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JIHADI GROUPS IN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS

Abstract

The article analyzes the role of Islamic Jihadi groups in international conflicts. The research concerns three armed conflicts in which Islamic Jihadi groups expressed their positions. Two of them are ongoing conflicts in Ukraine (since 2022) and Gaza (since 2023), and the third one was the second war in Karabagh. These significant armed conflicts were considered by Jihadi groups as a good possibility for fighting and gaining experience, although they had different positions on all of them. So, the article tries to show the attitudes and strategies of Jihadi groups to understand what motivates them to participate in international conflicts or not.

Keywords: *Conflict, Jihadi Organizations, Ukraine, Karabagh, Gaza*

To understand why terrorist groups participate in international conflicts, it is necessary to analyze the goals that these groups want to achieve. Terrorist groups have various goals, such as regime change, territorial change, policy change, or social control¹. For example, the Tamil Tigers or the so-called Islamic State (IS) had the territorial goal to found a new state, while the Ku Klux Klan, as well as the antiabortion movement in the US, are groups with the goal of social control to change the laws in the US; Al-Qaeda's goal is to withdraw US troops from the Middle East.

Among 40 terrorist groups analyzed by Kydd and Walter (2006), 31 groups have the goal of regime change, and only 12 groups have more than one goal, which includes regime change and territorial change. Al-Qaeda is the only terrorist group in the list with three goals: regime change, policy change, and territorial change².

The goals of terrorist groups also inform their strategy for fighting. As Kydd and Walter (2006) describe in their research, terrorist groups' strategy is used to achieve political ends such as policy change, overthrow of the current regimes, and withdrawal of foreign forces. Crenshaw (1981) explains that involvement in international conflicts gives terrorist organizations the possibility to gain operational leverage or to provoke enemies to overreact.³ Civil wars or international conflicts also create opportunities for terrorist

¹ Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism", *International Security* 31, (2006): 52.

² Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism", 54-55.

³ Crenshaw, M., "The Causes of Terrorism", *Comparative Politics*, 13 (1981): 379-399.

groups to expand operations, access weapons, and gain experience. Conflict zones, because of a lack of good governance, give terrorist groups space for operation with relative impunity.

Beyond the strategic calculus, some terrorist organizations build their strategy on their ideological or identity-based commitments that shape their goals and tactics. Radical Islamic groups, such as IS or al-Qaeda, see the international conflicts as part of a global religious war – global Jihad - and therefore justify participation in international conflicts. Also, sectarian or ethno-nationalist terrorist groups may join wars to defend co-ethnic or co-religious populations. Ideological narratives encourage recruits to frame local conflicts as part of a larger existential struggle.¹

So, in some cases, terrorist groups call their members to participate in international conflicts, although sometimes they call on them not to intervene. As it seems, the difference in the strategy is based on the ideological framework. For some Islamic Jihadi groups, some conflicts are viewed as the conflict between *infidels* or non-believers (the Russian-Ukrainian War), while the conflict between Palestine and Israel is seen as the war between Muslims and their enemies.

The events of February 24, 2022, in Ukraine have altered the ongoing processes in the World and confronted the globe with a new reality. Radical Jihadist groups were no exception in this case. Among these groups, IS stands out since it has lost territorial control since 2019 and changed its strategy of fighting. The group has chosen to use hybrid warfare elements to achieve its strategic goals, although it has not renounced the idea of the global Islamic Caliphate. The group, however, was more focused on online propaganda and activities. At the same time, the IS's own media paid great attention to the ongoing international events and tried to analyze them through the prism of its ideology, policy, and strategy. In this context, the organization actively discussed various armed conflicts around the world, such as the Russian-Ukrainian war, conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, the Uyghur issue in China, or Hindu-Muslim tensions in India. In many cases, the discussion centered on the justification of involvement in these conflicts, especially when there is an armed conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims.

It is important to clarify that this research focuses on the positions of Islamic Jihadi organizations and does not seek to examine Islamic doctrine in its broader context. Before discussing the views of the organizations on global armed conflicts, it is important to note that, according to their ideology, Jihad is not perceived as a general war between nations or peoples. They regard it as a war in the name of God, divine and eternal, destined to continue until the Day of Judgment. Furthermore, scholars and leaders within Jihadist organizations assert that Jihad must take the form of physical struggle and is considered obligatory for Jihadists. It is viewed as a battle between Muslims and 'infidels,' aimed at protecting Islam and the Muslim community². By interpreting Jihad through a spiritual lens, the struggle is imbued with celestial or divine significance, leading fighters to believe they are supported by the God himself³.

