



# TRC WAR Report

Weekly Analysis and Research Report



December 22, 2003

© Terrorism Research Center, Inc.

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

## EDITOR'S CHOICE

Increased Threat - Increased Vigilance

## INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS

- (1) U.S. Warns of Possible Colombia Attacks
- (2) Rival Former Exile Groups Clash over Security in Iraq
- (3) New Warning About Threat of Terrorism Is Issued in Saudi Arabia
- (4) Foreign Minister Denies Country's Links with International Terrorist Groups
- (5) Islamic Extremism Spreads in Central Asia
- Iraq
- (6) Iraq tactics may not aid bin Laden hunt
- (7) Italy Boosts Vatican Security After Threat Warning
- (8) Anarchist Groups Demonstrate in Greece
- (9) Pakistan on high alert after Musharraf assassination bid
- (10) JI 'Training Philippines Rebels'
- (11) South Korea Says It May Be Terrorist Target
- (12) High-Alert Holidays; A Series of Arrests in Britain and Europe Stokes Fears of a Terrorist Surge Timed to the Christmas Season
- (13) China issues first ever list of "terrorist" groups, seeks international help
- (14) AP: Bin Laden Approved Attacks in Turkey
- (15) Terror suspect admits Yemen plot

## DOMESTIC ANALYSIS

- (1) 'Lackawanna Six' Figure Sentenced
- (2) Panel Sees Slowdown in U.S. Fight Against Terror

## RELEVANT NEWS ITEMS

- (1) Hope of Political Peace from Paris Meeting -
- (2) Rebels Creep Out of the Bush as Peace Spreads
- (3) US Ends UNITA Travel Restrictions
- (4) Peru troops cleared over deaths
- (5) AP: Terror Suspects' Children Training
- (6) Man Is Sentenced for Helping Hezbollah
- (7) Mengistu's defence of Red Terror opens
- (8) UEFA downplays risk of terrorist attack during Euro 2004

## OVERHEARD

## COLOR GUIDE/DISCLAIMER

## CONTACT US

## EDITOR'S CHOICE

---

---

### Increased Threat - Increased Vigilance

US Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge officially raised the US Homeland Security Advisory Threat level from ELEVATED to HIGH on Sunday, December 22, 2003, citing the potential for terrorist strikes more devastating than the al Qaeda attacks on September 11, 2001 ([Intel Report](#)). The announcement followed speculation in the press earlier in the week regarding potential individual suicide attacks during the holiday season.

Secretary Ridge advised that US citizens should remain vigilant but not modify their holiday plans as a result of the increased alert level. He indicated that critical infrastructure providers and other private sector organizations would receive information from the government on how to modify their security posture to account for the increased threat. Specific concerns have been cited for the use of aircraft and fuel trucks as potential weapons. Additionally, previous reports discussed the potential for individual suicide bombers targeting public venues.

### Putting Holiday Threats in Context

The Department of Homeland Security raised the official threat level to HIGH citing the potential for mass casualty attacks over the holiday season. In addition, several news organizations reported on the increased potential threat of terrorism attacks in the United States over the Christmas holiday season ([Intel Report](#)). While the reports did not provide any detailed information, there was discussion of suicide bombings as a potential tactic. The potential method of attack becomes an important differentiator in evaluating the likelihood of attack during any holiday or significant date.

Attacking during a holiday is appealing due to the psychological and symbolic impact on the target populace. However, this appeal is usually counterbalanced, if not negated, by increased security measures put in place during the holiday timeframe. While terrorists are attracted to attacking during the holiday season, such attractiveness is likely to be tempered by any cost-benefit analysis designed to maximize the success of the terrorist operation. Therefore, launching attacks on holidays or significant dates is likely to be viewed as a "higher risk" of attack failure due to increased security measures in place, decreasing the attractiveness and potential for attack during those periods. Modern terrorist adversaries are driven to succeed, and their own internal risk management process will look for a combination of attack targets, tactics, and timeframe that will maximize the success of the operation. The raising of the threat level and the corresponding increase in security measures is designed to increase the cost/risk analysis and deter immediate threats. Unless attack plans are in their final stages and can not be halted or delayed, the raising of the alert level should serve as a deterrent.

That being said, this holiday season, and future significant dates, offer an interesting conundrum for several reasons. First, open source reports mention individual suicide bombings as a potential tactic. The tactic of suicide bombings is one for which very few discernable or actual security measures have been put place. As a result, the combined psychological/symbolic gains of attacking during the holiday are not negatively influenced by a perceived increased potential of operational failure (making individual suicide bombings highly appealing during the holiday season). In the end, the likelihood of individual suicide bombings launched within the United

States is grounded in the issue of resource management within the terrorist organizations. Given adequate resources and assets within the United States, the use of individual suicide bombings as an attack method is likely. However, if internal resources are constrained, individual suicide bombings are less appealing as resources (specifically human) will likely be utilized in attacks that are more spectacular or offer a higher casualty yields.

Secondly, increased complacency within the homeland perpetuates what TRC analysts have referred to as the “security half-life,” a term used to describe the consistent decrease in security measures as time gets further out from the previous terrorist attack. As security measures consistently decrease, the appeal of attacking during a holiday is increased from the terrorist perspective as the risk of failure diminishes in parallel with diminishing security measures. Therefore, as we are further removed from September 11, and our security policies and measures are impacted by the “security half-life,” the likelihood of terrorist attack (in general, not specifically during holiday periods) will consistently increase. To the extent that security measures in place during a holiday or significant date period are no different from those in place during the rest of the year, the attractiveness of holiday attacks increases.

The Department of Homeland Security has ensured that the level of protection offered to a subset of potential targets is actually increased during the holiday period, thus decreasing the attractiveness of attack. While this may solve the short-term problem, it does nothing to prevent the long-term threat of catastrophic terrorism, and we must remember that we are facing a determined and persistent adversary. In addition, each time the Alert level is raised (especially without evidence of a deterred attack) and lowered, the government actually contributes to the security half-life dilemma, as it gives a false sense of security in our ability to actually predict when terrorist attacks are immanent.

### **Chatter as Economic Terrorism**

It is also important to note that terrorist organizations and their sympathizers are somewhat empowered by our reactive Homeland Security Threat advisory system. There are significant costs incurred each time the threat level is raised, and it is quite possible that there are deception operations in place designed to simply increase the cost of sustaining active security measures to address the anticipated threat. Therefore, it is vitally important that our security posture is not driven simply by “terrorist chatter” but by actionable and specific intelligence information. Otherwise, we fall victim to our own system and inflict costs that do not contribute to reducing the threat of terrorist attack.

### **Implications for Personnel Abroad**

While the Homeland Security Threat Advisory level is a mechanism for addressing threats to the US homeland, it should also be seen as indicator for potential attacks abroad. Therefore, it is no surprise that the US State Department issued a Worldwide Caution Advisory via their web site to correspond with the DHS announcement. Specifically, the State Department warning (which is set to expire in June 2004) notes that:

“Terrorist actions may include, but are not limited to, suicide operations, hijackings, bombings or kidnappings. These may also involve commercial aircraft and maritime interests, and threats to include conventional weapons, such as explosive devices. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. These may include

facilities where U.S. citizens and other foreigners congregate or visit, including residential areas, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, hotels, outdoor recreation events or resorts and beaches. U.S. citizens should remain in a heightened state of personal security awareness when attendance at such locations is unavoidable.”

