The Structure and Tactics of al-Qaeda: Continuity and Change

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Abstract

Following the events of September 11, 2001, the name of the al-Qaeda organization, as the terrorist group leading to attacks, quickly spread all around the world, and this group and its leaders and activists were prosecuted. The organization, rooted in Salafi and fundamentalist extremist thoughts, has always been supported by the West and the United States during the Cold War because of his struggle against the Red Army in Afghanistan. But the end of the Cold War and the spread of al-Qaeda's thoughts to other Islamic countries, as well as the meaning crisis of the end of the Cold War, gradually led to the introduction of this group and similar organizations as enemies and fighting against radicalization of Western policy in the region. However, the war in Afghanistan caused the country to become insecure for al-Qaeda, and they scattered more than before in other countries of the region. The Iraq war also conducted part of these forces to Iraq to fight the Americans. Al-Qaeda has been struggling to rebuild itself all around the world, including western countries, since September 11, taking its flexible network structure into account and has put new tactics on its agenda. The present article examines the ideology and structure of this organization and the changes and continuity of its behavioral pattern and its operation.

Keywords

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Introduction

After the 70s, a new wave of movements in the Middle East was formed, originating from three groups of ideological groups (left and right), nationalist groups (irredentism, separatism, autonomy) and religious political groups. Following the military occupation of Afghanistan by the former Soviet Union and the beginning of the war on the liberation of Afghanistan, Arab countries, calling this war holy, launched massive propaganda against the Soviet government and the Afghan government and, in connection with this, provided a lot of military and financial assistance to the military guerrillas engaged in the war. In this regard, many fanatic and religious forces from different Arab countries participated in this war. These guerrilla forces included radical fundamentalists from Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Yemen and Afghanistan, which after the end of the Afghan war, set up a network called al-Qaeda and, with the aim of developing its activities, created branches throughout the world.

The al-Qaeda group formed a chain of terrorist networks in the year 1988 when it was established, i.e., one year before the Soviet Army retreated from Afghanistan. "Al-Qaeda" set up a group through the use of Islamic activists from different countries that Osama bin Laden gradually took over its lead. First of all, the organization was established under the name of "Kabul School" in 1984 and created a global network that deployed forces from all over the world in Afghanistan. After defeating the Soviet Army and taking it away from Afghanistan, the Islamists set their targets on the other great powers of the world-the United States. Interestingly, the Mujahideen groups in Afghanistan were equipped

and strengthened by the United States and the West to confront the Soviet Union, but after the collapse of the bipolar system and communism, Western-supported jihadist forces in the region were scattered across the region and returned to their original countries and injected the defiant ideology to these countries. On the other hand, the war-torn country of Afghanistan became a land of flaunting for terrorists and hosted the training and an operational area for the islamic groups. By October 2001, when the United States invaded Afghanistan, Afghanistan was the education base of tens of thousands of troops (Gunaratna 2004: 91-100)

Comparing the source of the emergence of terrorist groups, we find out that "al-Qaeda" is different in terms of composition, diversity and ability with other groups. Regardless of the Japanese group "Um Shin Raiki", "al-Qaeda" is the first multinational terrorist group formed in the 21st century. Al-Qaeda enlisted muslims from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, as well as muslim immigrants and Jews resident in Europe, North America and Australia. Unlike other groups that comprise a single nationality or a limited number of other nationalities, "al-Qaeda" is, as a matter of fact, a multinational group word. Despite the many efforts made to identify, disrupt, weaken and destroy this group, al-Qaeda due to its multinational characteristic and global presence is still alive. At certain intervals, "al-Qaeda" has invaded the symbolic, strategic and specific purposes in all parts of the world to indicate its presence to both the supporters and the enemies. The ability of this group is mainly related to the network structure, the different composition and its global ideology. "Al-Qaeda" has changed its structural, strategic, and geographic position in order to deal with threats. The