¹ Quintan Wiktorowicz, "A genealogy of Radical Islam", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 28 (2005): 83-84, accessed July 20, 2025 DOI: 10.1080/10576100590905057

² Shiraz Maher, *Salafi-Jihadism. The History of an Idea*, (UK: Penguin Random House 2017) 31-40.

³ The Koran Interpreted, Translated by Arthur Arberry, London: George Allen and Unwin LTD (New York: Macmillan Company 1955) 9:14.

In this research, we are examining the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutory¹ Statements of several Jihadist organizations, which discuss the issue of fighting in the global conflicts. In this context, the perspective of these groups on ongoing global processes, particularly large-scale wars, is notably intriguing.

The research methodology primarily involves analyzing the media outlets utilized by Jihadist groups to express their positions, such as the main publication of the IS - the magazine *al-Naba*². Additionally, English-language articles on international topics are published in the journal *Voice of Khorasan*,³ which is affiliated with the 'Islamic State Khorasan Province' (ISKP). Consequently, articles from these magazines were examined to understand the perspectives of these groups

In this research, video and audio interviews, as well as recordings where leaders or members of Jihadist groups explicitly express their own or their organization's stance on conflicts, were utilized. These materials were originally published on social media platforms through pages or groups associated with Jihadist organizations. However, due to the policies of these platforms, most of the content has since been deleted. As a result, it is now largely inaccessible to the general public. Therefore, these materials will be used sparingly and only in critical cases where they directly reflect the key positions of Jihadist groups (especially in the case of the Second Karabakh War).

On the other hand, written media remains accessible, enabling a more comprehensive analysis of the views and ideological approaches of these terrorist organizations. Citations from *The Voice of Khorasan* are presented here without any modifications, as they were originally written in English. In contrast, excerpts from the *al-Naba* magazine were translated by us.

Karabakh

It was in the interests of certain groups to give the Second Karabakh War a religious connotation, but the Armenian-Azerbaijani armed conflict did not take the form of Jihad. Russian propaganda actively tried to find Islamist traces in the aforementioned conflict. Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that: 'militants from illegal armed units are being moved to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone from Syria and Libya to take a direct part in the hostilities'⁴. Also, the head of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, S. Narishkin, mentioned that hundreds or maybe thousands of mercenaries from

¹ Maher, Salafi-Jihadism, 25.

² 'An-Naba' magazine (Arabic: النبا – The News) is a weekly publication of IS, which is the main platform for disseminating the group's narratives, ideology, news, propaganda. The first issue was published in May 2010. Since 2015 the magazine has been published as an official weekly newsletter.

³ 'Voice of Khorasan' – a magazine of the Islamic State of the Khorasan Province (ISKP), which was released in January 2022. The magazine is published in English, although in 2024 the publication in Tajik language was added.

⁴ 'Comment by the Information and Press Department on the movement of foreign mercenaries to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone'. MFA of Russian Federation, 1594-30-09-2020. Accessed 12 March 2025

https://archive.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/ckNonkJE02Bw/content/id/4363834?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_ckNonkJE02Bw&_101_INSTANCE_ckNonkJE02Bw_languageId=en_GB

international terrorist organizations, who were fighting in the Middle East, moved to fight in Nagorno-Karabakh¹. On the other hand, Russian propagandist media 'TV-Zvezda' published an article under the title 'Ghosts' Fought in Nagorno-Karabakh, which discusses the participation of Afghan fighters in the conflict². All these statements and publications aimed to give the conflict a pseudo-jihadist nature. However, the active involvement of the global Jihadist organizations in the Second Karabakh War was not observed. The aforementioned conflict was actively discussed in social media groups affiliated with Jihadist organizations. In most cases, despite the ideological confrontation, the positions of Jihadists in the aforementioned case coincided - the intervention of 'Muslims' (supporters of Jihadi groups) in the conflict of secular states is unacceptable³. Accordingly, no new hotbed of Jihad has emerged in the South Caucasus, and the conflict has not gone beyond interstate confrontation.

