

the Moroccan government to initiate a similar process.<sup>37</sup> In Mauritania, 23 imprisoned Islamist militants issued a statement in late November rejecting violence against the state.<sup>38</sup> The breakthroughs could further isolate al-Qa`ida in North Africa.

The LIFG peace process may also have had implications in the West. Despite early opposition to the talks, the approximately 30 LIFG members living in the United Kingdom threw their weight behind the *shura* council in July. Their number included several senior members of the group and 12 individuals once subject to UK government "control orders" because of their threat to national security. As a result of the Libyan peace process, all but one of the "control orders" were dropped.<sup>39</sup> The support for the peace process by UK-based leaders signals that al-Qa`ida has lost the battle to win the hearts and minds of LIFG members worldwide.<sup>40</sup>

37 "Jihadist Salafi Prisoners Value Reviews of Libyan Islamic Group," statement by Mohamed Abdel Wahhab Rafiki, September 30, 2009; Personal interview, Noman Benotman, December 2009. Not all Moroccan jihadist prisoners have endorsed the revisions. On October 20, 2009, the London-based Egyptian militant Hani al-Siba`i posted a statement claiming that another Moroccan prison faction opposed the revisions.

38 The Mauritanian prisoners appear to have been influenced by the Mauritanian cleric Muhammad Hasan Ould Dado, a key supporter of the LIFG revisions. See "Imprisoned Mauritanian Salafis Reject Anti-State Violence," Middle East Media Research Institute, November 26, 2009.

39 Control orders are a British administrative measure placing severe restrictions on the movement and communications of individuals judged to pose a potential threat to national security. Around a dozen individuals continue to be subject to them. Seven UK-based members of the LIFG had their control orders dropped after peace talks were initiated in Tripoli and four had orders dropped against them after the revisions were published. British security services distributed copies of the revisions to these latter individuals because of their lack of access to the internet. Personal interview, Libyan source, November 2009; Duncan Gardham, "Terrorism Suspects Released from House Arrests after Peace Deal," *Daily Telegraph*, November 13, 2009.

40 On November 3, 2007, al-Qa`ida released a videotape in which Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abu Laith al-Libi, a senior figure in the LIFG, announced that the LIFG had formally joined forces with al-Qa`ida, a clear play for the hearts and minds of the group's rank-and-file members.

Al-Qa`ida has thus far not officially commented on the LIFG revisions. According to Benotman, al-Zawahiri is maintaining a strategic silence because he does not want to draw more attention to the document since he fears the consequences.<sup>41</sup> For al-Qa`ida, the revisions are even more problematic because several of its top leaders operating out of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region are former members of the LIFG. For Abu Yahya al-Libi, currently al-Qa`ida's chief propagandist, the rebuke from the LIFG was personal because his brother, `Abd al-Wahhab Qa'id, is one of the authors. Mid-level LIFG commander Tarek Durman said that he expects Abu Yahya to "not react to this event," something which may weaken al-Qa`ida's ability to counter the LIFG's arguments.<sup>42</sup>

Benotman predicts that al-Qa`ida will be finished as a force in the Middle East and North Africa within the next half decade, in no small part because an increasingly critical mass of jihadists agrees with the initiative taken by the LIFG: "We are starting to see statements from the Islamic fighting groups themselves. They are supporting the idea. A couple years ago they were completely against that...Now I hope we will start to see a new era."<sup>43</sup> The Libyan revisions, said Benotman, will "challenge terrorists for a generation."<sup>44</sup>

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41 Personal interview, Noman Benotman, Washington, D.C., October 2009.

42 Personal interview, Tarek Durman, Abu Salim prison, Tripoli, Libya, September 2009.

43 Nic Robertson and Paul Cruickshank, CNN interview with Noman Benotman, 2009.

44 Personal interview, Noman Benotman, December 2009.

## Assessing the Progress of Pakistan's South Waziristan Offensive

By Rahimullah Yusufzai

IN OCTOBER 2009, after approximately four months of preparations, Pakistan's armed forces launched a highly anticipated ground offensive against Taliban militants in South Waziristan Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The objectives of the mission, called Rah-e-Nijat (Path to Deliverance), are to clear the area of terrorists and militants and stabilize the region.<sup>1</sup> The current offensive in South Waziristan marks the largest military operation to date in both FATA and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).