"al-Qaeda group" is recruiting from all over the world from Asia to Canada, and as a result, it uses various capabilities to access resources and various operational methods. (Paul 2003)

The Ideology and Strategy of al-Qaeda

The roots of al-Qaeda network members' ideology are based on the Salafi thought, which is rooted in Wahhabism. Wahhabism is one of the most visible manifestations of fundamentalism. To study its background, the veins of this religion shall be looked through in the thoughts of the Khwarij, Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Ibn Taymiyyah and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Despite its Islamic slogans and reformative pretensions, Wahhabism has progressed towards traditionalism and traditional conservatism, due to the lack of thought and critical and advanced ijtihadi mentality, and also because of its retrogressive nature and the attitude towards the past. Al-Qaeda is willing to establish an islamic order in the world that is fulfilled by fundamentalists, a world under the leadership of a caliph. These thoughts have been recovered again by Salafi groups in the present era, especially after the deployment of US forces in Saudi Arabia during the 1991 war and the observation of non-Islamic acts by American forces in Saudi Arabia, a number of Salafi spiritual masters of Wahhabis by proposing the idea that, the land of Saudi Arabia is sacred and contaminated by the atheists and issued a declaration against the presence of American troops in the country. And then, some famous orators called people to revolt in the mosques, but the Saudi government strongly encountered these elders, including Safar al-Hawali who signed the announcement and was one of the teachers of bin Laden, and gradually took hold

of the situation. However, the Salafi intellectual movement continued to express dissent and insisted on its principles and gradually became a movement that rooted throughout the islamic world and gathered followers. However, what more caused the thought and development of Salafism was the projection of the viewpoint of the lack of political development of Muslim nations due to the West's presence in islamic countries, the assassination of Anwar Sadat, the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, and, ultimately, the historic and unfailing support of the country of England from this sect. (Irwin 2001: 8)

Before the September 11 attacks, Osama bin Laden announced the goals, causes of the dissent and tactics of the international network of al-Qaeda comprehensively, in various announcements and interviews. A review of these declarations shows that the ideology of al-Qaeda is more political than religious. Bin Laden named the features of his warfare as the "American Crusade against the islamic Nations" and emphasized that he believed the conflict is between the islamic world and the United States and its allies. To his opinion, the islamic world needs to be self-reliant and united, and Muslims must defend themselves. Concerning domestic policies, he also recommends Muslims seek a leader who unites them on the one hand and seeks to establish a caliphate on the other hand.

There are two declarations of jihad against the United States that form the central nucleus of Osama bin Laden's philosophy. The first declaration was issued on August 26, 1996, under the title "The Jihadi Declaration against America, which has occupied the Lands of two Holy Places". In this declaration, Bin Laden, citing the problems of the Islamic world, believes that the Saudi regime

has lost its legitimacy for two reasons; firstly, it has abandoned the islamic law, and secondly, it has allowed foreign forces, i.e, the American Crusaders, to occupy the country. Bin Laden believes that in order to fight foreign enemies, internal conflicts should be discarded. In his view, the United States has occupied two holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and it is the duty of all Muslims in the world to "fight against atheists and expel them from the Arabian Peninsula." Bin Laden, along with Ibn Taymiyyah, considers jihad as the main duty of Muslims after believing in God. He regards jihad aggressive and that it establishes the sovereignty of God on earth, and considers it a sacred war that is legitimate. "If there is more than one task to do, then the most important one shall be made a priority. After the true faith, there is not a more important task than to expel an American enemy from the holy land. No other priority, other than faith should be considered before it, and there is no prerequisite for this duty. If it is impossible to expel the enemy other than muslim group movements, then it is the duty of the muslims to put away little differences between themselves. Ibn Taymiyyah explains this as well and stresses that in confrontation with the main threatm minor differences should be left out. (Declaration of Jihad 1996)