With these heightened security warnings, all US citizens (in the homeland and abroad) should remain diligent and ensure that the latest threat information is being incorporated into their personal and/or organizational risk management process.

Written by: TRC staff

## INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS

---

---

### Colombia

**(1) U.S. Warns of Possible Colombia Attacks** -- The U.S. Embassy warned Friday of "a high probability" of imminent terrorist attacks in Bogota and said Americans and U.S. companies may also be targeted in the coastal city of Cartagena. The warning urged Americans to avoid major commercial, entertainment and nightlife centers for the next several days. Bogota's two trendiest shopping and dining districts continue to be off-limits to U.S. Embassy employees, their families and embassy contractors. Colombia's main rebel group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known as the FARC, has carried out bomb attacks in this Andean capital in which dozens of people have been killed. [Full Story](#)  
**TRC ANALYSIS:** For details on the warning issued by the Department of State, please review the TRC [Intel Report](#).

### Iraq

**(2) Rival Former Exile Groups Clash over Security in Iraq** -- Tensions have emerged between two influential formerly exiled political parties in Baghdad over control of Iraq's rapidly proliferating security organisations. The growing number of Iraqi-financed private military companies had already sparked concern that secular leaders may be developing militias to match the paramilitary forces under the command of religious and Kurdish political groups. Now Ayad Allawi's Iraqi National Accord has accused the Iraqi National Congress, led by Ahmad Chalabi, of undermining central authority by backing the creation of a private military company to secure the oil sector. Mr Allawi is head of the security committee on the interim Governing Council and his deputy, Nouri Badran, runs the interior ministry which controls more than 50,000 police. The sparring between Mr Chalabi and Mr Allawi dates from the 1990s, when both men led separate attempts to overthrow Saddam Hussein. While Mr Chalabi is close to the Pentagon and advocates redrawing the Middle East political map, Mr Allawi is regarded as closer to the CIA and fears further upsetting the status quo would inflame the region. [Full Story](#)  
**TRC ANALYSIS:** It is becoming clear that Saddam Hussein's role in the Iraq insurgency was restricted to offering strategic guidance and intent to regime loyalist guerrilla leaders and disbursing some money to fund their operations. The necessities of Hussein's life on the run—unable to use communications gear that might give away his position, moving locations approximately every four hours, and liaising with resistance leaders and receiving updates on the insurgency intermittently through couriered messages—as well as his lack of military expertise, seems to have precluded him any direct control over the operations of regime loyalist guerrillas. Thus, Hussein's removal from the command structure of the regime loyalist insurgency will have little operational effect in itself. However, intelligence developed from the documents discovered in Hussein's hideout has revealed a more refined picture of the leadership network directing the operations of loyalist guerrilla cells and has already lead to the arrests of a number of cell leaders. Army Gen. John Abizaid, the head of US Central Command, said that those detained are "several mid-level Baathist leaders of cells in areas that we haven't had the opportunity to really get a good

**grip on previously." However, still at large is Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, former Iraqi general and commander of the Northern Army, who is reported to be the chief coordinator of regime loyalist attacks.**

**It is now thought that regime loyalist insurgent cells range from 10 to 200 members each, with US estimations of a core of 5,000 guerrilla fighters, buttressed by a number of ad hoc attackers drawn from the peripheral population of unemployed, disgruntled, and anti-coalition Iraqis, and paid to conduct attacks. The complete insurgency is rounded out by foreign mujihedeens, and Ansar al Islam ([Group Profile](#)) and al Qaeda fighters. Anywhere from 10-14 cells are believed to be operating in Baghdad.**

**Hussein's capture undoubtedly had a powerful psychological effect upon Iraqi society and loyalist morale. The manner in which Hussein was captured has been interpreted throughout Iraqi society, as well as the Arab world, as demonstrating a cowardice that destroys Hussein's long cultivated image of a strong and courageous Arab leader full of fight and bravado—often portraying himself as "Saddam the Lion" and as the reincarnation of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Muslim warrior Saladin. The images of a haggard and submissive Hussein, being manhandled by US doctors, served to de-mythologize and shatter Hussein's iconic power, and are widely seen by both his supporters and opponents as pathetic and bringing shame upon Iraqis and Arabs. With regard to the future evolution of the regime loyalist insurgency, the nature of Hussein's capture should have a resonating psychological effect upon two key audiences: the loyalist guerrillas and Iraqis who had aided the loyalist guerrillas out of intimidation.**

**As the figurehead of the regime loyalist guerrilla cause, his capture has likely eroded the loyalist morale and motivation to continue the fight in his name, though so long as he remains alive and in custody, the cause will likely endure with Hussein's 'unjust' imprisonment becoming a new rallying call to arms. Regime loyalist cause and its power to recruit seems to have lost its luster at least for the time being, and the continued loyalist guerrilla attacks may now increasingly be viewed as the desperate spasms of a dying movement. However, many hardcore loyalists, realizing that they are known accomplices of Hussein and thus unlikely to be afforded any mercy, also maintain a base self-preservation motivation for continuing the guerrilla fight if only to stave off the fate awaiting them in captivity.**

**The confirmation of Hussein's capture has likely helped to dissipate the lingering climate of intimidation and fear associated with his being at large which hung over Iraqi society since his ouster. As most Iraqis celebrated his capture, some also now felt emboldened to come forward with information on the regime loyalist guerrillas, thus aiding Coalition counterinsurgency operations.**

**In sum, regime loyalist guerrilla attacks are likely to increase in the short term, motivated by retribution for Hussein's capture and as a symbolic demonstration of resolve for their cause. However, in the long term Hussein's capture will likely contribute to an erosion in the regime loyalist guerrilla operations, as intelligence derived from his capture is leveraged in counterinsurgency operations, as the demoralizing psychological effects of his capture take hold, and as the liberating psychological effects take hold among regular Iraqis. Hussein's capture is unlikely to have any tempering effect upon insurgent attacks motivated by Iraqi patriotism and embittered anti-occupation sentiment. To the extent that the regime loyalist guerrillas collaborated with foreign mujihedeens and terrorist fighters in attacks, an erosion in loyalist operational capabilities will have a deleterious effect upon the other insurgent elements. However,**

the jihadist fighters will likely remain committed and motivated to continue their fight in Iraq as theirs was never a fight for Saddam.