Pakistan's government considers South Waziristan the primary source of recent terrorist violence targeting the state. It alleges that 80% of terrorist attacks in Pakistan have been organized by militants from Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a conglomeration of Pakistani Taliban groups headquartered in South Waziristan.<sup>2</sup> Government officials finally came to the conclusion that it was essential to destroy the TTP network, which is currently led by Hakimullah Mehsud.<sup>3</sup>

This article will offer an account of the offensive thus far, identify its successes and failures, and finally look at the government's strategy moving forward.

### The Offensive Begins

South Waziristan, spread over 2,419 square kilometers of vast and rugged terrain, has been under the effective control of Pakistani Taliban militants since 2003-2004. As a result, Pakistan's government does not have credible intelligence about the strength of local and foreign militants based in the area.

1 Amir Wasim, "Zardari Writes to NWFP Governor," *Dawn*, December 1, 2009.

2 Sajjad Shaukat, "Rationale Behind Waziristan Operation," *Pakistan Observer*, October 21, 2009; Khalid Qayum and Farhan Sharif, "Bombing Kills 19 in Peshawar as Pakistan Captures Taliban Bases," *Bloomberg*, November 19, 2009.

3 For a profile of Hakimullah Mehsud, see Mukhtar A. Khan, "A Profile of the TTP's New Leader: Hakimullah Mehsud," *CTC Sentinel* 2:10 (2009).

Pakistan Army chief, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, once described the tribal agency as an intelligence “black hole.”<sup>4</sup> At the start of the offensive, however, one government official estimated that approximately 1,500 foreign militants were hiding in South Waziristan, mixed in with an estimated total of 10,000 Taliban fighters.<sup>5</sup>

For weeks before the start of the ground offensive on October 17, the military softened the militants’ positions through airstrikes from fighter jets and helicopter gunships, in addition to long-

**“Overall, there is little evidence that heavy fighting occurred during the entire operation because it appears that most militants fled in the face of the government advance.”**

range artillery cannons. The airstrikes played a crucial role in destroying the militants’ resolve. Military officials later admitted that they had exhausted their target list as all known militant hideouts had been bombed.<sup>6</sup>

Early on October 17, regular troops from the Pakistan Army and paramilitary soldiers from the Frontier Corps mobilized from their bases under the cover of darkness and began the ground offensive. Military authorities claimed that 30,000 troops were part of the assault. Some reports, however, said a total of 60,000 soldiers were involved, including 45,000 combat troops and 15,000 supporting troops.<sup>7</sup>

The military initially targeted Makeen, Spin Kamar and Ladha, all located within the Mehsud tribal areas. The

ground offensive followed three routes into Mehsud territory. One route traveled northwest from the military fort of Jandola to the TTP stronghold of Srarogha via Spinkai Raghzai and Kotkai.<sup>8</sup> A second route traveled northeast from Wana and Shakai toward Sarwekai onward to Kaniguram and Ladha.<sup>9</sup> The third route left the garrison town of Razmak in North Waziristan Agency and headed south to one of the major militant strongholds at Makeen.<sup>10</sup>

The November 3 fall of Srarogha, where Baitullah Mehsud, the former head of the TTP, signed his first peace accord with the government in February 2005 marked a major setback for the TTP. It was in Srarogha that Baitullah spent most of his time plotting attacks, convening meetings and speaking to the media.<sup>11</sup> Zangara, the village where Baitullah was killed by a U.S. aerial drone in August 2009, is also in the Srarogha area, as is his ancestral village. Prior to Srarogha’s fall, the TTP also lost Kotkai, the village of current TTP leader Hakimullah Mehsud and his cousin, Qari Hussain, the latter of whom regularly trains suicide bombers for TTP operations.

On November 4, the military announced that they had entered Ladha town, considered the TTP’s most important stronghold. Shortly after, Makeen was taken. By mid-November, the militants had lost almost all their strongholds. Srarogha, Kaniguram, Kotkai, Spinkay Raghzai, Nano, Sherwangai, Shelwestai, Nawazkot, Ladha and Makeen have all been secured by the military. The military then announced that the first phase of operations was complete, as troops had reached all three previously designated targets: Makeen, Srarogha and Ladha.<sup>12</sup>

Also important was the fall of Kaniguram. Military authorities believe that most of the foreign militants

fighting in Pakistan were entrenched in Kaniguram, in particular Uzbek militants affiliated with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Although the military insisted that Uzbek fighters and other foreign militants resisted the advancing soldiers, no arrests were reported and no bodies were displayed to members of the media who were regularly flown in on military helicopters to survey the offensive. On a few occasions, however, media teams did report that rockets were fired at the troops, forcing the military to evacuate television crews to safer locations.