The second fatwa was issued on February 23, 1998, under the title of "The Islamic World Front for Jihad against the Jews and Christians". The declaration emphasizes the war against Americans and their allies who have made war against their Lord, His Messenger, and Muslims. According to this fatwa, the crimes and faults of the United States can be distinguished in three categories that according to Bin Laden, are three obvious facts that no one

can deny: First, there are many years in which the United States has occupied the most sacred territories of Islam, the Arabian Peninsula, and it is still occupied. During this time, the wealth of this land is ravaged, its rulers controlled and its people are humiliated; Second, the United States has imposed sanctions against the Iraqi people, which has led to more than one million people dead; Third, the main goal of the United States is to support the Jewish state and distort the public opinion of the occupation of Jerusalem and the massacre of muslims there. Therefore, the only proper response muslims can give to these crimes is a defensive jihad, which is obligatory to every mature muslim. In fact, he regards his goals as the awakening of the Muslim nation and the liberation of the Islamic lands, fighting for the sake of God and the implementation of the law of God, because he believes that God is the highest word (Blanchard 2007: 2-5). Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of the Islamic Jihad of Egypt, and the second person in rank in al-Qaeda organization, who is one of the signatories of the 1998 Declaration, considers the aim of the fundamentalist movement toppling the government and the establishment of the sovereignty of God. In his opinion, the conflict with the American-Jewish Alliance is unavoidable and considers it a fate and duty. Al-Qaeda organization described the United States as a war zone, and declares the reason as supporting the Jews to kill the Palestinian people. "The United States became the land of war when invaded Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan. It has put muslims under pressure in every place and over the decades and clearly advocates their enemies against them." (Mahdi Bakhshi 2006)

In sum, al-Qaeda's fundamental beliefs have never been com-

piled and published, but by reviewing the statements and positions of its leaders; the main reasons for al-Qaeda's actions, which are the main motive for their performance can be summarized in the following:

1. Suppressive regimes that with the accompaniment of the United States harass muslims, such as: Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Egypt.

2. Confrontation of the West and the Crusades against the establishment of the Islamic State after 1924 and the Ottoman collapse.

3. The unity of the Christians and the Jews for the destruction of Islam and to instigate civilization war.

4. The repressive, unfair, ruthless, and tricky behavior of the United States has caused reactions like September 11th.

5. The US allies will pay exorbitant financial and human costs to attack islamic lands.

6. Irregular and asymmetric guerrilla warfare can be an obstacle to the complex tools of the Western Army, as we have observed this in Afghanistan and Iraq.

7. The economy is on the one hand the center of gravity and on the other hand, the vulnerability of the United States. The attacks on New York and Washington were examples of the country's vulnerability.

8. The duty of all muslims is to resort to a defensive jihad.

These ideas have been widely spread through books, tapes, internet and video among muslims, and are attracting and recruiting members to al-Qaeda. As a matter of fact, altogether these issues shape the ideology of the al-Qaeda network and caused their resort

to terrorism. Based on this ideology, al-Qaeda seeks to establish an islamic government and fight against the West and the countries that are the West's partners in the region. Therefore, they are seeking a general jihad against the West and fighting the manifestations of the West. They somehow pursuit and preach the non-fundamentalist ideology (Rabasa 2006: 23-30)

Al-Qaeda's Goals

Based on the information obtained from al-Qaeda and its leaders, the organization seeks to fulfill a seven-stage scenario in which al-Qaeda hopes to create an islamic government in these seven stages that the west is too weak to deal with:

Stage One: This stage is customarily known as the awakening and has already been completed. The period lasted between 2000 and 2003 exactly from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 to the fall of Baghdad in 2003. The purpose of the September 11 attacks was to provoke America to declare war on the muslim world, which has wakened the muslims. Al-Qaeda's strategists and designers consider this first stage to be a very successful one: because the American's and their allies' already started-up battlefield have become easier targets. Al-Qaeda is now happy and pleased that its message is heard everywhere.

