



# TRC TWW Report

Terror Web Watch Report



October 14, 2005

© Terrorism Research Center, Inc.

[www.terrorism.com](http://www.terrorism.com)

Item 1: On the Authenticity of the "Zawahiri's letter to Zarqawi"

Item 2: Izzat al-Duri, Saddam's Vice President at large in Syria (Country Profile), asks that his Baath party be combined with the Jihadist movement, advises that a broad front be formed "to include all who can carry a weapon."

Item 3: A new, regional Jihadist group declares its existence in Saudi Arabia (Country Profile)

Item 4: Video Available: Training at the Badr camp, Afghanistan



**Graphic:** Training at the Badr Camp, IMC new video. Item 4.



## Orientation/Introduction:

Please review the introduction to the Terror Web Watch at [Intel Report](#).

## **Item 1: On the Authenticity of the “Zawahiri’s letter to Zarqawi”**

Debate continues around the mysterious letter making headlines, allegedly written by al-Qaeda's ([Group Profile](#)) Number Two leader to Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi in Iraq ([text of the letter](#)). On Islamist Web sites, discussion continued about the authenticity of the letter, with opinion split on whether it was real or a forgery by the American intelligence services. One writer, calling himself “hakuma” in a short essay posted on the *tajdeed* forum, stated his opinion: “I think that, no matter how hard they tried, the Americans could not have forged a letter like this, with all the great specifics which the letter contains. I can say that it is more likely that the Americans do not understand the letter and what it contains, than it is that they composed it themselves.”

Even the release of a statement from the spokesperson from al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers ([Group Profile](#)), Abu Maysara al-Iraqi, did not clear up the matter effectively for the virtual Jihadists. Originally posted on the Arabic site “World News Network,” the statement was not clear enough on the matter of the letter to satisfy readers. While it called on Muslims to “not be swayed by cheap propaganda,” it seemed to be referring to the interpretations of the letter rather than the letter itself. It denounces the conclusion that the letter amounts to an admission of failure of the insurgency in their battles in Afghanistan ([Country Profile](#)) – a conclusion made on *Al-Jazeera* but not represented in the text of the letter itself. It also points out that the Americans “have not announced how or when they found this letter, saying that this lack of an announcement was a ‘security necessity’ to ‘protect sources and methods.’” It also denies the speculation of “satellite channels” that recent speeches made by Zarqawi and posted on the Internet contain a response to the letter.

In this way, the counter-statement made by al-Qaeda in the Two Rivers denounces the conclusions drawn from the message and casts doubt on its authenticity but does not clearly attribute it to American forgery.

When it appeared on the *Tajdeed* forum, the first response to this counter by Zarqawi’s organization was simply: “Is the letter genuine or not? I want a simple answer please, Allah Akbar.”

There are a couple of things that cast doubt on the letter. While the American government may not have been behind it, the possibility remains that any Jihadist wishing to give Zarqawi some advice could have penned it, falsely signing it from one of the few people who the hot headed Jordanian terrorist may actually listen to.

First, the introduction to the letter is not satisfactory. There is no proper salutation in the beginning. There is a blessing of Zarqawi that is penned in the style that might be used if writing about the leader, but not to him. For instance, postings on Islamic Web sites from al-Qaeda supporters often start with the same kind of blessing of Bin Laden, but they are not directed to him.

The sentence appears thus: “The honorable brother Abu Musaab, may God keep him and watch over him.”

Compare this with the salutation of the letter Zarqawi wrote to Bin Laden and Zawahiri in February 2004:

“To the proudest of persons and leaders in the age of the servants,  
..To the men on the mountain tops, to the hawks of glory, to the lions  
of [the] Shara [Mountains], to the two honorable brothers.....,  
Peace and the mercy and blessings of God be upon you.  
Even if our bodies are far apart, the distance between our hearts is close.”

Even the letter from Izzat al-Duri (former vice president to Saddam Hussein and the only major Baathist figure still at large) to the Iraqi insurgency (item 2) begins in this fashion:

“To you, the honorable companions, the members of the leadership and the members of the forward cadres, and of the cadres who will follow them, to the leadership of the resistance, I send my felicitations...” Duri then lists his “types of congratulations” for a couple of lines and continues: “To you loyal believers, to the brave Mujahideen, you are following the best [of men] and others will follow you. ‘Those among the believers who do not go to



Jihad will meet with harm, but the Mujahideen fighting for [God's] sake with their money and their souls are of a degree higher.' 'God favors the Mujahideen over those who do not fight with rewards of a higher degree and with his forgiveness and mercy.' To you...the companions of belief, of the weapon, and of Jihad, all glory, honor and favor unto you...."

It even continues for a few more lines – and this is just the salutation. Comparatively, the greeting in the alleged Zawahiri letter is abrupt, sounding as if it is directed to someone other than Zarqawi *about* Zarqawi, and is ineloquent and unceremonious.

