jailed for five years. After he was released, he joined, Jabhat al-Nusra. He now holds the position of the Military Commander of Jabhat al-Nusra.

**Sheikh Abu Julaybib (Anas Sahaba)**

From Jordan, he made hijra to Iraq and fought as one of Sheikh Zarqawi's most trusted commanders. He is currently leader of Jabhat an-Nusra in the southern Syria which includes Dar'a and Qutaitra which borders occupied Palestine.

# Is the declaration of the Khilafah valid?

This matter explained by some of the Ulama of Jihad:

## **‘We want it on the method of Prophethood’**

**By Shaykh 'Abdullah al-Muhaysni**

I had previously tweeted deciding to suffice myself in regards to what I clarified relating to Jama'at al-Baghdadi. However an incident with consequences developed, and I ask Allah to be lenient with the mujahideen, it is the announcement of khilafah by Jama'at al-Baghdadi.

A group of brothers insisted that I clarify the basis of that stance shar'i wise, away from the ongoing dispute, away from emotion, for the affair is religion. So I say, (while) seeking Allah's help, through tweets titled "We want it on the manhaj of Prophethood":

To begin with, the striving towards the establishment of khilafah upon the manhaj of Prophethood, which the Ummah of Muhammad was stripped of when it reached that which it reached of humiliation and degradation when it abandoned jihad, lowered itself to palace scholars who legislated for their rulers what they want, so their masters determine the fatawa for them while they cause confusion, and Allah's aid is sought.

So (with that said) returning the khilafah and striving for that is from the most obligatory of obligations, for the strength of the Muslims lies in their unity and coherence, and due to that the European countries were avid on dismantling the unity of the Muslims by imposing the Sykes-Picot borders. There's no establishment of the religion and it's rulings in its full sense except through it (khilafah) and there's no complete safety for the Muslims except through it.

And I say here to all those in whose hearts wahn has nestled, O you who have been astounded by the strength of the West & its sway, and thought the pursuit for khilafah to be delusion and imagination, we say to those: know that the khilafah will return, and we swear by the One who's only worthy of worship that the khilafah & the honor will return to our Ummah, with the honor of an honored one, or the disgrace of a disgraced one. That's the promise of our Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, you see it afar off and we see it as near.

You are looking at dunya perspectives, we look at the change of situation of Tunisia overnight and the One who left the ruler of Egypt to the prison (Mubarak), then He made the imprisoned the ruler (Morsi) and then He rendered the ruler imprisoned (Morsi). Indeed the One who changes these conditions is able to change the condition of our Ummah with

his saying “be” and it’ll be. Moreover, we are only demanded to strive, as for the results then their command lies with Allah.

However despite all of that we say that the khilafah we strive for & our necks are struck for, is that which the Prophet sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam promised of, which is “upon the methodology of Prophethood”.

Anything besides that is forceful rule which the Ummah has grown tired of & has suffered the anguish of it for decades.

Claiming the label of khilafah without meeting its requirements is teasing the feelings of the Muslims, exploiting their emotions and harming the religion of Allah.

The announcement of khilafah by Jama’at al-Baghdadi isn’t the first case, it was announced before them in Algeria, they fought the Ummah, and the West & its agents rejoiced over this hastening before establishment.

Two years ago the khilafah was announced by Abul Banat and those with him in Syria, they demanded the bay’ah, they isolated themselves from the shura of the Ummah and ended! A youth in Afghanistan (also) declared the khilafah, they came out against the mujahideen, they imposed on the Ummah to pledge to them. They fought, killed and were killed.

What has to be taken into consideration isn’t raising the slogan of khilafah, but meeting it’s requirements, what has to be in consideration is that it should be on the methodology of Prophethood, or else what did we accomplish?

And here we are today, facing a prospect from the prospects of dividing the ranks of the mujahideen, an attempt to bury the jihad and to extend the dispute, disunity and bloodshed. So to you O Lord is the complaint.

Today Jama’at al-Baghdadi announces the khilafah not in ‘Iraq and Sham, but rather the whole Ummah from its east to its west, without referring to even one acknowledged scholar!

To every sincere one: Fear Allah, it’s a repeated attempt to bury the jihad by disuniting and hastening the affairs, far away from the jihad groups, it’s scholars, it’s intellectuals, the ahlul hal of this Ummah, and you will bear the burden of it in front of the Lord of all creation.

O seeker of the truth, the people of knowledge determined that that ruler comes to power in one of the three ways:

1. Appointment by a ruler before him
2. Shura upon the methodology of Prophethood
3. Overpowering

As for the appointment it didn’t occur, so al-Baghdadi’s rule is either overpowering or shura & (correct) khilafah.

As for shura, which is the methodology the Prophet sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam promised that khilafah would return with & it's what we spill our blood for in Allah's cause to revive it, then this isn't what the khilafah of al-Baghdadi is that he announced.

The sharee'ah has set for every action conditions and preventive factors so that the action of worship isn't in its wrong place and causes harm & no benefit, even if it appeals to the doer and thinks that he's upon good. So our love for prayer, fasting, hajj & khilafah doesn't lead us to do it when we want & desire and then use our love for the religion and good deeds as an excuse, lest we fall into bid'ah and innovating in the religion.

Indeed the khilafah has conditions just like everything else besides it has conditions, from its most important conditions are establishment & consultation. Real known establishment not delusional, and Prophetic consultation not based on groups, for the khilafah is for the Ummah and not for a group.

Also from its conditions is knowing the khalifah, by seeing and being aware of him, the majority of ahlul hal wal 'aqd do not know al-Baghdadi, let alone selecting him. Was he selected by Mullah 'Umar, ath-Thawahiri, the ameer of al-Qawqaz, al-Wuhayshi and others besides them from the leaders of jihad? Was he selected by the 'ulama or the majority of them? Was he selected by the ahlul hal wal 'aqd from amongst the mujahideen and those besides them, because we don't seek a khilafah for the mujahideen but a khilafah for the ummah, so is the khilafah of al-Baghdadi a khilafah for the ummah or a khilafah for a jama'ah?

O seeker of the truth, (even) the assuming of leadership over a particular land is not permitted except with the consultation of the people of influence, ahlul hal wal 'aqd. Didn't Allah say: "and their affair (is conducted) amongst them by mutual consultation"? Didn't the Messenger of Allah sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam say: "Were I to appoint anyone without consultation I would've appointed ibn Mas'ood"?

And it's necessary that ahlul hal wal 'aqd should be representatives of the Ummah of Muhammad sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam, not that they be chosen by so-and-so as a council for himself and then named as the people of shura, this is the action of the tyrants, not the way of khilafah.