The Second Stage: This stage is called the opening of the eyes which lasted until 2006. At this stage, al-Qaeda hopes to keep the islamic community cognizant of the existence of the conspiracy of the west. At this stage, al-Qaeda tends to turn its organization into a movement. In addition, Al-Qaeda network is investing in recruitment among young people. Iraq is the center of all these activities

in which there is a direct confrontation with the enemy. Surely, there are also bases in other Arab countries.

The Third Stage: this stage is called the uprising and resistance phase, and it lasts from 2007 to 2010, in which there is a focus on Syria. The battle teams are now ready, and some are settled in Iraq. It is predicted that some attacks on Turkey and even Israel would take place. Designers and planners of al-Qaeda hope that the attacks on Israel would cause the organization to be recognized. The neighboring countries of Iraq, such as Jordan, are in danger.

The Fourth Stage: this is between 2010 and 2013, at which stage al-Qaeda intends to crush Arab hateful governments. Al-Qaeda's predictions are that the decline in the power of these regimes will lead to the consolidation of al-Qaeda. At the same time, attacks on oil supplies are being made and through cyber-terrorism the American economy is set on target.

The Fifth Stage: At this stage, an islamic government is announced. The program of al-Qaeda is that at this time between 2013 and 2016, the influence of the west in the islamic world has so diminished and Israel is so weakened that the resistance movement no longer has any terror. Al-Qaeda hopes that at this time islamic rule would create a new world order.

The Sixth Stage: The full encounter begins from 2016 onwards. When the islamic government is announced, the islamic army begins a battle between the believers(faithful) and the unbelievers(pagans). This is the point that Osama bin Laden has predicted over and over again.

The Seventh Stage: This final stage is called the decisive victory which in Al-Qaeda's point of view as the rest of the world have

been defeated by one and a half billion muslims, the islamic rule undoubtedly wins. This stage must be completed by 2020, but the war should not last more than two years. (Ismaili 1386: 111-114)

This seven-stage plan is a roadmap and directions for all al-Qaeda fighters from a different range of strata. This hypothesized plan presented for the years 2000 to 2020 mostly looks like a set of ideas that is presented as an outlook and is not most likely similar to a predetermined planning. That al-Qaeda can create an islamic government throughout the islamic world is an ambiguous idea; Because this 20-year program is mostly based on specific thinking and far from reality. This is especially true for steps four to seven, but that does not mean we can easily ignore it. A few steps out of the steps presented in this program are noteworthy. Although this scenario does not belong to al-Qaeda, it can express some of its wishes and ideas. The efforts of the international community in fighting against terrorism and creating a great deal of restrictions on the sources and followers of the terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda all over the world, have made it difficult to achieve these goals and, in the current stage has become mostly an unreachable cause. However, in any case, these steps represent the long-term view of al-Qaeda leaders, and if they find adequate access to it, they are at least trying to provide the means to achieve their macro goals. Anyway, these steps represent the long-term view of al-Qaeda leaders, and if they find adequate opportunity they would either go towards it, or they would at least try to provide the means to achieve their major goals.

Altogether, it should be noted that al-Qaeda does not rely on one exact strategy (for example, striking at a specified time to af-

fect the course of events). However, they have a pragmatic and opportunistic vision and are trying to hit at any time to keep the atmosphere of horror. They try to show that none of the military interventions of the West from Afghanistan to Iraq is effective. Altogether, operations attributed to al-Qaeda can be divided into two parts: The first groups of operations have been carried out by groups of different nationalities abroad (in New York, Washington, Madrid, and also in cases of failed operations such as Los Angeles, Paris and Strasbourg). The second groups, local operations, are carried out by "national" groups operating in their territory but attacks "western" targets (Casablanca, Istanbul, Bali).