The IS has stated its own clear position on the conflict. According to the organization's propaganda, including from the ethnic Azerbaijanis, Azerbaijan cannot be considered a Muslim country, and the population, except for the supporters of the IS, are not Muslims; therefore, fighting on their side is religiously unacceptable⁴. In addition, it should be noted that the events in Karabakh have not received a significant official response from the IS, and the organization's members have limited themselves to religious narratives.

The clear stance of the so-called 'Islamic State' on involvement in global or regional conflicts is evident in the official statements made by its representatives, which are published through media outlets affiliated with the organization.

Ukraine

The ongoing Russian aggression in Ukraine has proven to be far more complex than the conflict in Karabakh. Muslims, particularly North Caucasian fighters, are actively participating in the conflict, fighting both for and against Ukraine. The involvement of North Caucasians in these hostilities, coupled with the overt depiction of Russia as the aggressor, has created new opportunities for the Jihadist-leaning North Caucasian segment. Several fighters who previously joined or led Jihadist groups opposing Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria, have now left the region to combat Russian aggression in Ukraine. For these fighters, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine represents a renewed opportunity to confront Russia.

This stance, however, has been strongly criticized by the IS, which has prohibited its fighters from engaging in the war in Ukraine. According to the organization, participating in a conflict between 'infidels' or fighting under their banner is categorically unacceptable, even for the purpose of gaining combat experience. Other Jihadist

¹ 'On the situation around Nagorno-Karabakh'. Foreign Intelligence Service of Russian Federation, Head of the Press Bureau S.N. Ivanov, 06.10.2020. Accessed 12 March 2025.

<http://svr.gov.ru/smi/2020/10/o-situatsii-vokrug-nagornogo-karabakha.htm>

² Victor Volf, 'Ghosts' were fighting in Karabagh' ('Dukhi' voyevali v nagornom karabakhe'). Zvezda (2021). Accessed March 12, 2025.

<https://zvezdaweekly.ru/news/202010231540-nuEos.html>.

³ t.me/War_Conflict/12300/ Accessed 12 September 2023

⁴ t.me/War_Conflict/12325/ Accessed 12. September 2023

organizations have adopted a relatively softer stance, limiting their actions to anti-Russian rhetoric.

It is also worth noting that the IS leadership sees the ongoing hostilities in Ukraine as a strategic opportunity to expand its activities in Europe. In April 2022, the organization's spokesperson, Abu Umar al-Muhajir, addressed the conflict in an audio message titled 'Fight them, and God will chastise them at your hands'¹, emphasizing that a prolonged war would weaken the 'enemies of Muslims', thereby creating more opportunities for action: *'O sons of Islam, carefully select and monitor your targets, for they are numerous. Focus on those that inflict the greatest pain upon the Crusaders and the Jews. Be resolute and place your trust in God. Today presents an opportunity, as Europe finds itself on a hot plate, with the embers of war glowing beneath it. The Crusaders are now striking at each other's necks'*².

Consequently, while the IS fighters have refrained from participating in the Russian-Ukrainian war due to ideological constraints, the leadership perceives global turbulence, such as the conflict in Ukraine, as a chance to further its objectives by exploiting the weakened global security environment.

Before the voice message of Abu Umar al-Muhajir, in the 328th issue of the *al-Naba* magazine, the opening article titled 'Crusader-Crusader Wars' was dedicated to the war in Ukraine. At the beginning of the article, a verse from the Quran is cited, portraying conflicts between non-Muslims as an expression of God's will³: *"And with those who say 'We are Christians' We took compact; and they have forgotten a portion of that they were reminded of. So, we have stirred up among them enmity and hatred, till the Day of Resurrection."*⁴

The author of the article analyzes the ongoing conflict from both military and Islamic law perspectives. He argues that this war marks the beginning of a global natural process that will continue to intensify.

'From a military standpoint, the 'Russian-Ukrainian' war, whether prolonged or brief, is merely the prelude to future 'Crusader-Crusader wars'. The destruction and death witnessed on both sides are but a small preview of what could unfold when larger wars erupt among them. The devastation seen today in Crusader Ukraine will inevitably spread farther and deeper to other Crusader capitals—God willing—that have long sought to avoid such outcomes, but in vain.