The lack of eloquence is consistent throughout the letter. The language is very basic, much more so than Zawahiri's usual style. While not the most eloquent of writers, in all of his other statements, he has made more of an attempt to sound more like a "Sheikh" (a spiritual authority). The style is not consistent with someone who is the spiritual leader of the Jihad movement. Zarqawi, had he received the letter, would likely find the lack of attention to rhetorical style disrespectful. In his own February 2004 letter to the Zawahiri and Bin Laden, he makes every effort to represent the best, most eloquent Arabic rhetoric he can muster.

The casual manner might be considered more appropriate if Zawahiri were writing to a close aide or deputy of Zarqawi, rather than the man himself. This is supported by a puzzling sentence toward the end of the message: "By God, if by chance you're going to Fallujah, send greeting to Abu Msaab al-Zarqawi." This would indicate the writer is addressing someone besides Zarqawi. The theory that he is writing to someone in Zarqawi's organization, likely someone very high up, could work throughout the message – except in one place. When discussing beheadings, it is written: "You shouldn't be deceived by the praise of some of the zealous young men and their description of you as the sheikh of the slaughterers." "Sheikh of the Slaughterers" is a title that has been given to Zarqawi and Zarqawi alone because of his infamous beheadings of hostages.

The apparent changes in who is being addressed throughout the missive indicate that it has been chopped. On the original Arabic, an inconsistency in the system of lettering and numbering that the writer uses to outline his points demonstrates that one section is missing. This could also explain the odd beginning to the letter; if one section were cut out, more may have been also, including the salutation and start of the message.

There are some other oddities: Zawahiri discusses Zarqawi's position vis-à-vis the Shia at length but does not mention Zarqawi's letter (that same February 2004 message previously mentioned) in which the proposal to begin a campaign against the Shia was described. There is no mention of Osama Bin Laden. Also, coming from the man suspected to be the primary strategist in al-Qaeda, one would expect more overall strategic guidance, rather than simply a negative reaction to the tactics of attacking Shia and beheading hostages.

The bottom line: The document has likely been abridged, making it difficult to draw conclusions, but the writing style and some of the content is inconsistent with what would be expected of Zawahiri.

## **Item 2: Izzat al-Duri, Saddam's Vice President at large in Syria ([Country Profile](#)), asks that his Baath party be combined with the Jihadist movement, advises that a broad front be formed "to include all who can carry a weapon."**

Izzat al-Duri was Saddam Hussein's vice president and deputy chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council – the Hussein regime's top legislative, executive, and judicial authority. He is the King of Clubs in the infamous deck of cards and one of the only figures in that deck still at large. He is believed to be in Syria, from which he maintains some control over the Iraqi nationalist element of the insurgency. This is the first such statement that has been seen from him.

The first thing he does in this message, after a long greeting interwoven with Koranic passages (see Item 1), is to meld the identity of the once ardently secular Baathist regime with the Salafi Jihadist movement. Once upon a time, these would have been among the most unlikely of bedfellows, but al-Duri probably sees this as necessary





to the survival of what is left of his party and an acknowledgement of the predominantly Jihadist/Islamist makeup of the insurgency. He uses Islamist terminology for the metaphysical Islamic "nation:" the Umma.

"Know, O honorable companions, O brave Mujahideen, that the Arab Baath Socialist party, handed down from dignified heritage...in its creed, goals, and path, is the party of the Umma, the Umma of the Semitic messages, the messages of civilizations, the final message of Islam, the great, the larger Arab message. All of these are unto us. This is a party of the message, not a traditional political party that appears one day only to disappear the next..."

He urges the insurgents not to negotiate with the Americans: The Americans "do not forgive, they do not have mercy, they do not know anything except their own interests and ambitions, and they do not know anything except oppression and tyranny and brutality and conquering and humiliation. Therefore, I emphasize, do not negotiate, do not contact the enemy or his collaborators, neither directly nor indirectly...until they admit officially their enormous crime in occupying Iraq and destroying it and until they officially decide to an immediate, unconditional withdrawal....remain firm in front of all these pressures, the pressures of the political game, the pressure of great force, and the pressures of those who claim they have adopted the way of liberation and democracy."

In terms of strategy, he emphasizes the importance of communicating to Iraqis the lack of progress made by the United States ([Country Profile](#)) in Iraq ([Country Profile](#)), the destruction caused by them, and the illegality of the occupation in order to win them over. "Ask them, what happened to liberating the country politically, economically, culturally, and socially? What about the great destruction of material and cultural resources? What about the crime of the illegal occupation, the millions of emigrants [out of Iraq]? What about the thousands of martyrs and lost?"

He believes an unusually broad base of people will come to his side, "I believe some will join our way and our goals. Though they may be few, they [will consist of] Arab nationals, socialists, the Iraqi national alliance, and many national, international, and Islamic personalities."

He notes that the "collaborators" with the Americans come from all different groups in Iraq; unlike his Salafi counterparts, he does not shift the majority of the blame onto the Shia. "Look at this enemy, how he divides his collaborators among the Shia, the Kurds, the Sunni, and the Arabs, so as to try to show the world that all of Iraq is with him?"