Overall, there is little evidence that heavy fighting occurred during the entire operation because it appears that most militants fled in the face of the government advance. Nevertheless, it was impossible for the media to independently confirm both the military and Taliban claims of casualties due to the lack of access to the conflict zone, disrupted lines of communication and the dislocation of almost all of the civilian population from the area.

#### Successes and Failures

On December 9, the Pakistan Army’s Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) released up-to-date figures on the offensive’s successes. It claimed that 589 Taliban militants and 79 soldiers had died in action so far.<sup>13</sup> The ISPR also said that Pakistan’s security forces seized a number of weapons, including RPG-7 rockets, anti-aircraft machineguns and SPG-9 rounds.<sup>14</sup> The military said it discovered 22 interlinked tunnels dug into the mountainside and stocked with arms and ammunition.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the military had taken control of all the important towns in South Waziristan where the TTP previously held power.

At some locations, the TTP’s retreat did not appear to be well organized considering that militants left behind heavy weapons and even cooked food. Separately, security forces said that they found passports of two foreigners in Shelwestai and Sherwangai villages. One passport belonged to Said Bahaji, a German national of Moroccan descent

4 Ismail Khan, “Battle for Waziristan Looms,” *Dawn*, October 2, 2009.

5 Zahid Hussain, “Laddah, Sararogha Cleared; Street Fighting in Makin,” *Dawn*, November 18, 2009.

6 Ismail Khan, “Army Close to Winding Up First Phase of Operation,” *Dawn*, November 5, 2009.

7 Maleeha Lodhi, “South Waziristan: Risks and Opportunity,” *The News International*, November 3, 2009.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Iqbal Khattak, “Taliban Good at Posturing, Poor at Resisting,” *Daily Times*, October 28, 2009; Iftikhar A. Khan, “Troops Enter Militants’ Srarogha Base,” *Dawn*, November 4, 2009.

12 Muhammad Saleh Zafar, “First Phase of SWA Operation Complete,” *The News International*, November 27, 2009.

13 “589 Terrorists Killed So Far in Operation Rah-e-Nijat,” *Frontier Post*, December 10, 2009.

14 Ibid.

15 “22 Tunnels, 15 Bunkers in SWA Destroyed,” *The Nation*, December 4, 2009.

who is considered a member of the Hamburg Cell that was involved in the 9/11 attacks on the United States. The second passport belonged to Raquel Burgos Garcia, a woman from Spain, who converted to Islam and married a Moroccan, Amer Azizi; Azizi was part of Spain's Abu Dahdah al-Qa`ida cell and was active in sending Spanish militants to training camps in Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup> The discovery of the passports raised prospects that Said Bahaji and other members of al-Qa`ida could be hiding in South Waziristan or the adjacent tribal areas.

The TTP, however, rejected the government's claims. In addition to disputing government casualty reports, TTP spokesman Azam Tariq insisted that the militant group executed a "tactical retreat" from their strongholds in South Waziristan and assured that the group's strength was largely intact.<sup>17</sup> Tariq said that the TTP was prepared for a long war and contended that the

### **"Hakimullah Mehsud has threatened retaliation against the military once heavy snows begin in South Waziristan in January."**

Pakistan Army was only occupying the major roads, while the militants were entrenched in the surrounding forests and mountains.<sup>18</sup> Lending credence to the TTP's claims about a tactical retreat, the government has so far failed to kill or arrest any senior TTP leaders. Furthermore, even by accepting the military's claims of 589 Taliban fighters killed, it is clear that the majority of fighters—numbering in the thousands—were able to escape and will likely continue to pose a threat.

16 Zahid Hussain, "Passport of 9/11 Conspirator Found in Waziristan," *Dawn*, October 30, 2009. For details on Amer Azizi, see Fernando Reinares, "Jihadist Radicalization and the 2004 Madrid Bombing Network," *CTC Sentinel* 2:11 (2009).

17 Ivan Watson and Samson Desta, "Taliban Claim 'Tactical Retreat' in Pakistan," CNN, November 4, 2009.

18 Irfan Burki and Daud Khattak, "9 More Militants Killed in South Waziristan," *The News International*, November 10, 2009.