### **Saudi Arabia**

**(3) New Warning About Threat of Terrorism Is Issued in Saudi Arabia** -- Just 10 days after its last security alert in Saudi Arabia, the United States yesterday issued another warning about the threat of new terrorist attacks there and authorized the reduction of its diplomatic staff in the kingdom. The warning also urged the estimated 37,000 private American citizens in the oil-rich Persian Gulf state to evaluate their situation and "consider departing." The United States will offer free flights for all nonemergency diplomatic staff and any family members at the embassy in Riyadh or two U.S. consulates in Jeddah and Dhahran. The United States took the latest step because U.S. intelligence "continues to receive indications of terrorist threats aimed at American and Western targets, including the targeting of transportation and civil aviation," it warned. A State Department official called the intelligence "specific and credible" aimed at the U.S. community in general. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** This week, US authorities recommended that up to 300 nonessential US officials and another 37,000 US expatriates heighten their vigilance and preferable consider at least a temporary move out of Saudi Arabia in the near future. For the full listing, please review the TRC [Advisory](#). This recommendation follows at least three al Qaeda attacks in the country since May 2003 including simultaneous coordinated attacks in May 2003 ([Terrorist Incident](#)) and more recently a suicide car bomb attack against soft targets in November 2003 ([Terrorist Incident](#)). Despite a flurry of Saudi authority raids and arrests yielding over 100 suspected radical Islamic fundamentalists and several arms caches originating from Yemen, American analysts and diplomats remain uncomfortable enough to issue such a warning while conceding they lack specific information about imminent attacks. Whereas the threat of a multiple strike similar to the May attack seems unlikely, small cells or individuals plotting suicide operations could easily have escaped detection thus far and likely remain the focus of warnings thus far.

### **Bangladesh**

**(4) Foreign Minister Denies Country's Links with International Terrorist Groups** -- Speaking to the media at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 11, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan stated that the Government was determined not to allow any terrorist group to operate in Bangladesh. Ruling out the possibility of any terrorist networks in Bangladesh, he also denied that his country had any links with the Taliban and Al Qaeda. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** Bangladesh has steadfastly denied that it has any links with international terrorists groups, and the foreign minister has reiterated that Bangladesh is democratic, moderate, and tolerant and that no Bangladeshis were involved in any of the al Qaeda operations unearthed or conducted. They also sealed their border to prevent fleeing terrorists from entering. A Canadian intelligence report that claimed that the Bangladesh government was not doing enough against international terrorism (allowing radicals to attack other cultural groups, hints of "collusion" with al Qaeda) also claimed that Bangladesh has a well established print media, supports Western policies, and has pledged assistance on the war on terrorism. These are seemingly opposite notions. What is more likely is that Bangladesh even with the best of intentions, may not be able to stop outside influences or terrorist groups from operating in their country due a lack of law and order in the country.

Bangladesh would seem to be a perfect haven for fundamentalist terrorists because of its location in South Asia, the fact that it is a major transshipment point for smuggling weapons to insurgent groups in the area, a lack of law and order, and an intolerance to other Islamic groups. It is an overpopulated, poor, and ill-governed country that terrorists could easily take advantage of.



Recent weapons caches have highlighted a disturbing trend for where weapons are going and what else could be smuggled in and for whom. An ammunition cache was recently uncovered close to the US mission in Dhaka, but government authorities refused to let the FBI conduct a probe. While there does not yet appear to be a fundamentalist bend to the 90% Sunni Muslim population, there does seem to be intolerance of other Muslims who do not have the same beliefs. The 150,000 Muslim minority sect, the Ahmadiyyas, have been under attack, violence, and harassment by other groups to the point that these groups threatened consequences if the government did not declare this group non-Muslim. It is thought this campaign was instigated through a spill-over from Pakistani clerics involved in anti-Ahmadiyyas campaigns. While the government pledges to protect these people, it has failed to convict anyone for the attacks. Bangladesh is also home to pirates and bandits, operating with near impunity in some parts of the country. The lawless situation has gotten so desperate that villagers have started their own revenge attacks. Terrorist groups like al-Qaeda tend to gravitate to areas where they can have local support, and where they can operate with impunity in a weak state that cannot effectively counter them. The good news is that Bangladesh is willing to cooperate in the war on terrorism, but unless the situation is carefully monitored and some support is offered, its weakness as a state may be exploited by terrorists.

## Central Asia

**(5) Islamic Extremism Spreads in Central Asia** -- The illegal flier boldly posted on the concrete telephone pole outside Dilyar Jumabayev's home leaves no doubt about the sentiments of the man who lives inside: "All Muslims of the world unite against the infidels." Through his black beard, Jumabayev shows an easy smile, but his words are vehement. "Muslims now realize who their enemies are. The United States and Britain want Muslims to fight against each other," he said. Jumabayev, 32, is a member of the secretive Islamic organization Hizb ut-Tahrir, or Party of Liberation, which is spreading across Central Asia. The growth is believed fueled in part by secular governments' heavy-handed efforts here to crack down on what has become the largest such extremist movement in the region. It has as many as 20,000 members. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** Many Muslims are left scratching their heads regarding US counterterrorism policy in the wake of the recent capture of Saddam Hussein. Members and sympathizers of the regional Islamic organization Hizb ut-Tahrir ([Group Profile](#)), which has steadily gained support throughout Central Asia over the last decade, see little difference between the Hussein regime and their experiences under national authoritarian regimes. In fact, even US diplomats and Western aid workers are caught between heavy-handed US-supported anti-terrorist maneuvers and their lip service in support of religious tolerance and pluralism. Although Hizb ut-Tahrir proclaims and seemingly has adhered to its policy of non-violence, this transnational political movement is poised to coordinate a variety of protest activities and movements across the region marking it as a high profile target for regimes struggling to keep a lid on Islamic extremism proliferating outside the state-sponsored mosques. It is incumbent on policy-makers to distinguish between the vocal yet passive critics of Western counterterrorism policies and the more secretive, rejectionist violent actors targeting business, economic, and political interests across the Islamic republics comprising the former Soviet Union. Hizb ut-Tahrir is not recognized as a terrorist group by the United States and is so far not connected to any acts of violence; however, it was recognized in February 2003 by Russia's Supreme Court as a terrorist group.

Kyrgyz security officials warn that it has become a fertile recruiting ground for al-Qaida and its allies, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan ([Group Profile](#)), although they often fail to provide hard evidence proving such ties. Afraid of extremism, leaders across the region have cracked down on independent Muslims who choose to worship outside state-run mosques. The

increased US presence in Central Asia--since troops arrived in the region to carry out operations in neighboring Afghanistan after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks--also means Washington is seen as supporting the authoritarian policies, despite the often-quiet US diplomats. Others ask why the United States took down Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein ([Intel Report](#)) while allying itself with authoritarian presidents elsewhere.