*From the perspective of Shari'a, the conflict is viewed not only as a punishment for the Crusaders' disbelief in God Almighty but also as a manifestation of a 'cosmic law' that no coalition of disbelievers can halt, even if united. This 'law of struggle' governs the perpetual clash between truth and falsehood, as well as the internal struggles among disbelievers themselves. These conflicts are seen as battles over worldly dominance and its spoils, forming a distinct subset of the broader law of struggle.'*⁵

¹ The Koran Interpreted, 9:14.

² "Fight them, and God will chastise them at your hands", *al-Naba*, issue 335, 21 April 2022. 11.

³ "Crusader-Crusader wars", *al-Naba*, issue 328, 03 March 2022. 3.

⁴ *The Koran Interpreted*, 5:14

⁵ "Crusader-Crusader wars", 3.

The article strongly criticizes Muslims who have chosen to participate in the war on either side and issues a warning against joining the forces of 'infidels':

'We have seen significant departure from the principles of loyalty and disavowal in the positions taken by some individuals regarding this war. Some support Crusader Ukraine, referring to it as resistance against the 'Russian occupation'. Others align with Crusader Russia, viewing it as an ally of their 'resistance axis'! and an enemy of America! And others are waiting for the outcome of the battle to become clear to decide whether to side with one of the two crusader factions!

...

What should be warned against in such times is the escalation of the activity of small charlatans and their media outlets in trivializing disbelief for people, as we have seen in their call to Muslims living in Russia and Ukraine to join and participate in this war, fighting for the tyrant!'¹

Almost the same is repeated by the author of the article 'A message from the Heart to our Muslim Brothers in Ukraine', which was published in the 24th issue of the Journal Voice of Khorasan:

'It is truly sorrowful to see how many Muslim brothers and sisters remain deaf and blind to this generous reminder of the Holy Quran, serving purposes other than those established by the Din. Nowadays, among others, this is certainly the case of those Muslims who joined the ranks of the Russian and Ukrainian kuffar armies, which keep fighting each other over minor worldly issues of pride, territory, and resources, and while joining such ranks of the infidels, they did not pay attention to the nullifier of Islam that they have committed for fighting for sake of Taghut².

...

On the one hand, there are thousands of born Muslim Chechens under the command of an ultra-Christian nationalist, imperialist, and former Marxist-Communist like Vladimir Putin, of course. On the other, thousands of born Muslim Tatars are executing the orders of an ultra-Jew Israeli Zionist supremacist, a "comedian" by the name of Volodymyr Zelensky, who is acting on the stage of the ongoing war as the "president" of his kuffar Christian "compatriots" on behalf, as usual, of the grand strategies of the Jewish global Taghut, which pulls the strings of the Western Taghut as well, embodied by the US-NATO (Turkey included)-EU axis. In addition, small groups of Muslim Chechens are engaged with the Ukrainian army, along with Arab and Central Asian Muslims, although the latter are being exploited as cannon fodder also by the Russian kuffar³.

The author continues with the ideological issues and criticizes Muslim Nations due to their 'misguidance' and disobedience of the Holy Law:

'The dictates of which book are they applying? Certainly not of the Holy Quran, where also nationalistic ideologies and sentimentalisms are clearly forbidden as an act of shirk: have the Tatars forgotten that, or are they simply disregarding the Word of Allah

¹ "Crusader-Crusader wars", 3

² "A message from the Heart to our Muslim Brothers in Ukraine" written by a Sincere Mujahid from "the European Dar al-Kufr", Voice of Khorasan 24, Ramadan 1444 (March 23 – April 21 2023). 41.

³ "A message from the Heart", 42.

the Exalted to worship the Ukrainian flag, instead of lifting the banner of the Islamic Khilafah?

Not to speak about the Arab and Central Asian Muslims. It is pitiful indeed to see them wandering across the Dunya, farther and farther away from the Straight Path. "Shaytan made their deeds seem decorous to them, and averted them from the way [of Allah]" [al-Ankabut, 29:38], to the extent that they confused Putin and Zelensky with the Caliph they are expected to follow¹.