It is not the first time that leading militants have escaped major military operations and months of aerial bombardment. The security forces' inability to obtain timely intelligence and capture or kill militant commanders has a pattern in all of their military operations. Furthermore, the current offensive did not benefit from the element of surprise, as it was clear that the military would launch the operation before the winter so that gains could be made by the time of the first snowfall. As a result, the militants were able to flee from South Waziristan before the start of the offensive. The snow began to fall on December 9, making the movement of troops toward the militants' mountain redoubt difficult. Outnumbered and outgunned, the militants retreated by replicating the tactics used by the Afghan Taliban, deciding to employ guerrilla tactics to harass the advancing troops and attack them at remote outposts.

Hakimullah Mehsud has threatened retaliation against the military once heavy snows begin in South Waziristan in January.<sup>19</sup> The military, however, appears to be prepared for the changing weather conditions. The troops deployed to the combat zone have already been replaced by fresh contingents.<sup>20</sup> More helicopters, heavy weapons, night-vision goggles and other equipment, some of it provided by the United States, have been sent to the troops. The soldiers are also benefiting from jamming devices that have been installed to protect military convoys from improvised explosive devices.

It is clear that Hakimullah, Qari Hussain, Waliur Rahman and Azam Tariq are still alive, as they have spoken to reporters in recent weeks.<sup>21</sup> This also shows that they have access to telephone lines and are therefore unlikely to still be in the Mehsud tribal territory in South Waziristan, considering that the phone lines are no longer operational in the area.<sup>22</sup> Current speculation

19 "We Will Give Effective Answer to Military Action in January - Hakimullah Mehsud," *Daily Jang*, December 10, 2009.

20 Zaafr.

21 Personal interview, Qari Hussain, TTP leader, December 5, 2009.

22 Cell phones do not work in most tribal areas including North and South Waziristan because mobile phone

only places Waliur Rahman, the TTP commander for South Waziristan, and his fighters in the Mehsud area, where he is organizing attacks against security forces.

It is possible that Hakimullah and his commanders could be seeking shelter in North Waziristan, where another Pakistani Taliban commander, Hafiz Gul Bahadur, maintains control.<sup>23</sup> Hakimullah and his commanders are

### **"The struggle, however, is far from over. The TTP has proved through its unrelenting campaign of terrorist attacks in Pakistani cities that its capabilities have not been fully degraded."**

unlikely to be in South Waziristan's Wana area, where Maulvi Nazir and militants from the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe operate; these non-TTP militants are likely hesitant to allow TTP fighters into their area due to fears that it would destabilize their own towns by drawing in the Pakistan Army.<sup>24</sup> Hakimullah could also have found refuge in Orakzai Agency, an agency he used to command for the TTP until the death of Baitullah Mehsud. Orakzai remains a TTP stronghold where militants from Waziristan, Khyber and Dara Adam Khel also operate and which serves as a base for planning attacks against Pakistan's urban centers. Some TTP commanders and fighters are reported to have entered Kurram Agency, and the

service is not available there. Militants normally avoid using satellite phones as their signals are easily tracked and have led to repeated captures.

<sup>23</sup> Hafiz Gul Bahadar, however, is not part of the TTP.

<sup>24</sup> South Waziristan is inhabited by two Pashtun tribes, Mehsud and Ahmadzai Wazir. The latter are not involved in the current fighting. The two tribes have traditionally been rivals and the government exploited this rivalry by renewing its peace deal with Taliban militants belonging to the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe living in the Wana and Shakai areas. The Mehsud-populated areas were targeted by the Pakistani military because the TTP had its headquarters there and drew most of its cadre from the Mehsud.

decision by Pakistan's military to send fighter jets and helicopter gunships to central Kurram was apparently taken following intelligence reports about the concentration of militants in the area.<sup>25</sup>

The TTP has retaliated by carrying out suicide bombings and other attacks in Pakistan's urban centers, and tasking its affiliates in Bajaur, Mohmand, Hangu, Kurram and elsewhere to launch fresh attacks on the security forces to put pressure on the government and influence public opinion.<sup>26</sup> They are also launching sporadic hit-and-run attacks against Pakistan's military in South Waziristan.

