



# Community Awareness Briefing

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National Counterterrorism Center  
2013



# Purpose of this Presentation

Share information on the risks we all face

Discuss opportunities we have to build communities that are stronger, more connected, and more resilient

Listen to your perspectives



# Communities Around the World Face a Wide Range of Violent Threats

White Supremacists  
Violent Eco-Extremists  
Neo-Nazis  
Gangs  
Online Predators



This brief focuses on the threat of Al-Qa'ida, its affiliates, and adherents



# An Enduring Challenge





# Al-Qa'ida Affiliates & Allies

Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Mahgreb (AQIM)

Boko Haram

Al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI)

Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LT)

Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

Al-Shabaab

Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) Jemaah Islamiya (JI)



# Overseas al-Qa'ida-Inspired Activity Since the Death of UBL

## Nigerian hostage deaths: Ansaru backed



The BBC's Frank Gardner says the hostage-takers are linked to al-Qaeda

A Nigerian Islamist militant group's claims to have killed seven foreign hostages it seized last month are credible. Western governments say.

The hostages - from Italy, Britain, Greece and Lebanon - were captured in a raid on a construction site in the northern state of Bauchi.

A Nigerian Islamist militant group's claims to have killed seven foreign hostages it seized last month are credible, Western governments say. The hostages - from Italy, Britain, Greece and Lebanon - were captured in a raid on a construction site in the northern state of Bauchi. In an online statement posted on Saturday, the militant group Ansaru said it had killed the captives. Ansaru is suspected of being an offshoot of the Boko Haram network. On Sunday, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague said a British construction worker, named as Brendan Vaughan, was "likely to have been killed at the hands of his captors, along with six other foreign nationals".



- A Kabul, Afghanistan
- B In Amenas, Algeria
- C Sydney, Australia
- D Paris, France
- E Berlin, Germany
- F Jakarta, Indonesia
- G Baghdad, Iraq
- H Amman, Jordan
- I Timbuktu, Mali
- J Maiduguri, Nigeria
- K Karachi, Pakistan
- L Khasavyurt, Russia
- M Mogadishu, Somalia
- N Gibraltar, Spain
- O London, UK
- P Sanaa, Yemen
- Q The Hague, Netherlands
- R Bauchi, Nigeria



# Domestic al-Qa'ida-Inspired Activity Since the Death of UBL





Al-Qa'ida-inspired extremists  
do not fit a predictable profile







# What Factors May Be Involved?

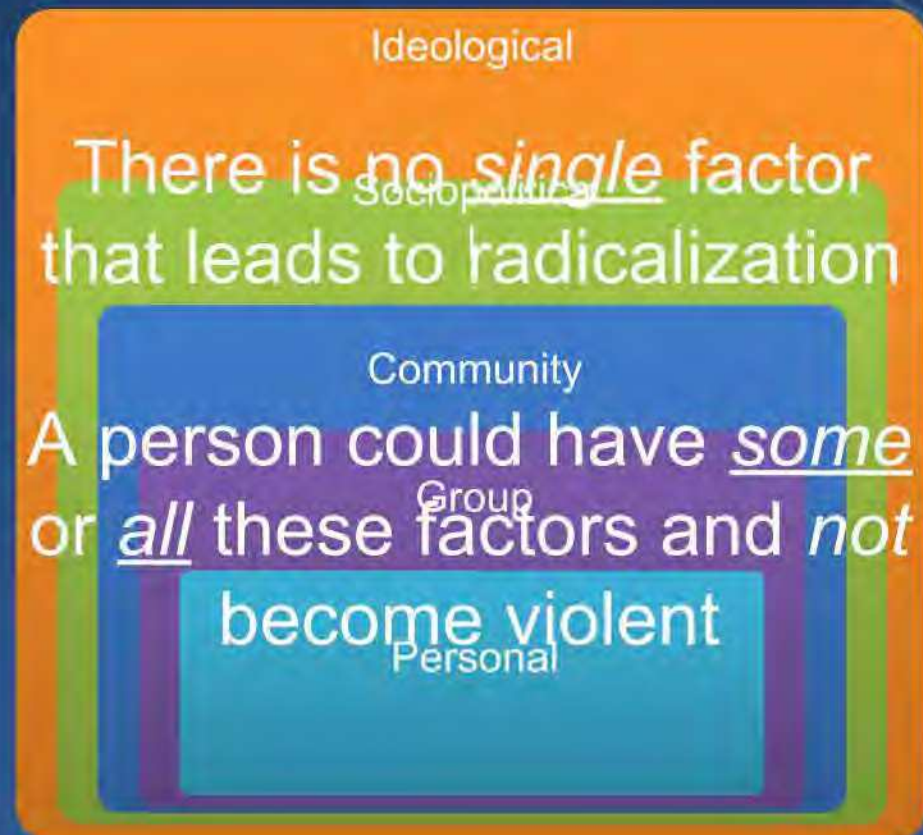
**Personal-level Factors** Include:  
psychological, demographic  
backgrounds, and personal  
history