Who were those whom the shura took place amongst? What are their names and what's their condition? Who are they representing and who chose them to choose (the khalifah)?

The declaration of what's known as "The Islamic State of 'Iraq & Sham" was a mistake that caused the Ummah bloodshed and woes, it'll be borne by all who aided, assisted and pledged to it.

Here we are today, facing the announcement of a khilafah with no establishment or consultation, upon the methodology of eradication not that of Prophethood, so how much blood will be spilled due to that?

Indeed I see that al-Baghdadi doesn't have establishment in the majority of Sham, such as Aleppo, as-Sahil (the coastal region), Homs, Damascus and elsewhere, so how does he

announce the khilafah for the whole Ummah? It is by Allah a grievous mistake and a blinding fitnah.

The mistake is even more hideous when it's based on blood & the violation of honor, the announcement of al-Baghdadi for his khilafah and the announcement of all those who don't recognize his bay'ah is tyranny which will spill falls of blood of muwwahideen. So woe to those who pledge and support (the "khilafah") from the curse of this blood on a day you will all stand before the Compeller.

Woe to them from dividing the ranks of the jihad in the Islamic world! It's as if their fitnah will reach Yemen, the Maghreb and Somalia – may Allah not decree that -, and what a joy for America and her agents when that happens!

From the dilemmas of the matters which there's no way out for the one who fell in such, is the spilling of Muslim blood without just cause. We, by Allah, did not come out nor did the mujahideen come out to spill the blood and violate the honor, rather they came to remove oppression, kufr and fitnah. So fear Allah in regards to them (Muslims).

Indeed the lack of consulting the mujahideen and the 'ulamaa is the greatest fitnah, this will cause fighting & bloodshed, had they referred to the 'ulamaa as Allah ordered they would've succeeded.

If it's not khilafah on the manhaj of Prophethood then it's overpowering and usurpation, that's tyrannical rule and not the khilafah which the Prophet sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam gave the glad tidings of.

And if they claim that the leadership of al-Baghdadi was not attained through consultation but overpowering, then all the people of knowledge have agreed on the fisq (rebelliousness, disobedience, evil) of the overpowering ruler, his repelling is obligatory in the areas which he has no authority or influence in.

So if you say that he's overpowering, then he – on the assumption that his bay'ah is valid – is overpowering over Raqqah, the people of Raqqah pledge to him due to his overpowering. However other remaining lands don't see him as a leader without shura, and since he's overpowering he's a fasiq, pledging to him is not permissible according to them, rather they repel him.

From what was mentioned before, the bay'ah of al-Baghdadi is neither that of khilafah or overpowering, rather it's a void bay'ah which incurred woes on the Ummah, divided their ranks and spilled their blood.

O seeker of the truth, the declaration of khilafah from one party besides the other factions of haqq only affirms the falsehood of this group and it's transgression against the rights of other Muslims.

The objective of appointing the Greater Imam is to unite the word, to bring together our gathering, to establish the religion, to implement the rulings of Allah, to lift oppression and

to spread justice. So I ask you by Allah, did you unite the word or disunite it with your action?

O seeker of the truth, the one whom it's obligatory to pledge to as leader is the one who's capable of spreading his authority to all the lands of the Muslims, then his bay'ah becomes obligatory on all. The one who has no capability or authority over most of the Muslims, their land, their skies, their seas, their resources or their services, has nothing from the khilafah except the name.

The obligations of the governor in Islam are greater and more than merely pleasing & attaching titles to oneself.

Is the khalifah which you selected capable of protecting the people in Yemen, Somalia or elsewhere? How then can he be a khalifah while the hadeeth states: "The Imam is a shield".

Is he really a shield for the population, whom he demands that they pledge him, from everything that harms them or frightens them, while the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "The Imam is a shield".

Demanding the obedience and bay'ah for the one who's incapable of taking care of the affairs of the population who are distant from him is a manifestation of ignorance regarding the objective of the khilafah and its services.

Indeed the khilafah that you have announced is nothing more than spilling more blood of Ahlu Sunnah, more of transgression and devising excuses to kill those opposing.

It means an attempt to eliminate the combating groups & others besides them who don't agree with the desires of Dawlah under the guise of their "invalidity".

It means a war against al-Qa'idah and affiliating groups which terrified the West and its allies, because they didn't pledge to the "khalifah", and thus remains the war against Ahlu Sunnah in the name of the Sunnah!

The decision on the khilafah means besieging the jihadi organizations before finishing them off in the upcoming phase, which means waging war against the mujahideen in the name of the religion.

O seeker of the truth, when you rule upon (label) everyone opposing you with misguidance or rather with death – while they are from the sincere of Ahlu Sunnah -, then this is the biggest sign of your misguidance.

O Jama'at al-Baghdadi and its supporters, indeed it's a word of truth that we say which honorable scholars have preceded us in. The Ummah and the Islamic state isn't Raqqa nor Mosul, the Ummah is greater than you and us, so fear Allah in regards to it.

Fear Allah in regards to the groups of mujahideen in Afghanistan, Yemen, Chechnya and Maghreb, don't corrupt for the Muslims their jihad.

The religion of Allah isn't fiery slogans nor dazzling words, and you will come to know the news of your actions, even if after a while.

And to Allah belongs the command, before and after.

**"And Be Not Like Her who Undoes the Thread which She has Spun, After it has Become Strong" (An-Nahl, 92)**

**By Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Maqdisi**

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

All praise be to Allah. Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah. And henceforth...

The Caliphate and the Imamate are among the important positions and great matters for the people of Islam, which the faithful of the people of Islam continue to aspire to restore and establish, and their anticipation of these affected them until a group rose out of haste to establish the Caliphate and install a Caliph. They made the Imam already established on the people of Islam, a man with no authority nor dominion, who sought refuge in London, and they called upon people to pledge allegiance to him and made those who did not pledge allegiance to him sinners... and others narrowed the issue by claiming to be guides for others. Without a doubt this depicts a search for a rightly-guided Caliph whose leadership people would accept.

These attempts and their like were and still come in service of one person, and they have no place in reality among the Muslims. Instead, he is named and elected by his people and group, and he is not the choice of the actual responsible people in the Ummah, its divine scholars, who would always fade and recede without the Muslims being hit with despair or distortion of this great position in their chests...