In the conclusion, the author of the article 'Crusader-Crusader Wars', emphasizes to readers that the only true path is Islam and unwavering devotion to Allah's will:

'We would like to emphasize an important point: regardless of how complex the situation becomes, how events escalate, or how intertwined positions may appear, certain truths remain unaltered. God Almighty is one, without any partner, and servitude belongs solely to Him. Truth remains truth, and falsehood remains falsehood; what is lawful is clear, and what is unlawful is equally clear. Muslims are obligated to align themselves with the religion of God Almighty alone, to remain loyal to believers, and to disavow all infidels, irrespective of their old or new alliances. Hope must rest solely on the group of believers who fight against all polytheists for the sake of God Almighty. These alliances, which were united in a global Crusader coalition a few years ago, have now fractured or are on the verge of doing so, God willing.

The Muslim should also take into consideration the scenes of war and destruction, which are still in their early stages, and remember that this entire world is destined for destruction and annihilation, and that the horrors of war, no matter how great, are nothing compared to the horrors of the Day of Resurrection².

In conclusion, the author of the article 'A Message from the Heart to Our Muslim Brothers in Ukraine' calls for unity within the Muslim community. He urges Muslims involved in the conflict in Ukraine to join the 'Islamic State' and participate in its 'holy war' against 'infidels', promising them a heavenly reward in return:

'The Baatil is now fully exposed in front of our Muslim brothers' eyes in Ukraine, can they see it? Thus far, it seems that they have not, but we are here on purpose to call them to come to their senses. With His blessings, we are all brothers within the same Ummah, our hearts are together, and we are not supposed to be divided [al-Imran, 3:103]. Do the right thing and come back to the Straight Path. Wage Jihad fi Sabilillah with the "Caucasus Wilayah" of the Islamic Khilafah. And you will not regret it³.

Gaza

The armed conflict in the Gaza Strip, which has been escalating since 2023, has resonated within Jihadist organizations. Almost all Islamic groups have publicly and officially expressed their support for the People of Palestine and condemned Israel's actions. It is worth mentioning that these jihadist radical organizations emphasized the solidarity with Palestinians, although Hamas was largely absent from their rhetoric as a central actor.

¹ "A message from the Heart", 49.

² "Crusader-Crusader wars", 3.

³ "A message from the Heart", 49.

However, not all Jihadist organizations ignored Hamas. Al-Qaida openly backed Hamas's actions against Israel on the 7th of October 2023. Al-Qaida in Yemen praised Hamas attacks and called its supporters around the whole world to seize the moment and take an action¹. As FBI director Christopher Wray noted, after the escalation in Gaza Strip, terrorist groups also called to attack Americans. He cited Hezbollah, Hamas and IS as making new threats against America.² These anti-American calls have been accompanied by antisemitic incidents across Western countries. According to official data, in the first weeks after the conflict began, Austria recorded 37 incidents, France – 819, Germany – 680, Italy - 159 and the UK – 416.³

As-Shabab group in Somalia released the statement: *'We salute all the brave heroes, the brave commandos, and all those stationed in the Holy Land and we say to all of them: May God reward you with good on behalf of the Islamic Ummah and may God reward you for your Jihad and your noble deeds'*.⁴

The leader of the Katibat Al-Tawhid wal-Jihad ("The Battalions of monotheism and Jihad") group⁵, mainly composed of Uzbeks, Abdul Aziz released two videos. In the first video titled "On the Hamas Attack Against Jews" (dated 18.10.2023) he described Hamas' recent actions as a tactically justified action⁶. According to him, such operations aim to draw global attention to the Palestine issue and could potentially lead to a positive resolution of the long conflict. Abdul Aziz compared Hamas actions to the Viet Cong actions during the Vietnam War, which triggered anti-war protests in the US, and which led to the resignation and withdrawal of US President Nixon and the American army from

¹ Tore Hamming, "The Beginning of a New Wave? The Hamas-Israel War and the Terror Threat in the West", Combat Terrorism Centre at West point 16 (2023). Accessed July 25, 2025. <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-beginning-of-a-new-wave-the-hamas-israel-war-and-the-terror-threat-in-the-west/>

² Daniel Boguslaw, FBI Warns Gaza War Will Stoke Domestic Radicalization "For Years To Come", The Intercept, (2024). Accessed August 5, 2025. <https://theintercept.com/2024/03/14/fbi-gaza-war-domestic-radicalization-hamas/>