Evidence indicates that the realm of al-Qaeda's activity due to the changes in its recruitment is largely diversified, so talking about it as a coherent organization is much more difficult. However, the name of al-Qaeda can still give extensive dimensions to terrorist activities. What is called al-Qaeda is, first and foremost, established by the assembly of the former warriors of the Afghanistan war. The central institute is made up of two groups of people: on the one hand, the official members and people close to Osama bin Laden, some of whom have been his companion since 1980, and, on the other hand, the wave of "internationalist" youth since 1990, and from 1997 to 2001, in particular, that joined this movement. Most of these young people, either went to the west to continue their education in a very young age, or were originally born in the West, and many also had western nationalities. Most of the people who have committed international terrorist acts have emerged from this new generation. Until now, they have been the axis of efficiency and power of organization. The solidarity of the

old warriors and the young internationalists who reside in the same camps and have been partners has given rise to trust and flexibility in the al-Qaeda network (Blanchard 2007: 16)

Al-Qaeda's Structure

It is difficult to talk about al-Qaeda's structure for several reasons, among which some believe that al-Qaeda is a systematic terrorist organization with a specified structure and command and hierarchy, and on the other hand, some believe that the organization does not have an integrated structure. "Al Qaeda" has always been under pressure because of losing its capability after the September 11, 2001. More than 3200 of the leaders, members and key supporters of "al-Qaeda" were arrested and killed in 102 countries. However, "al-Qaeda" improved powerful Islamic groups to compensate for the shortage of the arrested and killed manpower and the lack of the possessions, equipment and the seized capital. Today "al-Qaeda" is going through a period of transformation. Despite many restrictions on al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda is still a major threat to its enemies. Although the physical and personnel base of "al-Qaeda" has been under attack in the world, its multinational global network still has the ability to carry out terrorist plans.

Experts on fighting against terrorism, comparing the root causes that al-Qaeda has faced since the fall of the Torabura base in Afghanistan - at the organizational level - as well as assessing its previous activities, which began with Sudan and continued in Afghanistan, has concluded that al-Qaeda during its first period of activity has progressed from a local group to a global organization with a complex, spider-like and intercontinental network. The sec-

ond phase of al-Qaeda's activity, from the attacks of September 11 up to now, is a period during which Osama bin Laden's organization became a trans-regional organization; an organization that emphasized the unity and focused command for planning and executing operations. In such a structure, it is most likely that targeting the top of the pyramid, the whole pyramid shall collapse, but the new security developments led the global organization to find a new, flexible, and complex structure. A structure in which several independent and multinational branches of the organization fork off the head of the organization, and though consistent with the overall goals of the organization, has a self-reliant and independent structure in designing and carrying out terrorist operations. A structure that is totally different from the traditional notion of organizational work - which is usually a pyramid. (Al-Qaeda 2004: 1)

Al Qaeda now has five independent operational domains all around the world. In this new structure, only the main leaders of these five domains are interconnected while consulting each other in a way that no domain in need of the other domains. These five people are:

▪ Osama bin Laden, founder and leader of the organization

▪ Iman al-Zawahiri, the second member of the organization

▪ Mostafa Ahmed al-Hassawi, Al Qaeda's financial officer

▪ Abu Muhammad al-Mesri, in charge of al-Qaeda propaganda

▪ Midhat Mursi, commander of the battalion responsible for security of Osama bin Laden

The five areas of interest to al-Qaeda are as follows:

1)	India and Pakistan Region: includes Pakistan, India and Afghanistan.

2)	Central Asia Region: includes Uzbekistan, Chechnya, Georgia and South China.

3)	Southeast Asia: Includes Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

4)	Middle East and Persian Gulf Region: includes Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon.