But a group comes with predominantly extremist rhetoric, and an exclusionary approach in dealing with opposition, and has no consideration for the scholars of the Ummah and its prominent figures, and for it to claim its desire to implement the Shariah upon the Ummah, while it does not accept to be judged by it in disputes of blood and money of others! So it overcomes some aspects of the lands of the Muslims, and before it holds matters firmly, and people and the virtuous scholars agree upon it even in those lands, it declares the obligation to pledge to its Caliph that it named upon the Muslims all over the world, and the obligation upon the Muslims to emigrate to him, and it considers those who do not sinners... until it was necessary for fatwas such as that of Imam Malik about the invalidity of compelled divorce and the pledge of allegiance. I have received questions from women whose husbands gave them the choice between pledging to this Caliph or divorce. I said: Pledge if you hate divorce. This the pledge to something hated and it is not obligatory. The words of Imam Ahmed are known regarding the coercion of a woman by her husband even if it is correct if her husband threatens her with divorce... I categorize such questions and fatwas for the intransigence of the intransigent and their restriction upon the Muslims and

intimidating them with the sword and branding them as sinners and infidels, and they exceed this by threatening women with divorce...

More serious than this divorce, and this is what called me to write these words, is what they made as a consequence of divorce among the members of the Mujahideen and their groups and leaders, and what they will spread of chaos in the ranks and destabilization of their structure, when their official spokesman said: "The message to the factions and groups all over the face of the earth, the Mujahideen, and those who work to support the religion of Allah, and raise the slogans of Islam, and to the leaders and emirs, we say: Fear Allah in yourselves, fear Allah in your Jihad... By Allah, we find no Shariah excuse for you in delaying to support this Dawla." And he said: "As for you, the soldiers of the factions and organizations, understand that after this empowerment and the establishment of the caliphate, the legitimacy of your groups and organizations is invalidated, and it is impermissible for any of you who believes in Allah to sleep and not have bear loyalty to the Caliph."

Therefore, reflect on how they invalidate the Jihad of the Mujahideen and incite to follow the followed, and put students over sheikhs... What is this conspiracy to fragment the ranks of the Mujahideen and undermine and weaken their structures...

We say to our brothers, the preachers and the Mujahideen all over the world: Listen to the words of Allah and His appeal, and strike against the wall that which violates them...

Allah the Exalted said: "O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the messenger, and make not vain your deeds!" (Muhammad, 33) And the Exalted said: "And be not like her who undoes the thread which she has spun, after it has become strong." (An-Nahl, 92)

So rally around your leaders, your heads, and your senior figures, and do not be weakened by the calls of those who fragment the ranks of the Muslims, those who see that there is no truth today but with them, and all who are not with them are the enemy...

They have even used and still used - I do not know if it is deliberate or by mistake or nonsense - in achieving the pillars of this heinous plot against this blessed group in particular and against the people of Islam in general... putting on the dress of a genuine Islamic project! And thus a segment of the children of this Ummah were deceived by them, and I do not doubt the sincerity of many of them and their fervor for Islam, but I question the wisdom of their minds and the accuracy of their understanding and knowledge... It is no secret to them that due to the intransigence of the leaders of this organization and their superficiality, haste, and short-sightedness, and their refusal to be guided by the guidance of the scholars, on whose writings they were raised and they are still studying, probably because of their penetration by deviants and extremists or others, that this plot was carried out and is still carried out against the people of this current in many ways, including:

- Eliminating those who oppose them from the veterans of the Mujahideen and those who are relied upon to reap the fruits of Jihad in Syria so that all that remains in the field is the stubborn and the ignorant, or the foolish and the inane.



The atmosphere is clear for you, so make it white and yellow \*\*\* and destroy what you wish to destroy

- Taking down the symbols of the jihadi current and its scholars because they did not get caught up with the choices of this organization and did not support its intransigence, its transgressions, and its deviations.
- Corrupting the compass of the current, dispersing the circle of its conflict with the tyrants, and moving the rifle from the chests of the enemies of the Ummah to the chests of its children from the sincere mujahideen or the Muslims in general, citing various excuses and generalizations they are not allowed to make.
- Distracting the people and diverting their attention from the Islamic project and burning any potential popular support and deterring any of the supporters across the Ummah from this current due to their bad practices and their application on the ground, and the ill-dealings with the people in their various strata and religions.
- Distorting the project of the Caliphate and the Islamic State in the chests of the people with their practices, their intransigence, and their extremism and bloodshed. This could deter the people from this project for a period a time after the failure of their experiment that is replete with drawbacks, transgressions, and violations.
- They exceeded all this with their aforementioned declaration: They work to fragment the ranks of those who strive for this religion, and the Mujahideen, and sabotage their groups that strive for the religion of Allah and pit their followers against their emirs, and their students against their sheikhs!

Have you ever seen fruits more ominous than these for this current and its children, than the call for building the Caliphate?! Does building the caliphate in a spot of the earth require taking down Da'wa and Jihad in all the other areas by fragmenting and scattering the jihadi groups and pitting them against their Sheikhs in the various battlefields?!

It is another conspiracy against this blessed current and its sincere groups. In summary: Either you are with us or we sow division in your ranks and strive to fragment them. It is the method used by the anarchists in our country when they impose themselves upon others, and during games you see them say, "either I play or I will ruin your game," meaning, either they impose themselves and accept a primary player, or they will sabotage the game. These are morals apt for children of the streets and are not worthy of those who are part of Da'wa and Jihad... So What then if the choice that these people impose, either to preside over the game and directing it according to their whims, ignorance, and intransigence, or they will sabotage and corrupt it!?? Or in other words: Them or the flood.

The face is that this is the most dangerous part of their most recent declaration. As I said before, it does not harm me if they declared the Caliphate in Sham or in Iraq or in London!!

But the harmful matter is what have those people arranged and what did they arrange in terms of effects and acts based on this declaration??

We are not the enemies of the Caliphate, but we are from among the best of its supporters and preachers and those who strive to establish it and seek to restore it. However, the Caliphate is legitimate to preserve the essence of the Muslims and put their fragments back together, and not fragment or split their ranks. Thus is the Imam, as told by the Chosen Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him: "They fight behind him and they are protected by him." (Narrated by Muslim) It is Paradise and protection of the Muslims from all evil, not a call or invitation to evil...

The Caliphate should be a haven and safe place for every Muslim... not a threat and a matter that intimidates and brings worry to the minds...

They abrogated their first pledge of allegiance to their leaders and rebelled against their emirs, and they transgressed against their senior figures when they declared the first state, and when they declared the second they shed protected blood and refused to be judged by the Shariah. Therefore, it is our right to ask: What will they do after the declaration of the Caliphate??