#### **The Offensive Going Forward**

The Pakistan government's overall strategy in South Waziristan is not clear. Initially, it was to eliminate the TTP leadership and capture the militants' strongholds in South Waziristan. Yet the military now plans on holding the areas it clears until the threat from the TTP is diminished. In fact, the mission has now become a counterinsurgency operation since the government plans on reviving the civil administration in the tribal agency. The military will also have to oversee the repatriation and screening of displaced tribal civilians to their villages, and manage rehabilitation and reconstruction work. As in Swat, where the government has been slow to revive the civil administration and reconstruction work has yet to begin in earnest, the situation is even more difficult in South Waziristan.

The second phase of military operations in South Waziristan is being presented as a clear and consolidation effort. The troops will be clearing militants from all captured territory, detaining suspects, searching for weapons, removing mines and demolishing the homes of Taliban members. The government is also planning on bringing the political administration back to the area, where it has been absent for years. It will take time for civil officials to take control from the military authorities, who are

<sup>25</sup> Khattak.

<sup>26</sup> It is the TTP's standard policy to claim responsibility for attacks on security forces and police, but to remain silent when public places and civilians are attacked. Although Hakimullah denied TTP involvement in bombing marketplaces, there have been attacks claimed by his organization in the past against these types of targets.

now in charge of the affairs in all tribal regions. There are plans to complete damage assessments so that tribal households affected by the fighting can be compensated. South Waziristan's political administrator, Syed Shahab Ali Shah, promised that reconstruction and development work would begin once peace was restored. He also said that unemployed men would be recruited into the civil armed forces known as Khasadar and Levies to maintain security in the area.<sup>27</sup>

Repair work on the Shakai-Kaniguram road and reconstruction of the Jandola-Srarogha road has reportedly started. Reconstruction of the roadways will facilitate the movement of troops and supplies, and enable the military to mobilize quickly in case the militants decide to launch a counteroffensive. Work on restoring the power

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transmission lines is also moving forward. Officials in the FATA political administration are planning to complete major repair work, restore civic services and revive the political administrative system in South Waziristan by April 2010, in time for the displaced Mehsud tribespeople to return to their villages from the neighboring districts of Tank and Dera Ismail Khan.

<sup>27</sup> “Mehsuds Who Suffered Losses in Military Operations Will Be Compensated,” Radio Razmak, December 10, 2009.

The third phase will include corrective political steps. Efforts will be made to win the support of the Mehsud tribe against the militant groups. The military has said that it recognizes this cannot be accomplished until it demonstrates its commitment to overcoming militancy in the region. There is also a proposal to relocate the Mehsud tribe's regional headquarters from Ladha to Makeen, which is located in the plains and can be better defended due to its proximity to the army garrison in Razmak. The fort in Ladha, which was destroyed by the militants, would also be rebuilt and used to station troops for their quick deployment to problem areas.

The government also plans on creating more administrative units to increase the state's official presence and make the Mehsud territory governable. Another important and still divisive issue is the bifurcation of South Waziristan into two separate administrative divisions: the Mehsud and the Ahmadzai Wazir regions. The Mehsud tribe opposes this plan, and warns that it would create acrimony at a time when efforts are needed to bring the tribe into the mainstream.

#### **Conclusion**

The TTP retreated from its strongholds in South Waziristan in the face of the Pakistan military's offensive. Its birthplace and headquarters are no longer under its control. The group is under pressure to launch the long guerrilla war that its commanders have threatened. Although the group still has armed units operating in Bajaur, Mohmand, Dara Adam Khel, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram and other locations in the northwest, the government appears determined to weaken the militants' overall network. The airstrikes and ground attacks by the military in lower and central Kurram and in Orakzai and Khyber are designed to destroy the TTP's logistics and supply lines, in addition to killing relocated cadres who fled military action in South Waziristan.

The struggle, however, is far from over. The TTP has proved through its unrelenting campaign of terrorist attacks in Pakistani cities that its capabilities have not been fully degraded. Its success in hitting high-security military targets through complex suicide assaults proves that it can continue to launch operations

despite losing its South Waziristan base. Moreover, the hardest part of the mission for Pakistan's military has only just begun. Routing guerrilla forces with a modern army is not difficult; it is the "hold" phase of counterinsurgency that will prove the most challenging. The militants can now begin to practice the form of warfare at which they are best: sporadic guerrilla attacks against troops.