He accuses the Americans of trying to divide Iraq and ignite sectarian war among the Shia and the Sunnis. In response to this, and in a departure from the strategy that has been advocated by Zarqawi, he suggests a broadly defined "front." The proposal is to "establish bases for a national, Arab national, and Islamic front within a political and Jihadi framework that can encompass everyone, no matter what his situation or stance, in order to oppose the occupation and fight it, working to expel it, to expand, and to escalate to include all who can carry a gun and join the resistance and the way of the blessed Jihad in order to liberate completely the nation, the Umma, and the sons of the future."

It seems that Zarqawi's targeting of Shia and Kurds, and generally highly exclusionary philosophy, may be bothering other members of the insurgency. The choice to circulate this message on the same forums on which Zarqawi's network circulates their own messages is a telling one.

### **Item 3: A new, regional Jihadist group declares its existence in Saudi Arabia ([Country Profile](#))**

The following statement was circulated on the *al-Firdaws* site. The group is established in Zalfi, a region in Saudi Arabia. Its pledge to follow al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula ([Group Profile](#)) may actually be an attempt to take over the torch of Jihad in the Kingdom from the recently dormant group.



[begin translation]

...This statement comes in order to aid those who are loyal to God, the Mujahideen, who defend their religion and sacred places. It is an announcement of complete loyalty to them, in method and creed. It is also an announcement declaring complete separation from the enemies of God, the hypocrites, who could not send their armies to Palestine in order to free it from the Jews, nor to Iraq in order to free it from the Americans, but rather sent them to stop the Jihad and the Mujahideen who sell their souls in order to defend their Islamic Salafi creed, which they were handed down and taught in the school of the book and the tradition....

We announce that this organization, the Brigades of the Echo of Taweek in Zalfi, will follow al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. We emphasize our pledge to the Amir of the Believers Mullah Mohammed Omar, and the Sheikh, the Imam, Osama Bin Laden (the lion of this age) and the leader Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi (Amir of the Land of the Two Rivers)...

Our most important goals, in short:

- 1 Aiding Islam and the Muslims...
- 2 Getting rid of the enemies of God and angering the hypocrites...
- 3 Clarifying the creed and the path...
- 4 Telling the Umma and guiding it to truth and belief...
- 5 Circulating the publications of the Mujahideen...
- 6 Bringing down the liars...[illegible] in Zalfi, especially the leader of them, who teaches magic, Abdulaziz al-Anzi [the Qadaffi of al-Zalfi] and his henchmen. We will not do anything to them tonight, our appointment with them is in the morning, or perhaps the morning after that.

This is what we wanted to mention briefly in our first statement. In the next days, with God's permission, we will speak more on this region...

Abu Hajer al-Zalfawi

Official spokesman for the organization – the Echo of Taweek - in Zalfi.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
(إن نظروا أنه بغضكم ويشتد الغمهم)

[end translation]

### أول بيان رسمي لتكتائب صدى طويق بالزلفي



The statement:

Taweek is the name of a mountain in Saudi Arabia; this seems to be the allusion in the group name. Al-Zalfi is a region in northern Saudi Arabia that is infamous for extremism. Radical Islamists managed to pressure the schools in that area to ban the Saudi national anthem. This statement seems to be declaring the establishment of a regional al-Qaeda arm.

It does not seem that the group intends to attack westerners in the Kingdom. The anger in this statement is cast upon the Saudi regime. So far, there has been no additional activity from the group other than this statement, nothing yet indicates that there are the means and ability for violence to back up these words. Still, with al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula seemingly decimated, it is possible that small groups may try to rise up and act in its name, in an attempt to keep the al-Qaeda dream in the Kingdom alive.



## **Item 4: Video Available: Training at the Badr camp, Afghanistan**

This may be the same Badr camp that was bombed once in 1998 and again in 2002 ([source](#)). The footage may simply be old, but from the video, the intention in the film seems to be to show that the camp has risen again. Scenes of presumably American planes and helicopters are followed by scenes of Mujahideen continuing in their training. The 44-minute video shows a range of training activities, from jumping through fiery hoops to assassinations conducted from the back of motorcycles to various exercises with firearms. The video is available from TRC upon request.

---

*Terrorism Research Center grants you an exclusive, non-transferable licence to use the material within this Web site for your own professional purposes only. Except under amendment to contract, you may not reproduce, republish, post, transmit, or distribute any materials from the TRC-Premium Content Web site, in whole or in part, without the prior written permission of the TRC. Specifically, permission is not granted to store any text, graphics, or images on any remote server (or any other retrieval system) for distribution of any kind. The TRC cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage resulting from any information contained in this Web site. No endorsement is intended or made of any hypertext link, product, service, or information either by its inclusion or exclusion from this site. While all attempts are made to ensure the correctness and suitability of information under our control and to correct any errors brought to our attention, no representation or guarantee can be made as to the correctness or suitability of that information or any other linked information presented, referenced, or implied. Web site users should be aware that authors of content within this site have made every effort to ensure that the information presented is accurate and reliable. The TRC reserve the right, in every case at its own discretion and for whatever reason, to amend fees, and to alter or not offer services.*

Email: [Premium@terrorism.com](mailto:Premium@terrorism.com)

Online: [www.terrorism.com](http://www.terrorism.com)

Toll free: 1-877-635-0816

Fax: 1-703-935-2666