The most dangerous thing they have done so far call to fragment the Muslims and strive to split the ranks of their Jihadi and Da'wai groups, after they had split the Muslims in general between those who are with them and those who are against them. They did not show mercy to the weak among them, and did not excuse those who aligned with other than them from the groups in Syria. Instead, all who opposed them was either a backstabber who contradicted the pledge to them, or a Salooli, a Suroori, or Sahawati or supporter the Sahawat or lover of the Sahawat, or is seen or walks or goes with the Sahawat and so on... and they would kill those who did not pledge, and they were blamed for threatening to kidnap the wives of those who are against them!! This has not yet been proven to us, but if it were true then we would have with them quite an issue, may Allah defend the Muslim women from the evil of every aggressor and oppressor.

They know today when they call to disband the groups in order to pledge to them and to them, that there are superficial people in most of the groups, and most of those who listen to them are from this rank and from the ranks of the extremists, as well... and those whose enthusiasm and extremism dominates their wisdom, thought, and insight, their ignorance exceeds their knowledge. They build their hopes and

manage the fuel of their battles upon those due to the separation from them of the scholars, the sages, and the people of understanding...

And then there is the fact of their call to abrogate the pledge of allegiance of the groups to break the jihadi current fragment their groups, and split their ranks. This makes us look to what is behind the masks and not take their path with the naïveté and superficiality of the masses... If the situation before declaring the Caliphate was: either you are with us or against us, how will they be after...?

The Caliphate should be a haven for the Muslims and their lost paradise that they seek, so do not make it hellfire upon them and increase their frustration...

It is the dream of the Muslims that they are trying to achieve, so do not maim this beautiful dream with your bullets that split open the heads of those who oppose you, and spill what is inside!! Instead, achieve it, if you wish, while having mercy for the Muslims and supporting the oppressed. You are mortal as others are mortal, so keep the good thought and not the mutilation, and contribution to the construction, which will be the pillars of the rightly-guided Islamic Caliphate, and not the intransigent, transgressing, and unjust one. Contribute to reuniting the people of Islam and their groups, and not fragmenting them. Contribute to supporting the oppressed and removing from them the hardships and not increase them. Contribute to preserving the blood of the Muslims, not spilling it...

Imams Ahmed, Muslims, and al-Nisa'i reported that Abu Huraira said: "Whoso attacks my Ummah killing the righteous and the wicked of them, sparing not even those staunch in faith and fulfilling not his promise made with those who have been given a pledge of security - he has nothing to do with me and I have nothing to do with him."

The Caliph Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik said to the Follower Salamah bin Dinar al-Madani, the ascetic: O Abu Hazim, what do you say in what we are in? [Salamah] said: Would you pardon me [from this question], O Emir al-Mu'mineen? [The Caliph] said: But as an advice, give it to me.

[Salamah] said: Your fathers established rule over the people in this matter, taking it by force of the sword without consulting nor meeting with the people, and killing in a heinous fasion, then they departed. So if you were feeling what they said and what was said to them. So a man among the sitting ones said: How regretful is what you said!

Abu Hazim said: You lied. Allah the Exalted had the covenant upon the scholars to set it forth.

Yes, by Allah: They departed, so if you were feeling what they said and what was said to them...

And if thy Lord created for ants      Their wings they would have retreated

Every person has limits      And the end of him is when he crosses it

In the Hadith of Abu Huraira, may Allah be pleased him, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said: "An Imam is a shield for them. They fight behind him and they are protected by him."

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, was and remains to be the Imam of not only the Muslims, but the world, and his Imamate was not to separate the Muslims and fragment them, but to unify them; and it was not to fill the heads of the protected with bullets or to split them with swords to empty what is inside them, but to preserve those heads and what is in them, and develop them, and elevate them to the highest of stations and raise them above their meager options. Even the fighting factions that were unable to give allegiance to the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, or to enter under his political

territory, like the gathering of Abu Baseer at the time of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, and also those working against al-Aswad al-Ansi after his revolt against the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in Yemen, he did not call any of their jihad void or their Hijrah mandatory while leaving the lands of work and jihad. They were not declared as sinners or threatened or exiled or their group dissolved; instead they were left alone and working until they were able to emerge victorious and catch up to Dar al-Islam.

This is the case in the time of the Caliphate. The Caliphate was never a position that works to invalidate the Jihad of the Mujahideen or to fragment them or call upon them to turn against their seniors, leaders, and scholars in the lands that were outside of or left the fold of the Caliphate. Instead, the likes of those scholars would call to remain steadfast on their method and support them from the Caliphate. They were sponsored and not asked to leave the fields of Jihad and dissolve their groups, and those who did not do so were not called sinners. History has glorified and recorded the steadfastness of such groups from the people of Islam with the leaders and scholars in lands who left the fold of the Caliphate and its rule and pledge, and entered under the rule of the Ubayyids, Tatars, or Crusaders...

Therefore, we warn the Muslim public and particular ones among them from responding to the call of fragmenting the ranks, destabilizing the structure, and scattering the Mujahideen. We call upon them to remain unaffected by this psychological, moral, and physical terror that is being spread by the advocates of fragmentation and to remain steadfast on their promise, and around their leaders, gathered and prevalent on the truth, unharmed by those who oppose them and from those who disappointed them, until the order of Allah arrives.

I conclude with these warnings:

- The Imam of Haramayn said in his book *Ghiyaath al-Umam fi al-Tiyath al-Zulm*):

"If the era is void of an Imam, and lacks the presence of a wise, intelligent and able Sultan, the matters turn over to the hands of scholars, and it is mandatory upon the creation in spite of the differences in their status, to return to their scholars and take all their matters and concerns to them. If they do this, they have been rightly-guided. The scholars will then turn into caretakers of people. If they cannot agree upon one, every area should follow their scholars, and if there are many scholars in one area, the most knowledgeable among them should be followed".

This is the weakest point of those who declared the Caliphate today. Not even one scholar from the divine scholars supported them or trusted them or aligned with them, from the scholars attributed to them in creed, thought, and method... Let the people think of this, and let the reasonable person think of it well: Why did those people lose the trust of the scholars from whose letters and books they studied and learned, until they abandoned them and no one supported them?!! They are scholars who do not fear the blame of anyone other than Allah... there must be an answer.

- The Caliphate cannot be achieved by Da'wa and the name, nor by intentions or want, but by the actual application on the ground. When Omar named Abu Bakr the Caliph, he did not become the Caliph just because of this announcement; he did not become the actual Caliph

until the Sahaba pledged allegiance to him and he firmed up his position unchallenged... Every Emir who is not given loyalty by the Muslims and the best of the people of knowledge from the divine scholars is the emir of his group or his emirate, but not Emir al-Mu'mineen in general or the Caliph of the Muslims, and it is not right to call sinners those who do not pledge allegiance or travel to him. The fact that the outstanding scholars who are trustworthy have not flocked to give their allegiance shows that the one named and his group are not their point of trust with regards to religion and the world.