## Iraq

**(6) Iraq tactics may not aid bin Laden hunt** -- The tactics that US troops used to track down Saddam Hussein are unlikely to help allied forces in Afghanistan find Osama bin Laden, according to military officials and national security specialists. The US military probably will share the lessons learned from the hunt for the deposed Iraqi dictator, but the fanatical nature of bin Laden's supporters, the treacherous terrain along the Afghan-Pakistani border where the Al Qaeda leader is believed to be hiding, and the relatively small numbers of allied forces in the region make him a much more elusive quarry, the specialists said. Finding Hussein was a major public relations coup for the Bush administration, but many national security specialists contend that in terms of protecting the United States domestically, bin Laden is a more critical target because he runs a terrorist network with global reach. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS: The investigative methods used to hunt and capture Saddam Hussein in Iraq may be less effective in the hunt for Osama bin Laden and his leadership coterie due the diffuse and nebulous structure of al Qaeda ([Group Profile](#)) and its associated global operations.**

Details of Hussein's capture reveal the laborious investigative work conducted by US military intelligence, and other intelligence agencies, in constructing a detailed interpersonal schematic mapping of the network of Hussein's closest associates and bodyguards—most from clans in Hussein's ancestral home, in and around Tikrit, and long connected to Hussein by deep tribal and regime loyalties—who had hid and protected the former dictator during his underground odyssey evading coalition forces. *The New York Times* describes this map as, “a highly classified, color-coded chart that depicts Mr. Hussein's family and organizational tree. Centered in the chart in a yellow circle like a bull's-eye is Mr. Hussein. Links to other people radiate out, based on familial and functional ties. The names of those killed or captured are written in red.” The map was continually updated and refined with daily intelligence by a team of analysts. Aiding this analytic tool, US intelligence operations had been recently refocused on the more peripheral, lower-level individuals whose interrogations revealed important clarifying information that cascaded up the inter-relational sinews of the Hussein network map toward more senior, high-value individuals, and helped to develop a more complete and focused picture of Hussein's movements and whereabouts. Soon, the key intelligence targets among these individuals became five yet unnamed Hussein “lieutenants” who had served as senior officials in Hussein's security services, military, or government. Military intelligence had termed these five individuals ‘enablers’ for Hussein with each executing a particular job-- logistics, planning, operations and financing, and chief of staff--contributing to Hussein's underground flight. US military intelligence also believes that this cadre of lieutenants conveyed Hussein's strategic direction for the ongoing insurgency to guerrilla commanders in towns like Samarra, Ramadi and Falluja. The critical break in the hunt for Hussein came when the ‘chief of staff’ lieutenant was picked up and yielded actionable intelligence on Hussein's location, leading the US military task force to the farm house and the spider hole.

Though the success of capturing Hussein through the use of an organigramme analytic tool may lead some to believe it represents the counterterrorism talisman in hunting Osama bin Laden and his leadership echelon, al Qaeda presents a number of geographic, cultural-religious, and organizational dynamics that could bedevil such an approach.



Geographically, the hunt for Hussein was conducted in a relatively small and discrete area near his ancestral home and political powerbase of Tikrit. The area was saturated with thousands of US military and intelligence forces focusing their search and intelligence gathering operations to find one man, yet it took many months to locate him. The foreboding wilds, peaks, and ravines of the relatively large Afghan-Pakistani border region in which bin Laden is thought to be hiding, studded with innumerable undiscovered mountainous redoubts and passes that bin Laden can use for evasion, presents a daunting landscape through which the relatively small number of US and coalition forces must search. Also, bin Laden ranges frequently throughout the entire border region, making the development of a cohesive group leadership organigramme at the local level extremely difficult. Thus, more forces and tracking resources must be applied to physical search for bin Laden in this area.

The fervent religious extremist bonds and camaraderie that characterize al Qaeda's core internal dynamics, combined with the close-knit tribal society of their local protectors and benefactors in the Afghan-Pakistani border region has developed an social organizational creed—driven largely by religious prescript—in which members are far more resolute in their commitment to protecting the organization and compatriots. Contrast this with many of Hussein's loyalists whose allegiance carried a greater degree of malleability in their survivalist utilitarianism—wanting to maintain the personal benefits and avoid harm or death by continuing to serve Hussein. Thus, gleaning information to build a group organigramme from captured al Qaeda members would likely pose more difficult task than Hussein loyalists.

At the organizational level, the organigramme approach may be less effective in focusing on bin Laden and al Qaeda's leadership due to the physical and operational diffusion and incongruity of the individuals and cells that comprise the network. Al Qaeda makes extensive use of a cellular terrorist structure in which operational commands are buffered through layers of compartmentalized and possibly anonymous intermediaries and cell handlers in which the cell operatives have no knowledge of the composition or activities of other cells or the identity of the group leadership. The express purpose of this cellular structure is to make it impossible to construct a group organigramme from the intelligence derived from only a few captured lower-level group members. Further, the latticed connections between al Qaeda's terrorist and leadership nodes and its operational cells that would make up the broad group organigramme are becoming increasingly fractured, replaced by disconnected entrepreneurial and freelancing terrorist groups whose attacks may have had little or no operational association with the core al Qaeda leadership, but rather are conducted independently in the name of al Qaeda's global jihadist movement and strategic intent. Recent news reports have suggested that al Qaeda's role in global terrorism seems to be evolving into a highly networked terrorist consultancy, providing the galvanizing call to arms and strategic direction of a virulent jihadist ideology, and possibly offering operational advice and assistance for terrorist attacks carried out by a network of affiliate terrorist groups around the world (Al Qaeda Seen Shifting to 'Terror Consultant' Role, Reuters, 11.24.2003). In essence, al Qaeda is capitalizing upon its commanding position and faculties as chief ideologue of a global jihadist movement, inspiring, sanctioning, and aiding a growing phenomenon of entrepreneurial terrorism, united as a movement under the standard of al Qaeda's vicious Islamic extremism.

Therefore, despite its utility in leading to the capture of Saddam Hussein, the 'organigramme' approach to the interpersonal organizational analysis of a terrorist or radical group is likely to meet with greater difficulty when applied to the search for Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda's leadership. It would seem that greater intelligence and tracking resources need to be focused

upon monitoring and cracking the al Qaeda leadership tier and developing an exploitative organigramme at this higher level, rather than attempting to build one from the group's affiliate or base members. On the whole, refining the analytic picture and understanding of al Qaeda's nebulous organizational structure and leadership remains a daunting endeavor on many fronts.

## Italy

**(7) Italy Boosts Vatican Security After Threat Warning** -- Italian police will close the main road leading to the Vatican every night during the Christmas holidays as part of measures to boost security after warnings of an attack on Christian sites, a local official said Sunday. The decision comes after newspaper La Repubblica reported that the Israeli secret services had warned of a "probable attack in Italy" against a major Christian symbol at Christmas. A spokesman for the Italian Interior Ministry declined to comment on the report but less than 24 hours after the article was published, police said security was being stepped up at the Vatican, which is home to Pope John Paul. The Conciliazione, a broad avenue that runs from the river Tiber to St. Peter's basilica, will be closed to traffic from midnight until 7 a.m. from Monday night. Police will also patrol the huge square in front of St. Peter's day and night. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** In the aftermath of the bombings of Italian forces in Iraq ([Terrorist Incident](#)), warnings in its aftermath by the Italian interior minister that numerous sites in Italy were at risk, and the arrests of 15 mostly North African individuals accused of belonging to a cell of al Qaeda, it certainly would be prudent to take extra precautions to protect high value targets over the holiday season in Italy. Italy's participation and support for the war on terrorism and war in Iraq would make it a likely target for terrorists. Targeting supporters of the war on terrorism whether it has a symbolic presence in another country or in the country itself has been a tactic of terrorists in the last year. In addition, Italy has been home to terrorist groups and plots for some time. The recent arrest of individuals in Milan, Cremona, Parma were involved in fake passports, donations, and recruits for Iraq and Ansar al Islam. Some of these individuals were accused of working for Abu Musab al Zargawi, a Jordanian with ties to al Qaeda.