**Group-level Factors** Include: social  
networks (including family and  
peer groups) and group dynamics

**Community-level Factors** Include:  
alienation and marginalization

**Sociopolitical-level Factors** Include:  
collective grievances, foreign  
policy, and external events


**Ideological-level Factors** Include:  
appeal of justifying narrative,  
charismatic ideologues



# The Al-Qa'ida-Inspired Narrative



Al-Qa'ida divides the world into two incompatible camps



*Those that  
strictly  
follow al-  
Qa'ida's  
ideology*



# The Al-Qa'ida-Inspired Narrative

- **"Muslims are only part of a global community"**
- **"The U.S. has brought ruin and disgrace to Islam"**
- **"Muslims are the target of U.S. aggression"**

**"U.S. is at war with Islam"**

**"Muslims must counter this threat through violence"**



# The Narrative In Their Own Words



Anwar al-Awlaki

Mohammed Siddique Khan



# Al-Qa'ida-Inspired Use of the Internet



Video Sharing



Blogging



Social Media

# Case Study: Extremist Use of the Internet



Neo-Nazis



Blogosphere



(Stop Islamification of Norway)





# Summary

“Now more than a decade after the September 11th attacks, [w]e face an evolving threat from [al-Qa’ida’s] affiliates and adherents, who rally around the al-Qa’ida brand. Indeed, the threats we face have become more diverse. As al-Qa’ida’s core leadership struggles to remain relevant, the group has turned to its affiliates and adherents to carry out attacks and to advance its ideology.”

— Matthew Olsen, Director, National Counterterrorism Center  
19 September 2012

# Government and Community Efforts



How do we build safe and resilient communities?



Possible Examples





# What Can We Do?

## What can Communities do?

- ✓ Lead effort to counter violent narratives
- ✓ Ask for support when needed
- ✓ Reach out to vulnerable individuals, especially youth

## What can Government do?

- ✓ Do not demonize or securitize communities
- ✓ Prevent and prosecute illegal behavior
- ✓ Support communities in countering violent narratives and terrorist recruitment





# What is the US Government Doing?

- August 2011: White House issued Nation's first domestic CVE strategy
- December 2011: White House issued supplemental Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) to direct the who, what, and how
- Focus placed on three areas:

## Enhancing Engagement

Enhancing engagement with and support to local communities that may be targeted by violent extremists

## Building Expertise

Building government and law enforcement expertise for preventing violent extremism

## Countering the Narrative

Countering violent extremist propaganda while promoting our ideals



# Possible Community Actions...

*...But the best ideas will come from communities...*

Defeat the “us versus them” narrative

Encourage civic engagement within your communities

Engage online

Build resilience within your circle of influence

Build relationships with your government







## Defeat the “us versus them” narrative

- Al-Qa’ida argues that a person cannot be a good Muslim *and* live in a secular democracy
- Some online voices make the same argument
- The everyday lives of Americans disprove this “us versus them” narrative







# Defeat the “us versus them” narrative


Created in response to recent Newsweek article “Muslim Rage & The Last Gasp of Islamic Hate” published on September 17


Humor-based Internet campaign showing that violence is not the norm


Soon after the publication, the hashtag had almost 100,000 tweets per day


 When there's no prayer room in a mall  
#muslimrage

 Finding out marshmallows aren't halal then questioning every rice krispy treat you ever ate. #muslimrage

 Television 'experts' saying Iran is an “Arab” country. #muslimrage

 The Dark Knight Rises came out in Ramadan. #muslimrage

 Orders pancakes at IHOP, came with a side of bacon. #muslimrage

 When a “female assist” is called before I even walk through the metal detector. #muslimrage



# Defeat the “us versus them” narrative

## Protecting each other’s civil rights undercuts the Al-Qa’ida narrative







# Encourage Civic Engagement within Your Communities



Sambusa cook-off in Minneapolis to help raise awareness and funds for Somalia



Build awareness of the situation in Somalia



"We are all Somalis tonight," Minneapolis Mayor R. T. Rybak



American Refugee Committee  
Joint initiative of the  
Internally Displaced  
Somali Advisory Council  
and the American  
Refugee Committee,  
both based in  
Minneapolis  
Escalates  
Families Flee.