Moreover, for Pakistan's government to be successful, it will need to move against TTP leaders and cadre in other tribal areas—where they are seeking shelter—which will stretch the military's operations and make it more vulnerable to guerrilla attacks. Public support for military operations could fall if civilians feel increasingly insecure in their own homes, workplaces and cities. Public support for the army's actions in the tribal areas, currently at 51%, could also be jeopardized if the military bows to the pressure of the United States and its NATO allies and takes action against the hideouts of predominately Afghan Taliban militants, such as in North Waziristan and Baluchistan.<sup>28</sup> It is clear that Pakistan's security forces are still in the early stages of their perennial fight against Islamist militants intent on weakening the state.

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## The Internet and its Role in Terrorist Recruitment and Operational Planning

By Sajjan M. Gohel

THE VIRTUAL WORLD is fast becoming the most important meeting place for terrorists, and a major venue where extremists can make contact with like-minded individuals. Through these relatively anonymous contacts, an extremist can be brought into the terrorist fold and become physically involved in terrorist plots. Today, there are a growing number of cases in which terrorist groups, or jihadist radicalizers, have used the internet to recruit individuals in the West, providing them a starting point to engage in terrorist activity. By ignoring this developing issue, there is the risk of becoming complacent about an emerging threat that appears to be growing more significant with time.

This article will explore a now defunct network of terrorist cells that were located across the world and which became connected through the internet. By studying this network of cells, which the author identifies as the Digital Jihad Network, it becomes evident that the internet has become a key platform in cell formation and terrorist activity. Moreover, the article will also show how the internet is increasingly being used to recruit Westerners for jihadist operations at home and abroad. Finally, the article will identify the threat posed by "lone wolf" terrorism, which is made possible as a result of jihadist literature, online radicalizers and military training materials available on the web.

### The Internet as a Staging Platform: A Case Study of the Digital Jihad Network

The internet is increasingly playing a critical role in linking together disparate terrorist cells around the world. An examination of one major global jihadist network reveals the sheer number of links and connections forged through the internet. The case involved Ehsanul Sadequee, who an Atlanta court found guilty of conspiracy to materially support terrorists in August 2009. His trial explored a nexus of extremists who were connected through the internet to plan attacks and form a global network linking North America, Europe and

South Asia. The trial resulted in eight terrorism cases involving several dozen defendants and years of complex international cooperation.<sup>1</sup>

Born in Virginia with parents from Bangladesh, Sadequee exhibited radical sentiments in his teens. Soon after the September 11 attacks, he sent an e-mail to an extremist website expressing his desire to join the Taliban.<sup>2</sup> Sadequee's extremist activity intensified when he met Syed Haris Ahmed, a Pakistani-American student at Georgia Tech, at a mosque in Atlanta. The two made contact in a password-protected chat room.<sup>3</sup> Transcripts of their internet conversations reveal that they fed off each other's outrage at the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup>

It was in the virtual space, through murky web forums and radical chat rooms such as "Clearguidance," that an extremist network of like-minded individuals, together with Sadequee and Ahmed, was established and where ideas for terrorist training and plotting attacks were discussed.<sup>5</sup> The network included a group of radicals from Canada, known as the "Toronto 18" led in part by Zakaria Amara, a gas station attendant;<sup>6</sup> a Bosnian-born Swede named Mirsad Bektasevic who was planning attacks against Western interests in Sarajevo; and Aabid Khan from Manchester, England, who acted as a facilitator for various Pakistan-based terrorist organizations.<sup>7</sup> The final actor in the network was Younis Tsouli, a former Moroccan diplomat's son living in London whose computer expertise made him the network's hub.<sup>8</sup> Tsouli had also used the internet to build links to al-Qa`ida operatives in Iraq.<sup>9</sup>

1 "Atlanta Defendant Found Guilty Of Supporting Terrorists," U.S. Department of Justice, August 12, 2009.

2 Ibid.

3 Bill Gillespie, "The Case Against Canada's Plotters," Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, October 14, 2009.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 "Toronto 18 Video Evidence Released," Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, October 20, 2009.

7 "Atlanta Defendant Found Guilty Of Supporting Terrorists."

8 Tsouli infamously was able to hack an FTP server operated by the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department and turn it into an al-Qa`ida message board, providing detailed information on the art of hacking.

9 "Terrorist Use Of The Internet," Combating Terrorism

28 This poll is available at Gallop Pakistan, the findings of which were published on November 3, 2009.