There have also been arrests of other individuals thought to be involved in terrorist cells and networks over the course of the last two years. The most prominent of these arrests had to do with the alleged plot to use cyanide in a tunnel under the US Embassy in Rome. Although the case came apart legally, (the cyanide was a garden variety that would have made lethality difficult--it is also possible the plot was interrupted before the terrorists figured out how to conduct the attack), the individuals involved were found guilty of other activities that could be used to support a terrorist network. In addition, there were also alleged plots in 2002 to hit religious targets in both France (Strasbourg Cathedral) and Italy (Cremona cathedral). It would seem that Italy has a presence of al Qaeda or al Qaeda franchise networks and cells imbedded in the country. While the Italian security apparatus has made arrests, one wonders what may have slipped under the radar, and with recent events fueling it, if some sort of further activity is coming to a head. The fact that there are general terror attack warnings in the US and in the Europe adds to a general sense of insecurity and the need for extra precautions. While Italy may be a useful place for terrorists to plan activities, what may have shifted in the Italian case, is targeting Italian interests directly as opposed to US or foreign targets in the country. Targeting a major Christian symbol like the Vatican or other famous churches would frame al-Qaeda or another fundamentalist group's "fight" as anti-Christian, which is a risky strategy that serves as a unifying force against them. However, it would also pack a great symbolic punch against the West and against Italy in which these religious places are part of the national identity.

## Greece

**(8) Anarchist Groups Demonstrate in Greece** -- Anarchist groups protesting convictions of members of Greece's November 17 terrorist group demonstrated in downtown Athens on Thursday and claimed responsibility for overnight firebomb attacks. About 250 mostly young people, some wearing hoods and wielding wooden bats, chanted "Freedom for the November 17 fighters" and "the desire from freedom is stronger than any prison cell," as hundreds of riot police watched. Police blocked a road leading to the American Embassy before the demonstrators dispersed peacefully. Fifteen members of the far-left group November 17 were convicted Monday following a nine-month trial. Four other suspects were cleared and released. Once Greece's most elusive and feared terrorist cell, November 17 is blamed for 23 murders and dozens of rockets and bomb attacks over 27 years. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS: Anarchist groups looking for a cause used the convictions of 15 members (see TRC [Intel Report](#) for more information) of November 17 ([Group Profile](#)) to march in Athens on December 11, 2003. According to TRC sources in Athens, the protest consisted of between 200-250 people who were mainly teenagers. Anarchist groups, besides demonstrating, have been responsible for firebombings in Athens to include attacks on banks, ATM machines, political offices, bus stops, vehicles, and more recently a court complex. These attacks will probably continue even as the Greek government prepares to host the Olympics, which is just eight months away. These groups have participated in demonstrations against the European Union Summit, Head of State visits, and more recently against the convictions of members of November 17. Two particular anarchist groups that have come to the attention of Greek police include the "Wolves of Exarchia" and the "Black and Red."**

## **Pakistan**

**(9) Pakistan on high alert after Musharraf assassination bid** -- Pakistani security forces went on high alert as they investigated a bid to assassinate President Pervez Musharraf hours after Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri arrived in the capital. An explosion destroyed a bridge in Rawalpindi, near Islamabad, just seconds after Musharraf's motorcade crossed over it Sunday. No-one was injured. "It's a condemnable act and it has been condemned by everybody," foreign ministry spokesman Masood Khan said Monday. "Whoever has committed this act has committed a heinous crime. We are conducting a comprehensive inquiry and we will get to the bottom of it, and try to determine who was responsible, what was the motivation." [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS: For details on the failed attempt, please review the TRC Terrorist Attack entry ([Terrorist Incident](#)).**

## **Philippines, Indonesia**

**(10) JI 'Training Philippines Rebels'** -- Indonesian members of the Southeast Asian terror group Jemaah Islamiyah have been training Filipino rebels in bomb-making and other tactics toward its goal of creating a pan-Islamic state, the Philippines' defense chief has said. Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Thursday intelligence reports indicated that 31 Jemaah Islamiyah militants are training Filipino insurgents in southern Philippine jungle camps run by some commanders of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Al-Qaeda-linked Jemaah Islamiyah is suspected of several terror attacks, including last year's Bali bombings that killed 202 people. Philippine authorities say the group was involved in a series of December 2000 bombings that killed 22 people and injured more than 100 in the capital, Manila. The MILF denied Ermita's statements and accused an unidentified "third force" in the government and the military of attempting to derail the peace process. Talks are expected to resume next month. A cease-fire has held since July. "There are no JI members inside our camps," MILF vice chairman Ghazali Jaafar said. He said the rebels were open to inspections and had already promised to help the government hunt down any militants. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS: Although the government of the Philippines has been a supporter on the war on terrorism and worked toward apprehending terrorists and terrorist activities in its midst, its**

geographic location and terrain (an island nation made up of 700 islands with remote mountains, jungles, and coastline) gives terrorists plenty of access points and places to hide. For Jemaah Islamiyah ([Group Profile](#)) and their quest for a greater pan-Islamic super state, the Philippines falls into a natural line of progression as both a target, a recruiting pool, and a planning and resource base. Foreign nationals who are members of terrorist organizations have been able to exploit fissures in the Philippines--courting guerrilla groups and blending into criminal groups. However, despite these physical and social-cultural conditions that are attractive to terrorist groups, indigenous and foreign, does a group like Jemaah Islamiyah, and by association al Qaeda, have reasonable hope for success in the Philippines and what do they want there?

While there have been various Muslim guerrilla groups fighting for independence in the southern Philippines for decades, the majority of the population is Christian, mostly Roman Catholic with only about 5% of the population Muslim and mostly concentrated in the southern Philippines, especially Mindanao. It is unlikely that the Philippines would be ripe for Islamic fundamentalism, but in areas of unrest, trouble could certainly be stirred up further. However, the indigenous separatist groups do not seem to have the fundamentalist ethos that a group like Jemaah Islamiyah possesses. Abu Sayyaf ([Group Profile](#)) seems to have devolved to kidnappings for profit as of late. However, since the US in 2002 sent troops to train Philippine soldiers fighting Abu Sayyaf, there may be more of an incentive for Abu Sayyaf to cooperate with al Qaeda or JI. While the Moro Islamic Liberation Front ([Group Profile](#)) has been linked to JA and have been suspected in some bombings, members of MILF, engaged in a ceasefire with the government, claim that linkages are not official, and any ties may be to splinter cells or renegade commanders. However, the fact that outside groups can still form relationships with terrorists is reason for concern. In addition, the fact that foreign nationals like the Indonesian bombmaker member of JI, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi escaped prison (he was killed later in a shoot-out) with Abu Sayyaf members, have had a presence in the Philippines and have been arrested or sought after for a variety of terrorist or terrorist planning activities is alarming. Previously, this presence included notorious terrorists like Ramzi Yousef and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. Al Qaeda or JI tapping into discontent from separatist groups as well as possible anti-Western, especially anti-American sentiment among the general population would not be difficult. Both Australia and Canada closed their embassies in Manila. While it is unlikely that the Philippines is at risk of becoming a fundamentalist state or sever ties with the US, it will remain a dangerous place and a battlefield for terrorist activity.