# Encourage Civic Engagement within Your Communities



In honor of the President's National Day of Service, the International Cultural Center organized a community service project—Youth Against Hunger



Community members made sandwiches for the homeless and to raise awareness on the importance of helping the needy





# Engage Online

A social media campaign was started to raise money to rebuild the community mosque, which was burned down by arson

The \$250K goal exceeded nearly double that in just two days

The screenshot shows a GoFundMe page for "Rebuild the Joplin Mosque". The page title is "Rebuild the Joplin Mosque" with a subtitle: "This is the official campaign to rebuild the Joplin mosque, which was burned down in a suspicious fire August 8." Below the title is a progress bar showing the amount raised: "\$410,662" out of a goal of "\$250,000". A timer indicates "0 time left". The page also features a video player showing a scene of the destroyed mosque. The "Perks" section for a \$250 contribution is visible at the bottom right.





# Engage Online



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6zuKbBlmRo>

In reaction to violent protests surrounding “The Innocence of Muslims”, the Bayyinah Institute released a video calling for peaceful and productive responses to inflammatory actions

Published on YouTube on September 17, 2012, the video has received over 750,000 views





# Build Resilience Within Your Circle of Influence



Pakistani-American parents in Connecticut talking to their kids about integration, civil rights, their activities online and violent extremism.



# Build Relationships with your Government

Talk about foreign and domestic policies that interest you



Public service



Participate in community roundtables





# View From the White House





# Back-Up Slides





# Issues Identified with Training

Training needs to be academically and professionally rigorous.

Training needs to accurately describe the threat our country faces.

Media attention pointed out that a small amount of training has included inaccurate information on the threat and religious and cultural issues.

*“Training for Federal, State, tribal, and local government and law enforcement officials on community resilience, CVE, and cultural competency will improve, and that training will meet rigorous professional standards.”*

- White House Strategy



# Training was Reviewed and Revised

- Four major agencies have undertaken comprehensive reviews (DHS, DOJ, DOD, and FBI).
- Hundreds of thousands of documents have been reviewed.
- Training materials that did not meet minimum standards have been removed or improved, and courses that were not up to standards have been suspended.
- New standards ensuring professional rigor have been issued.
- New training courses that call upon the best minds in the field have been developed.



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# New Training Guidelines

## Training....

...must adhere to constitutional principles and be consistent with USG values

...should be expert and well-regarded and trainers must be well-qualified experts in the subject area

...must have accurate, focused, and audience-specific materials and objectives

...should reflect current understanding of threats and opportunities

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# Government has Taken this Issue Seriously



*“It was totally objectionable, against our values, and not academically sound.”*

– Gen. Martin Dempsey, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff



*“Those views do not reflect the views of the Justice Department. It’s regrettable...that can really undermine the really substantial outreach efforts we have made.”*

– Attorney General Eric Holder



*“I believe these were unusual circumstances, but we’re doing everything we can do a top-to-bottom review of our training to ensure we eliminate any of it...we have an obligation to try to identify future threats to the United States, and it should not be based on religion...we want to ensure we do it in way consistent with our values. “*

– FBI Director Robert Mueller

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# Government Has Taken This Issue Seriously



**Holder: Anti-Muslim Training Undermines Outreach Efforts**

more at [c-span.org](http://c-span.org)

November 8th 2011

**TPM**

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# Government and Community Efforts

How do we build safe and resilient communities?



Seattle, WA

Portland, ME

Boston, MA

New York, NY

Washington, DC

OH

Los Angeles, CA



## Department of Homeland Security

### Community Policing Initiative

Community Policing Initiative is a program that provides training and resources to law enforcement agencies in 15 languages to help them build trust and cooperation with the communities they serve. The program is designed to help law enforcement agencies better understand the needs and concerns of their communities and to help them build stronger relationships with community members. The program is a key part of the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to build safe and resilient communities.

- It has been released in 15 languages, including this version, in Somali.

