THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF AL QAEDA AND ITS STRATEGIES

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Abstract

The present study, which examines the organizational structure, ideology, strategy and financial resources as well as policies with regard to struggling with Al Qaeda, aims to investigate the profile of Al Qaeda terrorist organization and its strategies in the light of the current literature review. In this context, analyzing the profile of Al Qaeda terrorist organization, which acquired notable experiences from the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviets and used this experience in the global arena thus executing 9/11 terrorist attacks, is of utmost importance for the academics and practitioners who are engaged with the field of terrorism. Having scrutinized the profile of terrorist organization within the present study, it would be possible to see that Al Qaeda, which has retained global characteristic features during the course of the time, has a unique organizational structure, ideology and strategy as compared to other conventional terrorist organizations. Therefore, this study is academically unique in terms of offering new and global perspectives including theoretical explanations. Furthermore, the study contributed to the current literature through bringing up Al Qaeda's ideologies, strategies and organizational structure which help decision takers and policy makers to frame and shape policies with regard to struggling with Al Qaeda. In this respect, the prevention of abusing religious affairs and values, the construction of open society where liberal thought and fundamental freedoms can blossom and lastly the enhancement of international cooperation activities are the key counterterrorism strategies, which need to be considered while dealing with Al Qaeda. In terms of methodology and research strategy of the present study, qualitative data and secondary quantitative data have been used and mainly qualitative research strategy has been followed. To do so, initially, literature review regarding the scope of the study has been conducted, subsequent to the archival research, the content analysis of the gathered data has been made. After conducting the analysis process, categories of ideologies and strategies to which Al Qaeda adheres have been illustrated and accordingly, basing on the cited categories, a significant step has been taken toward offering theoretical explanations aiming to shape and frame policies with regard to countering Al Qaeda.

Keywords: Al Qaeda, Terrorism, Globalization, (De)securitization, Counter Terrorism Strategies.

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Introduction

With the impact of terrorist attacks targeting *Pentagon* and *World Trade Center* in September 11, 2001, the concept of security, security policies and profiling of terrorist organizations have been reconsidered. Al Qaeda incorporating a *sui generis* structure, which can be also regarded as a prototype terrorist organization, has been on the agenda of the world politics since the end of the Cold War.

By acquiring notable experiences from the Soviet-Afghan war, Al Qaeda has entered into the reorganization process (enhancing ideologies, searching for new strategies and means and meeting financial needs) just before 9/11 terrorist attacks. As a result of the reorganization process, Al Qaeda has managed to execute those attacks. In order to analyze the root causes of 9/11 terrorist attacks, which need further investigation, initial elaboration of Al Qaeda's profile emerges as a significant step.

Having considered ideologies, target groups, cross border terrorist actions, and its worldwide connection with affiliated terrorist groups and networks inspired by Al Qaeda standing on the basis of abusing religious affairs, one can argue that Al Qaeda, historically, has evolved from a local front initially established in Afghanistan and Pakistan into a global structure thus becoming a prototype and peculiar terrorist organization.

The organizational structure of Al Qaeda is quite different than other conventional terrorist organizations thereby retaining peculiar traits. In the light of parameters including the centralized structure of Al Qaeda, its connections to affiliated terrorist organizations being inspired by Al Qaeda's ideology, possession of cell structures which are operationally active at global level, and the supremacy of hierarchical structures, we can define Al Qaeda as a postmodern terrorist organization which has *sui generis* features.

In accordance with the current literature review regarding the scope of the study, we can address the ideologies that Al Qaeda adopted under four categories. These are classified respectively as the jihadist thought, liberalization of the Arab Peninsula from the hegemonic powers, enemification of the USA citizens and allies of the USA, and the establishment of the caliphate and Islamic state.

In order to apply ideologies, Al Qaeda has initiated some tactics and adopted some strategies. Among the adopted strategies, which are addressed and categorized within the present study; the dynamism in tactics, use of violence, abuse of religious doctrines and values, propaganda, and media coverage emerge as prominent and salient strategies.

As it can be observed in other terrorist organizations' foundations, Al Qaeda also depends upon finance in order to fulfill its targets and carry out strategies thus sustaining its existence. In order for ensuring the finance, Al Qaeda might resort to legal or illegal means thereby circulating the finance through registered or unregistered money transfer systems. Therefore, the finance is vital for ensuring the occurrence and sustainability of actions of Al Qaeda. In this sense, one can claim that methods of providing finance, as followed by other terrorist organizations, are also valid for Al Qaeda.

When recent counter-terrorism efforts are reconsidered, it is obvious that the leader profiles of Al Qaeda have always been targeted. However, having considered the referred ideologies, applied strategies, organizational structure, financial capacity, and global dimensions of Al Qaeda, it would be oversimplified to say that the Al Qaeda has been wholly terminated.