- It is necessary to state that if there was no other group on the fronts, then the knowledge of these scholars would have forced them to support the emir of this group because they are required to put the most ideal emir at the lead. So there is no doubt that these are better than the tyrants and the apostate rulers. However, as the front is filled with fighting factions and groups who rival and are on equal footing with this group in power and strength, and better in methodology and leadership, then the worse should not put about the better...

- Lastly, we do not accept for ourselves to be from those who do not engage in anything except words with Jama'at al-Dawla, and we do not like our enemies to feel pleased when we speak, or that they think that we are on their side, that is in truth not against Jama'at al-Dawla, but against the project of the Islamic State and the Islamic Caliphate. We do not like these people to be pleased with what we write, for it is not for them that we write, and we seek refuge in Allah that there must be any connection or understanding between us. What we are writing and saying is due to the trust of knowledge and Da'wa, and telling the statement of truth and supporting the truth and its people. Other than that we do not care who is pleased with our saying or who is angered, and who is happy or whose throat narrows on it. If we sought the approval of the people and put fame and glory in what we write and say, we would have ridden the wave of the Dawla and they would have raised us above their heads or even above the clouds, but we have decided to ride the wave of truth no matter how difficult it is. We shall not step back from it or leave it, even if they put us below the earth, or fill our heads with bullets and empty their contents.

However, the dilemma is that Jama'at al-Dawla and its chiefs and spokesmen attack us every day, which obliges us to respond to them; otherwise we would have left ourselves to statements and their confirmation, as the war is not declared on Jama'at al-Dawla, from my side at least. Instead, it is truth that I support and speak of when there is need, and it is not permissible to delay the statement when it is needed. They are the ones who compel us to this and we can no longer remain silent.

O Allah, we ask You for guidance, rightness, determination, and a good conclusion. May Allah pray on and have peace on our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his family and his companions, all of them.

Written by Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi

13 Ramadan 1435H

### **Allamah Sulayman Alwan regarding the claim of Baghdadi as the Khalifah**

“Al-Baghdadi is not the *Khalifah* of the Muslims for him to do whatever he pleases; rather he is a leader of a faction. Requesting a pledge of allegiance, killing those who refuse is the action of an aggressor, not the action of a person of good and righteousness.” He further said: “If his own leader does not agree with his actions, how can he expect allegiance from others?”

### **Did the other factions abuse women from IS group?**

Members of the IS group constantly claim that they are fighting other muslim factions because the others abused women Muhajiraat (migrants who came to Sham). They claim that this occurred during the first major infighting in January 2014. IS uses this claim to incite their own fighters against the other groups and to try to incite other mujahideen in joining their fight against the different factions.

This is a testimony from a fighter named **Abu Ahmad al Muhajir** of Jaish Muhammad, a group of mujahideen who are fighting Jihad in Sham. Abu Ahmad was in the area in which the alleged rape of women from IS took place.

*“The first that told this lie is Abu Steef al-'Iraqi when he came to us at the base belonging to Jaysh Muhammad. He was crying until we believed him. After this Abu Muhammad at-Tunisi came to me after I had taken out his wife and another brother to a safe place (when the fighting first started between the rebels and ISIS), he also told the lie until I strongly believed what he was saying.*

*He told me that the Sahawat in Tel Rif'at have raped the women of the Muhajirin (emigrants), and at that time I was a passionate ISIS-supporter, may Allah forgive me. So I began to verbally attack anyone that talked about remaining calm. When we left to confirm the issue, and searched for any sort of evidence of rape taking place, we couldn't find anything at all... Every time Abu Steef came to me to tell me that "this time we have confirmation", we couldn't find anything after investigating what he said except lies. If you saw his manner when he told us this, your chest would inflame and you would search for a car bomb to explode yourself in it.*

*I was a translator for him to the brothers from Uzbekistan, among them was a brother named Abdul-Rahman who was fluent in English. I transmitted what he (Abu Steef) said so that they would leave Sayfullah (al-Shishani) and join Dawlah (ISIS), may Allah forgive me for*

*my emotions overcame me and I believed their lies and I became like a bewitched person supporting them.*

*During the last time I saw the one called Abu Steef, he had with him someone i believe to be an Amir (leader) who was also Iraqi. He wanted to leave with his family to Turkey, so he came to me so I would take him out. And it was like that he wanted to escape, he didn't talk in front of anyone and he would plea with me that I kept the matter secret until he was able to get out.*

*Abu Steef talked with me regarding a sister from Tunisia saying confidently that she is with so-and-so from Liwa al-Fath and she was being raped for more than 10 days. This made the whole world blacken out in front of me due to the grief and anguish from what had (allegedly) taken place against her.*

*So I began to incite the brothers that we pledge to fight those that rape the women from the Muhajirin. At that time I fell for and were deceived by their lies which I trusted, for by Allah, these people have mastered the art of of lying.*

*He said that the sister's name was Umm Ya'qub at-Tunisiyyah, and go and you will find what I'm saying to be the truth. So I pledged to Allah with sincerity that I would charge against them until I am killed or I kill them.*

*We went to Tel Rif'at to search after the sister - and we from Jaysh Muhammad acted as a middle-man to exchange prisoners between ISIS and the other rebels. So we said we want so-and-so (i.e. the sister) and it has come to us that she has been raped by so-and-so from Liwa al-Fath.*

*So three youths from Liwa al-Fath that were Ansar (i.e. Syrians) said to us: "By Allah if this is true, we will wear explosive-belts and blow ourselves up by the one who did this and those that protected him."*

*So the accused man came after they brought him to us and said: "I'll kiss your shoes, take her." (a Syrian phrase meant to show extreme humbleness.)*

*We were surprised by all of this and why the man said these sort of words. But when we went to the sought after house we knew the reason for this and our amazement desisted; The sister (may Allah protect and forgive her) was wearing an explosive belt and a vest, and anytime anyone came near her, she would grab the detonators. So is someone like this going to get raped??*

*She said; "I want to see Shaykh Abu 'Ubaydah al-Masri (leader of Jaysh Muhammad)". So the Shaykh came to speak and guide her and to ask her to remove the explosive belt and not to be afraid since she is going to leave the place boldly and defiant.*

*She refused to remove the belt, so he told her that if any person makes a wrong move, you will pull your belt and we came (to Syria) to get killed by the hands of the disbelievers, not by your hands.*

*At the end of the story, we took the sister to A'zaaz to the house of the Shaykh (Abu*

Ubaydah) and she stayed with his family. After she had calmed and trusted the wife of the Shaykh, he informed us what she had said to her; The sister - may Allah forgive her, cried and said that "upon my neck is (responsibility for having spilled) blood, and I don't know what I should do. Once when they came to me with food I became frightened and threatened to detonate the belt. And with them was a pregnant woman who had prepared the food, and when she heard what I said she panicked and miscarried her fetus because of me.. And I don't know how I compensate for this sin (kaffarah)".