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# Quazi Mohammad Rezwanul Ahsan Nafis

- Location: New York City, NY
- Arrest Date: 17 October 2012
- Travelled to the United States to conduct a terrorist attack
- Planned to attack the Federal Reserve Bank of New York



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# Yonathan Melaku

- Location: Alexandria, VA
- Arrest Date: 23 June 2011
- Former US Marine Reservist
- Sentenced to 25 years for firing shots at the National Museum of the Marine Corps and then at USMC and Coast Guard recruiting centers in Northern Virginia



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# Randy Wilson | Mohammad Abdul Rahman Abdukhdair



- Location: Mobile, AL
- Arrest Date: 11 December 2012
- Met each other online
- Attempted to travel overseas to join a terrorist group



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# Raees Alam Qazi | Sherheryar Alam Qazi

- Location: Oakland Park, FL
- Arrest Date: 30 November 2012
- Scouted high-traffic locations in NYC
- Found with bomb-making materials in their home



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# Sohiel Omar Kabir | Ralph Deleon | Miguel Alejandro Santana Vidriales | Arifeen David Gojali

- Location: Riverside, CA
- Arrest Date: 19 November 2012
- Attempted to travel to Afghanistan to kill US soldiers
- Kabir lived in Afghanistan and communicated with the group through the Internet



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# Adel Daoud

- Location: Chicago, IL
- Arrest Date: 15 September 2012
- Used the Internet to connect to like-minded individuals
- Drafted a list of 29 locations in Chicago to attack, including bars, malls, and tourist attractions
- Wanted to set off a car bomb

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# Amine El Khalifi

- Location: Alexandria, VA
- Arrest Date: 17 February 2012
- Conducted surveillance on a number of targets
- Wanted to be a suicide bomber at the US Capitol



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# Sami Osmakac

- Location: Tampa, FL
- Arrest Date: 9 January 2012
- Wanted to set off a series of car bombs near bars and clubs







# Craig Baxam

- Location: Laurel, MD
- Arrest Date: 6 January 2012
- Former Army soldier
- Flew to Kenya and tried to cross the border into Somalia to join al-Shabaab



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# Jose Pimentel

- Location: New York, NY
- Arrest Date: 20 November 2011
- Attempted to create a bomb in his apartment using instructions found online
- Maintained a website that hosted violent extremist materials, including bomb-making instructions



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# Rezwan Ferdous

- Location: Ashland, MA
- Arrest Date: 27 September 2011
- Wanted to use remote-controlled airplanes to attack the Pentagon and US Capitol



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# Naser Jason Abdo

- Location: Killeen, TX
- Arrest Date: 28 July 2011
- Scouted nearby restaurants serving US soldiers to set off a bomb
- Possessed a .40 caliber handgun, ammunition, and bomb-making instructions



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# Mohammed Hassan Khalid

- Location: Ellicott City, MD
- Arrest Date: 20 October 2011
- Honors student in high school
- Full scholarship to Johns Hopkins University
- Active on extremist online forums, raised money for terrorist organizations

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# Abu Khalid Latif | Walli Mujahidh

- Location: Seattle, WA
- Arrest Date: 23 June 2011
- Planned to attack a military enlistment processing center in Seattle with small arms and grenades



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# Jamshid Muhtorov | Bakhtiyor Jumaev

- Location: Denver, CO
- Arrest Date:
  - January 23, 2012 (Muhtorov)
  - March 15, 2012 (Jumaev)
- Planned to travel overseas to join the Islamic Jihad Union, a designated terrorist organization





# Agron Hasbajrami

- Location: New York, NY
- Arrest Date: 9 September 2012
- Planned to travel to Pakistan to join a terrorist group
- Exchanged emails with contacts in Pakistan to set up trip
- Sent funds to support terrorism



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# Ulugbek Kodirov

- Location: Pelham, AL
- Arrest Date: 26 July 2011
- Threatened to kill the US President using illegal weapons
- Visited extremist websites, attempted to make contact to foreign terrorist organizations



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## Waad Ramadan Alwan |Mohanad Shareef Hammadi

- Location: Bowling Green, KY
- Former insurgent in Iraq (fingerprints found on IED that targeted US soldiers)
- Attempted to ship money and weapons to al-Qa'ida in Iraq



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# Matthew Llaneza

- Location: Oakland, CA
- Attempted to set off what he believed to be a car-bomb outside a bank
- Wanted to join the Taliban



# Case Studies: Emerson Begolly

- Active administrator for an extremist forum
- Advocated the use of firearms, explosives, and propane tanks against targets like police stations, post offices, Jewish schools, daycare centers, military facilities, train lines, bridges, cell phone towers, and water plants



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# Case Studies: Omar Hammami



- Sophomore high school president in Alabama
- Indicted for material support to al-Shabaab
- Featured in a number of al-Shabaab online videos encouraging others to join him



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# Case Studies: Zachary Chesser

- Attended George Mason University before dropping out
- Posted threatening videos on YouTube, created his own website advocating for al-Shabaab, maintained extremist Twitter feed
- Arrested for material support to al-Shabaab



What interested me in the internet?