³ "Director Wray's Opening Statement to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs," FBI, accessed August 11, 2025. <https://www.fbi.gov/news/speeches-and-testimony/director-wrays-opening-statement-to-the-senate-committee-on-homeland-security-and-governmental-affairs>; "Antisemitic Incidents Report 2023", CST Blog (2024). Accessed June 25, 2025. <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2024/02/15/antisemitic-incidents-report-2023>; "Facing Facts Toolkit in a Time of Crisis", Facing Facts (2023). Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.facingfacts.eu/facing-facts-toolkit-in-a-time-of-crisis/>

⁴ Caleb Weiss, "Shabaab celebrates Hamas-led invasion of Israel, calls people to jihad", FDD's Long War Journal, (2023). Accessed July 26, 2025. <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2023/10/11/shabaab-celebrates-hamas-led-invasion-of-israel-calls-people-to-jihad/>

⁵ Katiba al-Tawhid wal-Jihad was formed in 2015 by Uzbeks fighting in Al-Nusra Front. Since 2015 it has been under Hayat Tahrir al-Sham fighting in Syria. In 2022 the group was designated by US State Departments as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. The same year UN Security Council added the group to the list of sanctions for its association with Al-Qaeda.

⁶ Ustoz Abdulaziz, "HAMAS faoliyati". Accessed August 10, 2025. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cRilv7a_Y0

Vietnam. So, he stated, that Hamas purpose should be to show Israel's real plans against Palestine to the World¹.

In the second video titled 'How We Can Help Palestine', Abdullah Aziz called Muslims across the World to support Palestine through prayer, charity, Jihad, and sacrificing their lives.²

Among the organizations commenting on the situation in the Gaza Strip, the IS remained the toughest. Alongside criticism of Israel, the IS also condemned Hamas actions, as well as the governments of Muslim countries, accusing them of supporting Israel and the West in this conflict. The group stated that any struggle should be waged in the name of Islam. Henceforth, only 'Al-Muwahhidun' ('The Monotheists') are capable of defeating Israel and saving the Palestinian people. The IS spokesperson Abu Umar Al-Muhajir underlined this position in his statement when he called Muslims to monitor their own government's engagement in peace talks with Israel. As Al-Muhajir declared, while in the past these governments secretly tried to pursue peace with Israel, while publicly supporting the liberation of Palestine, recently they have openly begun to establish a relationship with Israel³.

As the IS considers the militant groups and Hamas as apostates, it mainly keeps silent on the Israel-Palestine conflict. Although the exception was Al-Naba newsletter, issued on the 20th of October. The group sees Israel as the enemy of Islam and often claims that attacks should be organized against Israel. But in reality, IS never took a part in the fight against Israel and the liberalization of Palestine.⁴

From all of the above, it can be concluded that Jihadist groups closely monitor global developments but avoid participating in large-scale armed conflicts. This position can be explained by several factors:

First and foremost, the reason is that recently, Jihadist organizations lack the necessary resources for engaging in conventional warfare and instead prefer guerrilla and sabotage tactics, aiming to weaken the enemy step by step and through attrition and constant psychological pressure. These groups use hybrid warfare elements to achieve their goals. The most important among these elements are information and psychological operations. Through propaganda and the dissemination of extremist narratives, Jihadists seek to demonize the civilized world and romanticize terrorism. Of course, ongoing conflicts occupy a central place in their narratives, serving to strengthen their positions among supporters and potentially vulnerable groups. So, the Jihadist assessment of the recent conflicts should be viewed in this context. Extremists who speak in the name of Islam justify their inaction or weakness by their religious obligations, while explaining Muslim 'defeats' as the result of 'deviation from the path of Allah and His messenger'. At the same time, they preach that the only way to victory and salvation is through joining their organizations and fighting under their banner. Accordingly, fighting in the ranks of

¹ Uran Botobekov, "How are Central Asian Jihadi groups exploiting the Israel-Hamas war?", The Diplomat (2023). Accessed July 30, 2025. <https://thediplomat.com/2023/12/how-are-central-asian-jihadi-groups-exploiting-the-israel-hamas-war>.

² Botobekov, "Israel-Hamas war".

³ Fight them, and God will chastise them at your hands", 11.

⁴ Hamming, "The beginning of a new wave".

‘Infidels’ (non-believers) or ‘secularists’ is religiously unjustified as well as a waste of human resources that should instead be devoted to the ‘victory of Islam’.

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