After this another lie emerged of a sister being raped in Hreitan after her abduction, so we gave her name and the name of her husband to a Libyan brother who was the Amir of Hreitan, so he met the husband so we could find out the truth of the matter, and the husband responded by saying "this is a great slander".

The truth was that his son was driving their car fast in the area where Liwa at-Tawhid controlled, which made the Tawhid members frightened due to this was the time when car bombs was beginning to take place, so they fired against the tires (to stop the vehicle) but when they realized that there was a woman inside of it they asked for forgiveness and let the brother and his mother leave the area.

Lies and then more lies to to raise the emotions from their members, something they succeeded in doing and their lies affected many. That which took place before is happening again and even increasing. At the beginning they said that it was women from Holland that were being raped and now it's German ones.

Tel Rif'at used to be called among the members of Dawlah "The Islamic Emirate of Tel R'ifat" due to the city embracing them and marrying off their women to many of them. Subhan Allah, they married off their daughters to you and trusted you with their honor, so is it logical that they would then transgress against your honor (i.e. wives) O people of Dawlah? And now, many of the girls from Tel Rif'at that married soldiers from Dawlah are in a suspense like situation - she isn't married nor is she divorced. In what religion is this allowed?

Is it allowed for you to treat the way you did against the peoples girls? Would anyone of you approve of this happening to your own sister??

The reason for this:

I was responsible for their injured and giving them sanctuary and protecting them and transporting their women. And I was also a source for recommendation (tazkiyah) for whoever wanted to join Dawlah and ask (for confirmation of this) Abu Sa'd al-Deeb, who was the temporary Wali of A'zaaz after Abu 'A'ishah. And ask Abu al-Walid al-Jazrawi who was the Wali in A'zaaz after him, regarding me - may Allah forgive me.

Ask about me, for everyone that was injured in A'zaaz and in Shimareen and the hospitals in Turkey will tell you who I am, O soldiers of Dawlah, and I haven't said anything except what I directly experienced and saw.

After this, I saw what I saw and heard what I heard from the injured members of Dawlah regarding what took place, and I saw the bombing of Tel Rif'at with mortars and



*grad-missiles while the soldiers from Dawlah were still inside the city. So when we spoke with Abu Abdul-Rahman at-Tunisi that he should withdraw the brothers and stop the bombing of Tel Rif'at, he said "we count them as martyrs and we will not stop bombing the apostates (murtadin)".*"

Abu Ahmad al Muhajir was not the only witness to these lies being spread rather many have reported it including **Sheikh Abdullah alMuhaysini** who was in the area working to stop the infighting.

This is what he said regarding this matter:

*"And news spread and lies was broadcasted in which that sisters were being raped. And Allah knows that I went there many times to find [the truth]. I found that there was no truth [in these claims]. There was no trace of it on the ground. I do not deny that something may have happened but the way in which they were told and spread are intended to push youth into fighting other muslims in what is between them.*

*When some of them wanted to refrain from fighting it was said to them "How can you leave our brothers and how can you leave our sisters who are raped?"*

*Praise to our lord, If we really wanted to protect our sisters and protect their honour, then let the law of Allah judge between us to stop this chaos and to let the Jihad continue. Then blood will not be spilt and the violation of honour will be stopped"*

**Commander Muslim Sheeshani**, a veteran Mujahid who fight under Khattab (ra), was also there at the time the rumours were spread. He said:

*We saw a lot of lies and dirt. At night, when me and Sayfullah returned to the base, as we passed by one ISIS base, he stopped. The gates were closed, and while we were waiting till they came out, he explained to me that this was a Turkish Jamaat and he knows them well. And when they came out they were very happy to see Sayfullah. When Sayfullah was with ISIS he called them to come back. They spoke in Turkish and when we went he explained that they refused to come out to fight against the Ansar[Syrian factions] and that the Emir of ISIS threatened them with violence. And they asked him for advice. He advised them not to raise arms against Muslims, and if they were forced, to quit them.*

*And then they started coming up with a lot of stories. One of them said, they had our hostages and they should be freed, and when it did not pass, they said they had kidnapped the sisters and that we were going to save them. That one had already beentaken and raped by five men... I was in Aleppo, near Kafar Hamra, in the midst of these events, and it certainly greatly alarmed us and me and Sayfullah immediately went to the Ansars, against whom ISIS were fighting, although it was a big risk.*

[After visiting bases of the factions that had allegedly kidnapped the women]

*Afterward, we immediately went back to the brothers from ISIS and explained the situation and said, if indeed there are such cases, they should give us specific info and that we would not leave it unattended...After that we came to Salahuddin [Shishani, the emir of JMA], he told us the same thing, that he went everywhere and learned about it everywhere, he asked ISIS to show one [woman] that they had taken from captivity as they talked, and he said that he had promised them if this was true then he would fight with them with the group that did it, but nothing came of it. But the brothers slowly began to fixate on these rumors. We tried to explain it to them, but these rumors were spread so much that our words were questioned. And many foreign fighters went out saying that they were going to release the sisters.*

The IS group continues to use these false pretexts to fight the mujahideen but the question many are asking is why do IS refuse to appear before an independent Shariah court in which they many raise their grievances against the different faction and others raise theirs against the IS group?

*“And when they are called to [the words of] Allah and His Messenger to judge between them, at once a party of them turns aside [in refusal]. But if the right is theirs, they come to him in prompt obedience .Is there disease in their hearts? Or have they doubted? Or do they fear that Allah will be unjust to them, or His Messenger? Rather, it is they who are the wrongdoers. The only statement of the [true] believers when they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge between them is that they say, "We hear and we obey." And those are the successful.”*

Translation of Surah Nur 48-51

## **Words from some of the Ulamaa of Jihad regarding IS**

### **Sheikh Abu Muaaz Noor-u-Deen Nafeeah**

Sheikh Abu Muaaz is from Morocco. He was from Shuyookh that travelled to Afghanistan in the 80s to fight against the Soviet invasion. He participated in many battles and accompanied Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, Sheikh Usama bin Laden, Sheikh Ayman Zawahiri and other senior mujahideen. He gained deep respect and admiration from the leaders of jihad and their shura due to his experience, extensive military and knowledge. After the fall of the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan, he moved with his wife to Pakistan and then to Mauritania. They were kidnaped and handed over to the Moroccan regime where they underwent torture and mistreatment until his mujahida wife was afflicted with illness in her nervous system.