For my generation this is tantamount to asking the question, "What interested you in the phone?" It is simply the most dynamic and convenient form of media there is. If I had continued with Revolution Muslim, it would now be pulling in a larger audience than many television stations (here I am referring to the ones beyond basic cable). I was on the internet before I became Muslim, so there was no real decision to be made.

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# Case Studies: Major Nidal Hasan

- Joined U.S. Army in 1996
- Communicated with Anwar al-Awlaki online
- On November 5, 2009, allegedly attacked the Fort Hood military base, killing 13 DoD employees and wounding 32 others



Assalum Alaikum Wa Rhahmutallahı Wa Barakatu,

There are many soldiers in the us armed forces that have converted to Islam while in the service. There are also many Muslims who join the armed forces for a myriad of different reasons.

Some appear to have internal conflicts and have even killed or tried to kill other us soldiers in the name of Islam i.e. Hasan Akbar, etc. Others feel that there is no conflict.

Previous Fatwas seem vague and not very definitive.

Can you make some general comments about Muslims in the u.s. military.

Would you consider someone like Hasan Akbar or other soldiers that have committed such acts with the goal of helping Muslims/Islam (Lets just assume this for now) fighting Jihad and if they did die would you consider them shaheeds.

I realize that these are difficult questions but you seem to be one of the only ones that has lived in the u.s. has a good understanding of the the Qur'an and Sunna and is not afraid of being direct.

Jazaka'Allah Khair.





# Case Studies: Ramy Zamzam



- Was studying dentistry at Howard University in Washington, DC
- Left his home in Virginia with four friends to allegedly join the Taliban

## Interrogation Report

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These five foreigners were held by the Police on December 9, 2009. They were all college students. They had deep interest in the religion and they were of the opinion that a Jihad must be waged against the infidels for the atrocities committed by them against Muslims around the world. Among them Ahmed Abdullah Minni used to regularly visit the internet page of YouTube. He used to the praise the videos which showed attacks on the US Army and Installations. This became a regular feature and Minni, a registered user of YouTube, regularly praised such attacks. Soon after, Minni was contacted by a person named "Saifullah". The two



# Case Studies: al-Shabaab Recruitment

Between September 2007 and October 2009, approximately 20 young men left the Minneapolis area to fight for Al Shabaab, an Al-Qa'ida affiliated group in Somalia.



Burhan Hassar Shirwa Ahmed  
Age 17                      Age 26  
Killed                      Suicide Bomber



# Al-Qa'ida-Inspired Use of Video Sharing

A screenshot of a YouTube search results page. The search term is "Anwar al-Awlaki". The page displays several video results, each with a thumbnail, title, uploader, and view count. The videos are related to Anwar al-Awlaki's messages and speeches. The browser's address bar shows the YouTube URL. The page layout includes a left sidebar with navigation options like "Home", "History", and "Browse @Anwar".

Search results for "Anwar al-Awlaki":

- Shahid Anwar Al Awlaki Last Message** by AnwarAlAwlaki • 9 months ago • 8,747 views
- Imam Anwar al Awlaki - Last Message To The West [Rare Video]** by shiwofram • 5 months ago • 1,796 views
- Imam Anwar Al Awlaki - Last Message To The West** by Al Khilafah • 1 month ago • 294 views  
A storm is brewing over the enemies of Islam. The US, Israel and their allies and supporters will not go unpunished for their...
- MESSAGE FROM DR. NASSAR AL-AWLAKI TO MUSLIMS** by Muslim Knight • 1 year ago • 2,322 views  
On 2nd December 2011, Muslims united outside the US embassy in London Grosvenor Square to condemn the recent spate of drone...
- Shahid Imam Anwar Al Awlaki last message Part 2** by Asim Riaz • 5 months ago • 469 views
- The Silent Majority Anwar al-awlaki** by SoldierToAllah • 1 year ago • 4,524 views  
A message from Anwar Al Awlaki. Why is everybody in society (will) attack Islam?

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# Al-Qa'ida-Inspired Use of Blogs

**Anwar al Awlaki On-Line**  
 محمد الشيخ انور العولقي | Anwar al-Awlaki | 1957 - 2011

Home About Sheikh Anwar Contact the Sheikhh Transcripts of Lectures

BOOK REVIEWS RAW AWLAKI'S BLOG IN THE NEWS LECTURES MEDIA & ARTICLES NEW LECTURES PREVIOUS LECTURES

Search this website...