5)	The Western and the Arabian-Mediterranean Region: includes 11 European and North African states (Germany, France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Libya). (Rabasa 2006: 80)

"Al-Qaeda", in order to show its presence in the world and to blow its enemies is relying heavily on global terrorist networks in southeastern Asia, South Asia, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, and the Caucasus. The organization's attacks in Kenya, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Kuwait, and Yemen are representative of the making up for the loss of place and an opportunity to carry out operations in the west. Elimination of the support and operational structure of "al-Qaeda", which is under the influence of military and legal activity, will make the group rely on strategic, varied, and globalized operational capabilities. Al-Qaeda's decentralization has contributed to its flexibility in setting goals for itself. Despite the fact that this terrorist group has been exposed to a lot of attacks throughout history, the construction structure, the tough sections and its strong social circumstances guarantee that it would return to its original state. Al-Qaeda seems to have turned from a structured terrorist organization into an ideological movement

that has expanded in the region and attracted many other groups, which this has made it very difficult to fight against the terrorism of al-Qaeda.

Future Prospect of al-Qaeda's Performance

It seems that in spite of the serious injuries that al-Qaeda has suffered since September 11, 2001, as a result of the global agenda change in the fight against terrorism, al-Qaeda's opinion and ideology are still expanding after all. Despite undermining its structure, Al-Qaeda is still alive and local terrorists are operating using methods that al-Qaeda has built and put into use, and they sometimes take action by the name of al-Qaeda. Today, the spread of its thinking to the world seems to be dangerous more than just an organization called al-Qaeda. On the other hand, the flexible structure of al-Qaeda, a typical example of "new terrorism", provides the ability to rebuild itself quickly and pursue in the form of restructuring, its aims and objectives. Al-Qaeda is currently rebuilding itself, in particular, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Pakistan. By an extensive use of modern media in the world, including the internet, and by sharing audio and video files concerning its beliefs and operations, al-Qaeda makes an effort to transmit messages at the lowest cost and to access its audience. In this way, it either recruits members or threatens the interests of its enemies. The most important issues facing al-Qaeda can be summarized as follows.

A. Al-Qaeda and the Iraq War

Today Al-Qaeda has been rebuilding itself in Iraq after the death of its leader Abu Musab Zarqawi by handing over the group's leader-

ship to Abu Hamaze al-Muhajar. Al- Muhajar expressed his loyalty to bin Laden and Zarqawi ideals through a manifest and sought to attract other Iraqi and non-Iraqi militant groups such as the Afghan mujahideen and the radical Egyptian and Libyan groups. According to the US declaration in 2007, al-Qaeda was responsible for 90% of more than 800 suicide attacks in Iraq, in which a total of 10,000 people were killed. The Iraq war has created conditions that have ultimately strengthened the radical tendencies among the opposition forces of the west, the United States, and particularly al-Qaeda in the Middle East. This has increased the recruitment capacity of al-Qaeda not only in Iraq, but also all around the world. On the other hand, it has led to the growth of a new generation of fighters and their leaders, and the methods of their struggle and the intensity of their function have been strengthened in such a way that deadly attacks from 2003 onwards to Iraq have become seven times and has tripled in the world.

On the other hand, the consequences of the Iraq war for the United States are far more than the consequences of the Afghan war for the former Soviet Union, since the allocation of combat forces in Iraq is much higher than that of the Afghans, and their methods of struggle have also changed. For example, the use of suicide attacks in Iraq was not conventional in the past. Furthermore, the similarity of Iraqis with al-Qaeda is much more than the Afghans. Currently, two million Iraqi Sunni wandering people are exposed to al-Qaeda's thoughts, which are present in Jordan and Egypt, and are capable of being organized. On the other hand, Sunni settlements of Iraq can be considered as a safe haven for al-Qaeda. Although al-Qaeda has also taken action against Sunnis, the future of al-Qaeda in Iraq depends on the Sunnis' analysis of

al-Qaeda as either supporter or suppressor (Katzman 2008: 3)