Sheikh Abu Muaaz was pressured and tempted to backtrack on his views but he remains firm on the way of Jihad and sacrifice in the sake of Allah. We ask Allah to release him.

These are some of his words:

*This is a statement to our Muslim ummah in general and to the public of the farthest of Maghrib (Morocco) in specific, I clarify in it my stance, me being the servant in need of Allah, Abu Muaz Nooru Deen Nafeeah, my stance towards the group Islamic State; I say and success is with Allah, in advice to the ummah and clearing myself of responsibility, I will never be at war against the weak and I will never increase the numbers of those who attack the people of the Qiblah without justice whoever it may be, and I will never remain silent at those who trespass upon the sanctuary of our scholars and our leaders or vilify their faith and their trusts without any knowledge or guidance or an enlightening book. And I emphasize to every one of those to whom this letter of mine reaches amongst the Muslim public that from the fundamentals of this religion with which Allah has been pleased for us, is to follow the example of the Messenger, may prayers and peace of Allah be upon him, and our righteous predecessors, may Allah be pleased with them, and to gather upon that and follow the leaders of guidance and the inheritors of the Prophets for they are the best of this ummah, its pioneers and its upright ones. And from its fundamentals is giving up of desires and its people and staying away from divisions and what causes it and avoiding exalting and corruption on earth. And from its fundamentals is that we judge the people on the matters of this life from their apparent and entrust their secret affairs to Allah. And those whose righteousness is known at length and is widely praised is not questioned about his uprightness, let alone slander him. And one whose integrity is sound and his trust has been confirmed in knowledge is not turned for a statement of anyone.*

*And you will not fulfill the lofty needs except with generosity of souls and soundness of hearts and advice to the ummah. And Allah will never establish firmly those whose actions are seen by all those with intellect to be against what wisdom requires, and came up in the most defective and repugnant manner and destroyed most of the intended benefits as against what the shareeah intends and wisdom requires.*

*And if a lot of intellects found evidence of the truth of Prophethood within the essence of the shareeah itself and it sufficed them from asking for miracles – because the da’wah of the messengers are from the greatest testimonies of their truthfulness; – then indeed the path adopted by the group The Islamic State is the opposite of it, and it contains the greatest testimony that they are the furthest people away from rationality and the prophetic path. And every one of those who knew what they are upon and was not prevented by anything from staying with the reality and then supported them after that, then he is from amongst them and his judgment is their judgment as has been stated by our scholars.*

*And we say to the people of Islam all of them that what Allah has promised is true and what our Prophet sallallahu alaihi wa sallam has given glad tidings of will take place inevitably. And that the existence of falsehood in this world is from the perfection of the beauty of truth since the beauty of the opposite is revealed by its opposite.*

*And I did not determine to release this statement until after silence became a stance of justification for what is happening to the rights of our people in Shaam by crimes at the hands of the group Islamic State. And if my silence has been very long throughout this period, then due to the necessity of staying with the reality and clarifying and verifying from all of the related evidence over which my position has been built upon in this statement and after the required portion has been completed and the scene became clear, it became compulsory on me to offer this advice hoping for what is with Allah, the Most High and to help the weak and to fulfill some of the obligation imposed on us towards the elite of the ummah.*

### **Sheikh Abu Muhammad al Maqdisi**

Sheikh Maqdisi was born in Nablus, Palestine in 1959. He studied at the University of Mosul and under various ulama in the Arabian peninsula. In the 90s he travelled to Afghanistan where he became closely associated with the mujahideen and their leaders. He is also known for being the mentor and teacher of Sheikh Abu Mus`ab Zarqawi. According to the Combating Terrorism Center of the United States Military Academy Sheikh Maqdisi "is the most influential living Jihadi Theorist" and that "by all measures, Maqdisi is the key contemporary ideologue in the Jihadi intellectual universe".

*I announce, here, that Tandheem al-Dawlah fil-‘Iraq wal-Shaam, is a deviant organisation from the path of truth, [they are] aggressors against the Mujahideen. They lean towards ghuluw . They have become embroiled in the spilling of unlawful blood, the sequestration of their wealth, war booty, and [the] regions which they have liberated from the [Asaad] regime, [This group] has besmirched the name of Jihad and the elite Mujahideen. [They have] turned their rifles from the chests of the apostates and those at war [with the Muslims] to the chests of the Mujahideen and the Muslims, as well as other documented deviations.*

*I also call upon all Mujahideen to adopt this statement [as their official stance], and publically align with it, giving victory to the truth and its people. I also call upon the members of Tandheem al-Dawlah to join the ranks of Jabhat al-Nusrah, giving bay’ah to its leaders.*

*This is our fatwa to them and what I encourage them to do and chose for them. I also call upon all Islamic Jihadi websites, and others who are concerned with the affairs of the Muslims and their Jihad, to spread this statement and give victory to it and to refrain from publishing Tandheem al-Dawlah's media releases.*