**Recent Comments (1)**

**Response to Abdullah bin Abdul-Rahman al-Jafar**  
 The below is written by Ibn Abu Adnan, in response to a translated transcription of...

**Could Yemen be the Next Surge of the Season?**  
 The Jihad movement around the world has witnessed a surprising growth during the...

**Beyond Guantanamo: Is This The End? | Anwar al-Awlaki**  
 Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu. In the Adnan News, I decided to post...

**The Army of Yemen Confronts the Mujahideen**  
 In the first confrontation between the government of Yemen and the mujahideen, we...

**When Scholars Visit rulers**  
 شرح لوردان والترمذي وصحة والتمسك والتعظيم

**What is now the Pakistani army treats the Muslims**  
 This is how the Pakistani army treats the Muslims. This is how the Pakistani army treats the Muslims. Read More...

**Elid Mubarak! (Translated) Allah eimme wa jannah! Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu. This is Adnan News. We praise Allah...**

**The Boko Haram of Nigeria**  
 This item is from one of our readers (edited) Ya Sheikh, I am delighted over you...

**Burawala Attack: Ibn Qulthub**  
 This item is from one of our readers (edited) Wassalamu Salamu / in Burawala, a small...

**US soldiers start crying after firefight with TALIBAN**  
 Read More...

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**Al-Naba' al-Rahman**  
 Al-Naba' al-Rahman al-Akbar...  
 Al-Naba' al-Rahman al-Akbar...  
 Al-Naba' al-Rahman al-Akbar...

**Can the Ummah trust its Scholar...**

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# Al-Qa'ida-Inspired Use of Social Media



A screenshot of a Facebook page titled "WE ARE ALL OSAMA BIN LADEN". The page features a profile picture of Osama bin Laden. The page name is "WE ARE ALL OSAMA BIN LADEN" with a "Like" button. The page is published in Arabic. The page management information indicates it has over 1,000 fans.

A screenshot of a Twitter profile for "HSM Press Office" (@HSMPress). The profile bio states: "Harakat Al-Shabaab Al Mujahideen is an Islamic m governs South & Cen. Somalia & part of the global str revival of Islamic Khilaafa Somalia." The profile has 1,247 followers and 21,322 tweets. A tweet from HSM Press Office dated 10:20 GMT, Wednesday, 10 January, 2013, reads: "Derris Alesic, an Agent Betray (10/01/2013). In the Name of Allah, the Most (not Equal)." The tweet has 0 replies and 0 retweets.

A screenshot of a Twitter profile for "HSM PRESS" (@HSMPRESS1). The profile bio states: "Press Office, Harakat Al-Shabaab Al Mujahideen". The profile has 11 followers and 920 tweets. A tweet from HSM PRESS dated 10:20 GMT, Wednesday, 10 January, 2013, reads: "Six separate attacks target apostates & Ruffar invaders in Lower Shabelle region, killing atleast 13 and seizing many weapons as Ghaneema". The tweet has 0 replies and 0 retweets. Another tweet from HSM PRESS dated 10:20 GMT, Wednesday, 10 January, 2013, reads: "Mujahideen units in Mogadishu carry out a targeted explosion in the area of the..." The tweet has 0 replies and 0 retweets.

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# Need Your Help – Government & Law Enforcement

- Debunk the false narrative that U.S. is at war with any religion
- Create relationships with communities and value them as partners
- Explain U.S. policy





# Priority 1: Enhancing Engagement



US Attorneys



Bureau of Near  
East Affairs  
Outreach



Civil Rights Civil  
Liberties  
Roundtables



Community  
Engagement



Building  
Communities of  
Trust Program



Anti-Bullying  
Education

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# Priority 2: Building Expertise

## Improve our understanding of the problem

- Increase intelligence analysis production
- Support academic research
- Coordinate with foreign governments
- Partner with non-governmental organizations

## Increase information -sharing with state and local partners

- DHS case studies on suspected terrorists shared with local partners
- DHS fusion center training
- FBI disseminates information on radicalization process with states and locals

## Develop rigorous training

- Publish standards for training
- CRCL training
- FEMA grants
- Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)

# Priority 3: Countering the Narrative



Share information on threat of domestic recruitment

Listen to perspectives and insights of the community

Foster discussion on ways communities and the US government can work together