On the other hand, the Iraq war has caused its neighbors to be involved in war in different forms, and al-Qaeda by recruiting from Arab countries in the region, especially Saudi Arabia, and training them in the countries of the region, strengthens itself. An important issue to acknowledge about Iraq is the retreat of American forces from Iraq in the forthcoming years. According to the current analysis, some people believe that the withdrawal of the United States would lead to a civil war in Iraq that, as a result of al-Qaeda's possible unrest, it would most likely provide a background for the expansion and development of its own operations in Iraq. On the other hand, in the absence of a civil war, the Shia's dominance of the fundamental structures of the government in Iraq will cause al-Qaeda to fight against the Shiites to prevent further power consolidation and stabilization in the socio-political structure of Iraq. Anyway, this issue is directly associated with the appreciation and perception of Iraqi people and ethnic-religious groups of al-Qaeda.

B. Al-Qaeda and Afghanistan and Pakistan Issues

Al-Qaeda has put into use in Afghanistan, which is the primary basis for its development, all the methods that used to be used in Iraq. For example, in 2006, there were about 139 suicide attacks in Afghanistan by Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda is trying to reach its goals through extensive communication with Taliban. It is important to note that the United States actually observes the separation between al-Qaeda and the Taliban useless and has an equal behavior towards them. The presence of al-Qaeda in shelters located in the Pakistani-Afghan border and their support for the Taliban, con-

sidered as Pashtun supporters, has led to its popularity among the people of these areas and the difficulty of fighting them as a result. This issue has greatly spread al-Qaeda's thoughts from Pakistan to Afghanistan.

Al-Qaeda is struggling to bring about serious damages and fight against coalition forces in Afghanistan through its influence and expansion in Pakistan and feeding Taliban and is somehow successful in achieving this. It has also succeeded in modifying the west's strategy and attracting more attention to it. In consequence, more attention has been paid to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan has become a shelter for recruiting and a place for al-Qaeda's military drills and training. For example, two people who had attacked the London subway in 2005 were trained in Pakistan. On the other hand, al-Qaeda's relationship with Kashmiri warriors has been widespread and the Kashmir issue is one of the serious motivations for the presence of al-Qaeda in Pakistan. This issue, considering the lack of willingness or inability of Pakistani's security agencies to fight and suppress al-Qaeda in the country has led this organization to use the present conditions at its best.

The set of these issues has caused Pakistan, because of sending so many immigrants to Europe and particularly to England, to become the center of attention by terrorists, and the number of European citizens traveling to the country has increased, and as a result they are most likely to become a member in terrorist organizations. For example, there are more than 400,000 British citizens traveling to Pakistan in a year, and the spread of al-Qaeda's thoughts have even increased among Western citizens in recent years. As the results of a terrorist survey show 41% of the 373 terrorists who were

arrested or killed in Europe between 1994 and 2004 were born in Europe and the United States. European citizens have always been seen among terrorists who have carried out suicide attacks and bombings in European countries in recent years. Most of these people are funded by Muslim groups in these countries. In other words, al-Qaeda has been able to expand its recruiting capacity from western citizens and use educated and grown-up forces in the west. For example, three pilots and two designers of the September 11th events have lived and educated in the West. Many al Qaeda forces in western countries are recruited from immigrants as well as the second generation of western muslims who are not attracted to western culture (Fishman 2008: 48).

C. Al-Qaeda's Tactical Change

Al-Qaeda has faced serious restrictions and has to change its tactics because of the global campaign against terrorism after 9/11. Perhaps the most important tactic change in this organization is to approach soft targets such as western economic aims. Al-Qaeda well understood on September 11 how $500,000 was spent by al-Qaeda, leading to $500 million damage to the American economy. Therefore, al-Qaeda has attempted to cause damage to western global companies such as well-known oil companies and symbolic centers. In this regard, one of its goals is to attack the oil facilities of these companies in the Middle East as one of the reasons of western presence in the region is oil. In total, there have been attacks on some of the offices of these companies such as Shell Oil Company or other centers such as the Sheraton hotel, and Hilton hotel in different countries. In this regard, it has also car-

ried out suicide attacks by women. Al-Qaeda, on the other hand, has a strategy to strengthen its media presence on the internet, and its ideology is preached by more than four thousand active bases. Al-Qaeda is predicted to use weapons of mass destruction as well as surface-to-air missiles to attack international commercial air cargo in the future and achieve its goals by smuggling weapons of mass destruction. (Fishman 2006: 19)