## South Korea

**(11) South Korea Says It May Be Terrorist Target** -- Agents linked to Al Qaeda visited the nation to scout U.S. facilities, according to officials citing a classified report. A number of agents connected to Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist network have visited South Korea to scout potential U.S. targets for attack, officials here said. One of the more worrisome instances involved a Pakistani who arrived from Manila earlier this year and has since left South Korea, said Hahm Seung Hee, a member of the National Assembly's intelligence committee. Hahm cited a classified intelligence report that was presented to the committee this week by the National Intelligence Service. He said the agency also suspected that one or two South Koreans might have assisted the suspected terrorists. "Our feeling is that these terror groups moved from the Middle East into western Asia and Southeast Asia and now into eastern Asia," Hahm said in a telephone interview Tuesday. "We have to strengthen security at our ports and [take] other counter-terrorist measures." [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** A recent classified South Korean report leaked to the press posits that al Qaeda representatives traveled to the country apparently to identify possible targets. Upon reflection and further review of the regional and, in fact, global terrorism threat, there are at least two

factors that contribute to the growing profile of South Korea as a target for terrorist attacks, especially by Islamic fundamentalists such as al Qaeda and its supporters. First, as restrictions increasingly hamper travel to Europe and North America, attacks have increasingly occurred in the Middle East and in Asia (i.e., closer to the homes of attackers). Second, South Korea's very public military cooperation with the United States extends beyond the Korean Peninsula concerns to include troop support for Iraq operations thereby angering radical Islamists. At least one al Qaeda operative thought to have traveled to South Korea is reportedly in Western custody and under interrogation. South Korea's historically high alert profile notwithstanding, the country has nonetheless entered the radar-screen of the most militant global Islamic terrorists - most notably Jemaah Islamiya and al Qaeda.

## **United Kingdom**

**(12) High-Alert Holidays; A Series of Arrests in Britain and Europe Stokes Fears of a Terrorist Surge Timed to the Christmas Season** -- The small, anxious-looking man who stood before a judge last week in London's Central Criminal Court hardly resembled the feral terrorist British police are linking him to. But Saajid Badat, 24, faces charges of having conspired with fellow Briton and convicted shoe bomber Richard Reid, who tried to blow up an American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami in December 2001. And Badat is just one of 21 people detained by British police in the past three weeks under antiterrorism laws (some suspects have since been released). All across Europe, in fact, it is a busy time in the war on terrorism. German police two weeks ago announced the arrest of an Iraqi, 29, identified only as Mohammed L. He is suspected of having dispatched a dozen radicals from Germany to Iraq to carry out suicide attacks against U.S. troops. More than 5,000 police officers raided locations tied to 1,200 supporters of Germany-based Turkish militant Metin Kaplan. His Caliphate State group, which seeks to replace Turkey's secular government with an Islamic one, has been linked to terrorist plots there. Five people were arrested on weapons, drug and illegal-immigration charges. Meanwhile, Syria has handed over 22 suspects sought by Turkey in connection with the November Istanbul blasts. And French police rounded up four people accused of assisting an al-Qaeda operative last year as he passed through France on his way to London. Are police methodically rolling up terrorist networks--or frantically trying to stave off a suspected holiday attack? [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS: Badat and Richard Reid, the shoe bomber, allegedly met in Pakistan at the Khalden training camp, which is modeled for European-jihadists and emphasizes suicide missions. Zacarias Moussaoui and Ahmed Ressam were both Khalden graduates as well. Said one French terrorism expert, "There are clear indications Badat and others he's involved with are up to something very sinister." The arrest of Badat is a victory for British police. According to OSAC, he was charged with "unlawfully and maliciously' conspiring with Reid 'and others unknown to cause...an explosion of a nature likely to endanger life or cause serious injury to property in the United Kingdom or elsewhere.'" According to the AFP, Badat will face a criminal court on April 12, 2004 for conspiring with Reid to commit offenses between September 1, 2001 and November 28, 2003, and two charges of explosives' possession. He will remain in custody until his court date.**

British authorities fear a terrorist attack in Britain during the Christmas holiday season. The Brits have not released any information about police operations, but the country is on its second highest alert level, "Severe General." Bur, the AP reported that the BBC indicated attacks could come from North African al Qaeda members. A senior French terrorism expert said, "Concern is high that attack plots may be advancing swiftly. I've never seen the British quite this alarmed." According to the Guardian, "Peter Clarke, the Metropolitan police deputy assistant commissioner in charge of counter-terrorism, said the past year had seen an unparalleled level of police investigation into terrorists, their supporters and sympathisers, and the arrests and charges reflected a whole gamut of activity, from the 'export' of suicide bombing to financing terrorists."



Clarke also confirmed that Britain is vulnerable, but he did not elaborate or name potential targets. However, Prime Minister Tony Blair's controversial support of the war against Iraq and his crackdown on Islamic extremism in Britain have raised concerns that the country, and London specifically, may fall into terrorist crosshairs. Thus, an attack in Britain this year might have political undertones, not just religious extremism.

Then again, according to the January 2003 USA Today magazine, "al Qaeda has never staged an incident on a holiday." Such a statement is sophomoric and should carry little weight in planning against a potential terrorist attack. Specific dates should be less of a concern than the process of securing against a terrorist attack. Undoubtedly, the same security precautions should be undertaken on December 25 as on any other day, if intelligence dictates a possible threat.

## China

**(13) China issues first ever list of "terrorist" groups, seeks international help** -- China has issued its first ever list of "terrorist" groups, blaming them for a series of bombings and assassinations and calling for international assistance to wipe them out. The groups are accused of trying to create an independent Islamic state called "East Turkistan" in northwest China's Xinjiang region, which is populated by the Turkish-speaking Uighur Muslims. East Turkistan forces inside and outside China have long plotted and executed a series of bombings, assassinations, arsons, poisoning attacks and other activities in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China, said Ministry of Public Security official Zhao Yongshen. The groups carried out their attacks "to achieve their goal of undermining national unity," said Zhao, deputy director of the ministry's bureau of anti-terrorism. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** This week, China demonstrated increased diplomatic savvy by formally announcing its own list of terrorism groups and individuals. The Uighurs, a culturally, linguistically Turkic and religiously Muslim ethnic group in the Xinjiang province of western China, enjoyed a brief period of independence in the 1940s before the communist regime asserted centralized control. Significant migration of the ethnic Han over 50 years threatens to diminish the Uighurs to minority status in the former East Turkestan region. Most analysts downplay the threat posed by the four groups named by the Chinese government: the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), the Eastern Turkistan Liberation Organization (ETLO), the World Uighur Youth Congress (WUYC) and the East Turkistan Information Center (ETIC), due to the considered belief that they lack local leadership and coordination. Human rights activists worry that the new international "war on terrorism" may now legitimize Chinese efforts to crack down on Islamic and other autonomy movements. In fact, China convinced the US and United Nations to add ETIM to their respective terrorism lists. Despite the comparatively unorganized resistance to Chinese domination, there are documented cases of ethnic Uighurs training at al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan and perhaps Pakistan that have led to calls by the Chinese for access to Uighurs held in Guantanamo Bay prison Camp X-Ray and dampened Sino-Pak diplomatic relations.