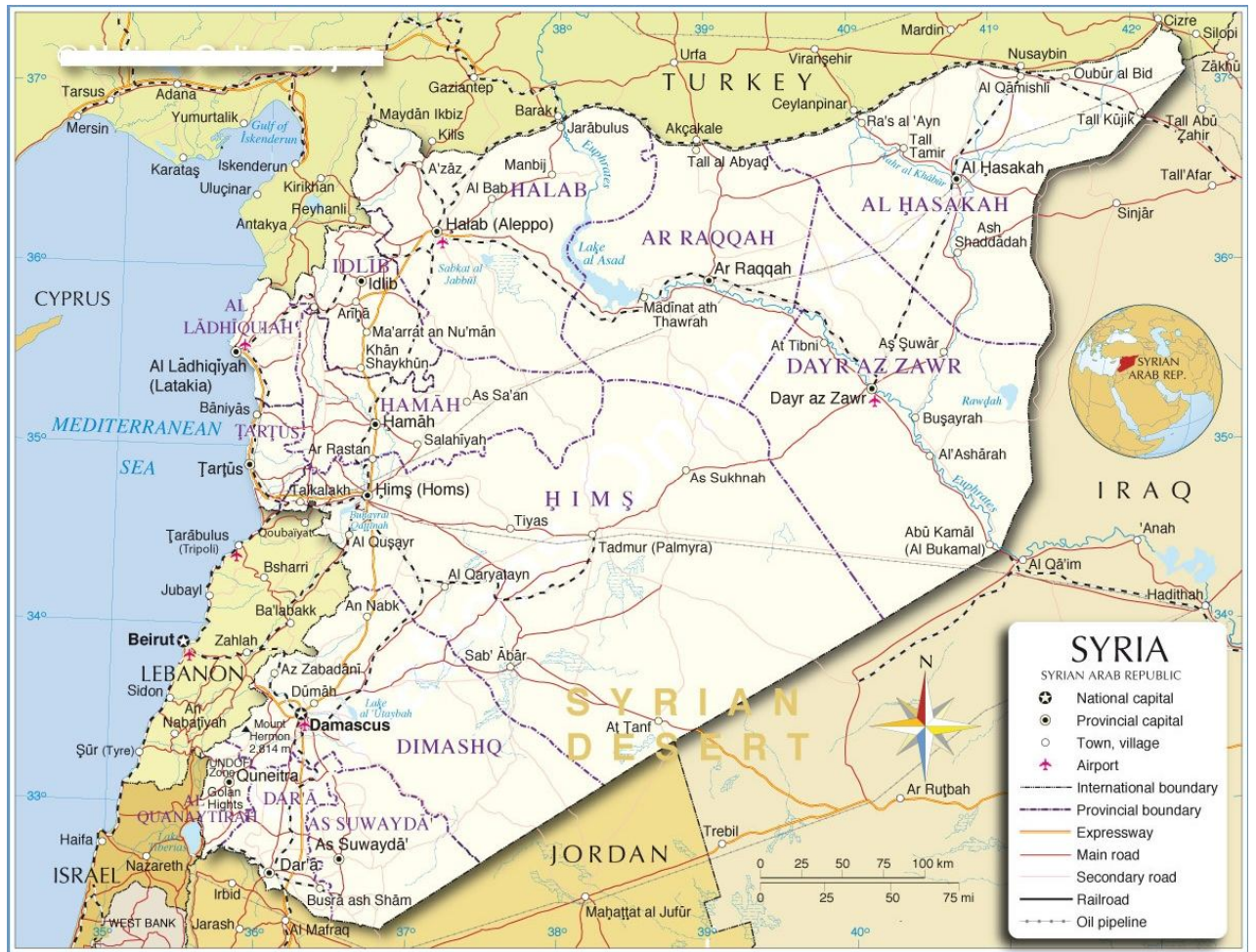
### **Sheikh Abu Qatada al Filisteeni**

Sheikh Abu Qatada is a Jordanian of Palestinian origin. In the 90s he moved to Peshawar, Pakistan to continue work of Da`wah and Jihad. He became widely popular in the Jihadi community and was considered one of the greatest Ulama of whom the mujahideen sought advice from. He was jailed in the UK and was deported back to Jordan. In 2014 he was finally released, May Allah protect him.

*This is a letter that I write with deep sorrow, and if it were not for the covenant that Allah took upon the creation, I would have not rushed to writing this letter. By Allah, I struggled with myself not to release this letter as much as I could. However, I could not do so, fearing that I would conceal the truth that I believe. I tried my utmost in private and in public to repel all harm from all those affiliated with Jihad and the people of Jihad, however some of them are drowning in falsehood, evil and misguidance. Their main priority is to ruin the Jihad and not to do good towards it. The onus these words should be held by the command of the Islamic State of Iraq and their branch in the land of Ash-Shaam (Syria).*

*It has become clear for me with certainty and without a shadow of doubt that this group with its military and Islamic leadership, and whose actions testify that they are 'the dogs of Hellfire'. And they are most deserving of the description of the Prophet (peace the peace and blessings be upon Him): "They kill the people of Islam and they leave the people of the idols [idol worshippers]. By Allah! If I live to see them, I will kill them like the people of 'Aad were killed."*

*I do not hesitate to pass this judgment, because of their evil actions. I tried as much as possible to forward advice to them until they stopped listening to the word of truth, advice and guidance. I say these words of mine to those who remain ascribed to them who have an ounce of Sunnah, Deen or Taqwa, fearing to spill the blood of the Muslims, and this is the prophetic saying regarding such people.*





**O OUR MUSLIM UMMAH...! BE WARNED AND BE CAUTIOUS OF TWO GROUPS OF EXTREMISM AND NEGLIGENCE. WE HAVE BEEN TESTED BY THOSE WHO TOOK THE UMMAH IN THE PATH OF THE POLYTHEISTIC DEMOCRACY AND THE PATH OF COMPROMISING THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE SHAREE'AH AND THE PRINCIPLES OF THE RELIGION. AND THEY HAVE NOT STOPPED PLAYING WITH THE EMOTIONS OF THE MUSLIMS DESPITE REPETITION OF FAILED AND BITTER EXPERIENCES. AND IF THEY HAD FEARED ALLAH IN REGARDS TO HIS SLAVES, THEY WOULD HAVE SURELY CALLED THEM TOWARDS THE SHAREE'AH OF THE MOST MERCIFUL AND TOWARDS THE UNIFICATION OF THE CREATOR, MIGHT AND GLORY BE TO HIM; SO THEY WOULD NOT ASCRIBE A SHARE IN HIS LEGISLATION JUST AS THEY WOULD NOT ASCRIBE TO HIM A PARTNERSHIP IN THEIR WORSHIP OF HIM.**

**INDEED, THIS TREND HAS BECOME A PICKAXE OF DESTRUCTION IN SOME COUNTRIES AND A TOOL TO SUPPRESS THE SINCERE SONS OF THIS UMMAH WHO ARE STRUGGLING TO RESTORE THE RULE OF THE SHARIA AS IS HAPPENING IN GHAZA AND TUNISIA AND COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THAT.**

**AND SIMILARLY, THE UMMAH HAS BEEN TESTED WITH PEOPLE OF EXTREMISM AND IGNORANCE AND GOING BEYOND THE LIMITS. SO THEY DECLARED THE WORSHIPPERS AS DISBELIEVERS, AND KILLED THE BELIEVERS IN THE ONENESS OF ALLAH AND UNDERMINED THE JIHAD AND DISTORTED THE MESSAGE OF THE MUJAHIDEEN AND TWISTED THEIR PATH. AND ALLAH IS THE ONE SOUGHT FOR HELP.**

**O ALLAH...! BEAR WITNESS TO OUR INNOCENCE FROM BOTH THESE METHODOLOGIES AND OUR DISASSOCIATION FROM BOTH THESE PATHS. AND GUIDE..., OH ALLAH..., BOTH THESE GROUPS...**

**SHEIKH ABU DUJANAH AL-PASHA**