On the other hand, al Qaeda's function and operations have evolved since the attack on US embassies in East Africa. The use of the professional people's network and resorting to suicide attacks and the use of airplane and speedboat to attack targets (such as the attack on twin towers and USS Cole) have been examples of al-Qaeda's initiatives. On the other hand, al-Qaeda's goals have changed from hard to soft targets. In this way, attacks have been carried out on economic purposes with less number of victims, and mostly westerners and Europeans have been used in the attacks. On the other hand, al-Qaeda has made great efforts to obtain biological chemical, radiological and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, and some countries have also contributed them.

Al-Qaeda carries out these actions using its vast underground financial network. Before September 11, al-Qaeda's transfer of money and credit had been less limited and almost markedly done through popular financial networks, but after the September 11 attacks, due to extensive international limitations, using direct exchange-rate methods and the establishment of charity institutions on the internet that was often unnamed and in many different and unrecoverable locations, have become customary. On the other hand, the use of creditable and hidden bank drafts by members of

the organization in different countries, which eliminates the need to transfer money from one country to another, are also another ways used by al-Qaeda (McCants & Brachman 2006: 310).

Al-Qaeda is also looking for a fundamental strategic goal: having a government or part of a government in islamic lands. They try to implement their desired government model in that state. Therefore, they try to settle such a problem in Afghanistan or Pakistan, although it is more desirable for them to achieve this goal in Iraq because of its presence in the heart of the Islamic world. Al-Qaeda is currently trying to maintain the current situation and keep its name alive. In this regard, it will resort to every trick and he tries to be present in any region that the west is present in the islamic world in a violent manner. (Zawahiri 2007)

Conclusion

The organization of Al-Qaeda, like any other organization, depending on the time and place conditions has inevitably changed the methods and tactics for reaching its goals throughout the history of its life. After the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, al-Qaeda's forces faced a crisis of identity and meaning, but immediately by defining the enemy in their motherland returned to it and injected their radical ideas into their countries. Gradually, with the spread of western thinking and the unrivalled domination of the United States in Islamic countries, these US-supported groups during the Cold War defined their enemies in a new way and became the main enemy of the United States. Using the instability and structural weakness of some Middle Eastern countries, including Afghanistan, they started recruiting and training their

forces and sent their troops to carry out operations in different areas, and Western and American purposes were targeted explicitly. The peak of al-Qaeda's actions was manifest on Sept. 11, replacing the fight against terrorism with the fight against communism in the Cold War. The west launched an army of islamic countries in its fight against terrorism and took serious measures against extremists and al-Qaeda and made limitations for its leaders and members all around the world. Following this, al-Qaeda has inevitably changed its tactics and is targeting towards soft purposes. By selecting new methods in terrorist acts, they try to follow the same old strategy with a new approach. In this regard, al-Qaeda has been able to make the most out of the globalized world. Globalization as a process, is a background through which the transformation of new terrorism is facilitated. Technological developments directly associated with globalization have contributed to a large number of terrorist groups such as al Qaeda. In this regard, groups and individuals have succeeded in: Firstly, to get more powerful weapons. Secondly, there has been a tremendous evolution in communications and processing of information. Thirdly, they have obtained abundant capabilities in the exploitation of civilian technologies to use in military industries. In spite of all the issues raised about al-Qaeda, it shall be indicated that this organization has many weaknesses that can be used to draw up comprehensive counter-terrorism policies.

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