## Turkey

**(14) AP: Bin Laden Approved Attacks in Turkey** -- Osama bin Laden proposed attacking a Turkish military base used by the United States, but militants stymied by tight security bombed civilian targets instead, killing Muslims and upsetting al-Qaida leaders, Turkish officials told The Associated Press. The information came from interrogations of a top suspect in last month's deadly bombings in Istanbul that authorities believe were carried out by Turkish militants trained by al-Qaida in Afghanistan, according to the officials. The suspect, Fevzi Yitiz, told interrogators that bin Laden approved attacks in Turkey on condition that Turks were not killed, a top intelligence source told the AP this week. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** The November terrorist attacks in Istanbul against two synagogues ([Terrorist Attack](#)) and two British entities ([Terrorist Attack](#)) that killed 62 people were allegedly not

sanctioned by Osama bin Laden. According to Yitiz, who was arrested on December 10 returning to Turkey from Iran, attacks were to be targeted at the US military presence in Turkey at Incerlik Air Base or Israeli ships in the Port of Mersin, not civilian Muslims. However, the two sites were deemed too difficult, so months prior, the attackers changed their targets and recruited suicide bombers.

Yitiz told authorities that he had been trained by al Qaeda ([Group Profile](#)) in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, in 1994 and helped make the explosives for the four attacks. He is a prime example of a radicalized Muslim; he was a poor, disgruntled man, looking for a group to identify with. He turned to radical Islamic friends who sent him to the Jalalabad camp at no cost. Upon his return, he associated with the Turkish Hizballah ([Group Profile](#)) and was even questioned by authorities for those ties. Yitiz also indicated that two fugitive accomplices—Habib Aktas and Ibrahim Kus—also trained in Afghanistan and met with bin Laden in 2002 to “do something in Turkey for the jihad.” Another man, Adnan Ersoz was detained on December 15 for his involvement in planning the bombings and was formally charged on December 19 with “attempting to overthrow Turkey’s ‘constitutional order by force,’” tantamount to treason.

The Turkey bombings highlight the newest trend of al Qaeda terrorism wherein nationals are training in Afghan al Qaeda camps and return to their homeland to perpetrate terrorist suicide attacks. This autonomy, however, was a flaw in the Turkey attacks; bin Laden gave his blessing for attacks in Turkey, but the attackers changed the targets without confirming continued approval. Top al Qaeda officials called the set of dual attacks “a failure because it mostly killed Muslim Turks.”

Turkey has been concerned about suicide bombings within the country since a manuscript, written in Turkish, was discovered in 2001 in an al Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan about committing suicide bombings. Turkey has even offered amnesty to individuals who give information about illegal organizations. Ersoz, in wanting that amnesty, told authorities “‘a local structure has been established in Turkey’ linked to ‘an international terrorist organization’...[and he] ‘has been maintaining the link between this structure and the terrorist organization,’” which is presumed to be al Qaeda.

## Yemen

**(15) Terror suspect admits Yemen plot** -- An al-Qaeda plot to use a truck bomb to blow up the British embassy in Yemen was foiled just weeks before an identical attack killed the British ambassador and 11 other people in Turkey. News of the plan came as Yemeni officials announced that a leading al-Qaeda figure has confessed to planning the attack on the USS Cole in Aden harbour in 2000 and last year's bombing of the French oil taker Limburg off the coast of Yemen. Mohammed al-Ahdal, arrested last month, said he also organised cells to infiltrate the Yemeni security forces. Saudi-born al-Ahdal, 32, was one of Washington's 20 most wanted al-Qaeda operatives. He is said to have organised al-Qaeda's finances and weapons procurement in Yemen and provided links with local extremist groups. A seasoned 'jihadi' or holy warrior, al-Ahdal fought in Bosnia and Chechnya, where he lost his left leg below the knee. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** For details on the plot to attack the British Embassy, please review the TRC Terrorist Attack entry ([Terrorist Incident](#)).

## DOMESTIC ANALYSIS

---

**(1) 'Lackawanna Six' Figure Sentenced** -- The U.S.-born man accused of leading the others to an Al Qaeda camp gets 10 years. A 26-year-old man who prosecutors said led a group of American recruits to an Al Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan received a 10-year prison sentence Wednesday for supporting the terrorist organization. Yahya Goba, who was born in the Bronx and spent part of his childhood in Yemen, knew before leaving Lackawanna, N.Y., for the Al Farooq camp near Kandahar that it was associated with Osama bin Laden, authorities said. All the defendants in the "Lackawanna Six" case who attended the camp, where the use of explosives and weapons was taught, have pleaded guilty to single counts of providing support or resources to a dedicated foreign terrorist organization. Goba was the fourth to be sentenced. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** This past week marked the conclusion of the case against the Lackawanna Six-- a group of young Yemeni-American men now convicted of providing "material support" to a "foreign terrorist organization" under a 1996 anti-terrorism law. In fact, they all cooperated extensively with prosecutors in exchange for a reduced sentence by detailing al Qaeda recruitment and membership, tactical training, hiding and forging identities, concealing communication, learned at the al Farooq camp outside Kandahar in Afghanistan that they attended in 2001 prior to, and unrelated to, the attacks of 9/11. Nonetheless, despite the cooperation, the judge condemned the actions of the cell leader noting that he "significantly undermined the investigation of terrorism crimes in this case," and therefore extended the sentence recommended by the prosecutor. Upon review of the court materials, it seems the case of the Lackawanna Six is best viewed as a warning as to how disenchanted youth even within the United States can become captivated by the siren song of al Qaeda propaganda of word and deed, rather than as an example of a nefarious al Qaeda plot to insert six foreign nationals to execute a specific operation.

**(2) Panel Sees Slowdown in U.S. Fight Against Terror** -- Momentum has waned in the U.S. fight against terrorism, a federal panel said on Monday, and the chairman urged the government not to let events like the capture of Saddam Hussein lead to complacency at home. In its final report to President Bush and Congress, the Gilmore Commission -- mandated in 1999 by the Clinton administration to assess the country's preparedness for terrorist strikes -- warned of a slowdown in progress in the U.S. domestic security front since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. The 17-member panel said it had hoped the strong reaction in the wake of the 2001 attacks would result in a comprehensive national strategy to prevent future terrorist attacks. [Full Story](#)

**TRC ANALYSIS:** The Gilmore Commission has responsibly addressed the threat of terrorism and US homeland security responses over the past several years, providing an insightful body of knowledge on these issues. In its most recent and final report, the Commission acknowledges the persistent nature of the terrorism threat and warns of the dangers of complacency and the merits of measured and consistent homeland security program.

The Commission notes that the fight against terrorism is one that is not likely to be solved by arresting or detaining key personalities or imposing ad hoc domestic security measures. As many experts have pointed out, the threat of terrorism is not addressed over a period of several years, but rather several generations. Unless our response and security approaches are consistent with this fundamental notion, they are likely to be ineffective in countering a patient and determined terrorist adversary. The Gilmore Commission reports are essential reading for those involved in terrorism and homeland security issues and this report is no exception.

## RELEVANT NEWS ITEMS

---

**(1) Hope of Political Peace from Paris Meeting** -- Almost three years after a deal was struck between leaders in the Comoros to resolve a secessionist crisis, political stability continues to elude the troubled Indian Ocean archipelago. A protracted dispute pits federal President Azali Assoumani against Grande Comore President Abdou Soule Elbak over the respective powers of their offices. Elbak has accused Assoumani of riding roughshod over the country's recently adopted constitution. On the other hand, supporters of the federal government claim that Elbak - relatively new to politics on the main island - is being manipulated by a small group of detractors, whose aim is to derail the fragile peace process and eventually oust Assoumani from power. Commentators have remarked that the infighting, now entering its second year, has deteriorated into a mudslinging match between the two politicians. They say the long-running standoff has delayed economic development, as investors remain wary of the precarious political situation in the country. [Full Story](#)

**(2) Rebels Creep Out of the Bush as Peace Spreads** -- Burundian rebels lurking in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo are turning in their weapons and heading home as peace slowly spreads across the central African region, officials said on Thursday. The vast DRC and tiny neighboring Burundi have both incorporated rebels into their respective governments in recent months, raising hopes that years of conflict may be winding down in the heart of the continent. Burundi last month awarded top ministerial posts to leaders from the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), a former Hutu rebel group that has agreed to join the Tutsi-dominated government and army. "It's peaceful now in Congo and FDD rebels are coming down from the hills of their own free will - they don't want to live in the bush any more," said Colonel Cyrille Nsimba, an officer in the DRC's new unified national army. "Over the last month, a few are coming day by day and handing in their weapons. They want to go home," he said in Baraka, a small Congolese town on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, across from Burundi. He said up to 200 had surrendered over the past few weeks. [Full Story](#)

**(3) US Ends UNITA Travel Restrictions** -- The United States has lifted a five year-old travel ban on members of Angola's former rebel group, UNITA. US Secretary of State Colin Powell said UNITA had successfully completed its transition into a political party after the end of the civil war last year. UNITA leader Isaias Samakuva has called for elections to be held in 2004. [Full Story](#)

**(4) Peru troops cleared over deaths** -- A military court in Peru has cleared commandos accused of executing rebels during a hostage rescue operation, according to local media reports. Fourteen members of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement died after special forces freed hostages at the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima in April, 1997. But one former captive said he saw at least three rebels captured alive. The court said the rebels died in a "military confrontation". [Full Story](#)

**(5) AP: Terror Suspects' Children Training** -- Anticipating their own capture or death, Southeast Asian Islamic extremists sent their sons to Pakistan for training in how to attack Western targets so they could take over as the next generation of terrorist leaders, The Associated Press has learned. In a crackdown on the practice, five Malaysian students, including four teenagers, have been jailed without trial here following raids on Islamic boarding schools in Karachi, which had sent them on field trips to get firsthand experience of Islamic militant operations. The students underwent weapons and explosives training in Afghanistan and Kashmir, and some met al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden before the U.S.-led Afghan war started in late 2001, Malaysia police told AP. [Full Story](#)

**(6) Man Is Sentenced for Helping Hezbollah** -- A man who allegedly funneled cigarette trafficking profits to an Islamic-militant group was sentenced Tuesday to four years and nine months in prison.

Hassan M. Makki, 42, pleaded guilty in September to a racketeering conspiracy charge and to providing material support to Hezbollah, after it was designated a foreign terrorist organization by the State Department. Makki acknowledged providing more than \$2,000 to the militant group. Prosecutors say the money was intended to support Hezbollah's "orphans of martyrs" program, which benefits families of those killed in Hezbollah operations or by Hezbollah's enemies. [Full Story](#)

**(7) Mengistu's defence of Red Terror opens** -- Nine years into the trial of former Ethiopian dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam and his regime, defence lawyers finally opened their defence yesterday against the 209 charges of crimes against humanity during what was called the Red Terror in the late 1970s. The trial of Mengistu and 69 of his aides has become a lesson in the challenges of resurrecting a local justice system to prosecute crimes committed by a former dictator and his government, and how local courts can't always cope. While no one knows for sure how many people Mengistu's Marxist regime, which ruled between 1974 and 1991, killed during the purge of suspected opponents, experts estimate the number to be 150,000. Human Rights Watch called the Red Terror "one of the most systematic uses of mass murder by a state ever witnessed". [Full Story](#)

**(8) UEFA downplays risk of terrorist attack during Euro 2004** -- A top official with European football governing body UEFA downplayed the risk that a terrorist attack will disrupt the Euro 2004 finals which Portugal will host next summer. "Portugal does not have terrorism and there are no records of attacks in this country," UEFA's director of competition operations, Jacob Erel, told reporters while on a visit to Portugal. He added UEFA was "carefully monitoring the international situation" and the security measures taken so far in preparation for the football finals "give us confidence". One in four residents of Portugal fear their country could be the target of a terrorist attack when it hosts the European football championships next year, according to a poll published earlier this month in weekly newspaper Expresso. [Full Story](#)

## OVERHEARD

---

---

"We are one attack away from having our act together."

-Retired military general describing U.S. homeland security initiatives

## COLOR GUIDE/DISCLAIMER

---

---

The Color Guide, based on the US Department of Homeland Security color alert system, is an illustration of the level of severity of each article analyzed in the WAR Report by TRC staff. Below is a brief explanation of what each alert level signifies.

|                     |                   |                       |                      |                  |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Severe Alert</b> | <b>High Alert</b> | <b>Elevated Alert</b> | <b>Guarded Alert</b> | <b>Low Alert</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------|

**Severe Alert:** a serious threat, risk, or development is anticipated or expected. This category is used to announce major, concerning developments that may require immediate action.

**High Alert:** a higher level of threat or risk is likely. This category is used to warn clients of likely dangerous and significant developments that may require attention.

**Elevated Alert:** a level of threat or risk is evident. This category is used to alert clients to the potential for security-related developments.

**Guarded Alert:** a general level of threat or risk. This category is used to bring developments to the attention of clients, but these developments require only monitoring; action is not necessarily required.

**Low Alert:** a low level of threat or risk. This category is used to make clients aware of developments that are security-related but are not an imminent threat.



*website, 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 website. 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.*

## **CONTACT US**

---

---

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

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

Toll free: 1-877-635-0816

Fax: 1-703-935-2666