Thus, the present study examining the profile of Al Qaeda terrorist organization argues that new policy approaches aiming to counter Al Qaeda should be shaped and framed in accordance with the ideology, strategy, organizational structure and financial resources of Al Qaeda. Through the construction of open society where civil liberties and freedoms are highlighted, the prevention of abusing religious values and the enhancement of international cooperation efforts, notable steps therefore would be achieved while countering Al Qaeda which is still operatively and globally active.

1. Theoretical Background

Securitization and desecuritization theories are the core theories of the present study thus aiming to provide explanations how securitization process impacts terrorism policies of nation states and intergovernmental organizations. In this respect, maximization of power and security-based policies matter while ensuring the global order in response to the contested policy areas.

While de-securitization emerges as a freedom aspect regarding contested policy areas as seen in the case of terrorism, securitization based policies focus on realist paradigm and maximizing the value of national identity against the interests of 'others' which explains the current agenda of nation states. Balzacq

et al. (2015) explain the desecuritization process through identification of the phenomenon, transformative practices, ethics and normativity.

However Wæver (1995), Bourbeau and Juha (2015), Balzacq (2015), and many other scholars have postulated the logical relationship between securitization and desecuritization at macro political level, the current literature is lacking of the impact of desecuritization process on terrorism and including the unit of analysis through explaining international, national or non-state actors hand in hand. Thus, identification of terrorism, ethics and normativity regarding terrorism policies and transformation of global security policies are followed throughout the present study.

2. **Al Qaeda Framework with its Global Features**

The global dimension of Al Qaeda can be explained through some parameters including the universality of ideologies, the cultural diversity of targeted groups, its terrorist actions defying borders, and the capability of networking with other terrorist organizations who adopt similar ideologies and thoughts which will be examined under this section.

Today's terrorist organizations differentiate from conventional terrorist organizations in many ways. To give an example; while organizational structures, strategies and actions of conventional terrorist organizations were foreseeable and predictable, contemporary terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda, with its cell structures at global level, asymmetric targets and terrorist actions, embrace some peculiarities in the sense that Al Qaeda cannot be identified easily without these peculiarities (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 468). Having considered its transnational actions, activities and ideological aspects, Al Qaeda can be assessed as a terrorist organization retaining global features however conventional terrorist organizations were local and would operate at national level. Thus, while explaining why Al Qaeda is global, further arguments can be offered.

Firstly, Al Qaeda retains global features due to the fact that Al Qaeda ideologies defy borders. Conflicts happen at local level however they can disseminate to other countries which can be motivated by an inherent ideological reaction. For example, Al Qaeda's global efforts aiming to abuse religious principles, in particular, using religious discontent at global level would contribute to Al Qaeda's strategies on ensuring the involvement and mobilization of new members (Payne, 2011, 127). Henceforth, Al Qaeda has adopted a functional strategy on disseminating the ideological conflict and dissatisfaction, which incorporates the discontent of Islamic groups under the umbrella of Muslim and non-Muslim countries adopting the secular state system (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 471).

Secondly, Al Qaeda cannot be claimed to be a local terrorist organization due to the diversity of its targets. To give an example, Al Qaeda announced its global and strategic targets with the declarations of World Islamic Front dated 1996 and 1998, which were two legitimate pillars of its establishment. With the given religious orders (called as *fatwas*) within the context of the cited declarations, the global jihad has been concretely legalized. Thus, this kind of religious orders (fatwas) regards American citizens and allies of the USA including civilians and military staffs as an enemy whom are blamed for defying strategic objectives of Al Qaeda (Pankhurst, 2010, 542). Therefore, Al Qaeda targets groups from diverse cultural and ethnical background which in turn has contributed to the given idea why Al Qaeda retains global features.

Thirdly, Al Qaeda is also a global terrorist organization in terms of its terrorist actions which can be observed all around world. In spite of the fact that the headquarter of Al Qaeda is situated in Afghanistan and Pakistan, in terms of its terrorist actions at global level and worldwide organizational structures, one can argue that Al Qaeda is not deployed in a specific area or region (Hoffman, 2007, 46). Previously, Al Qaeda used to attack the targets in Middle East and North Africa, however the origins of Al Qaeda's targets have shifted into targets in various countries. Since the emergence of 9/11, terrorist attacks executed by Al Qaeda can be seen all around the world, thereby leading Al Qaeda to be a global terrorist organization (Zarate and Gordon, 2011, 106). In addition to 9/11 terrorist attacks occurred in the USA, Al Qaeda has also fulfilled terrorist actions in many countries. Thus, the Figure-4 demonstrates the worldwide terrorist attacks of Al Qaeda.

Having considered its leadership style, tactics, recruitment of new members and training activities, one can claim that, Al Qaeda has experienced a great transformation since its establishment dating back 1980s, thus acquiring global features (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 467). With its compound, headquarter, and centralized organizational structure, Al Qaeda has evolved from an individual terrorist organization established in Afghanistan and Pakistan into a international terrorist network which can impact all over world Muslims through its extensive ideologies and global strategies (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 469). The

existence of worldwide affiliated terrorist organizations connected to Al Qaeda demonstrates a dynamic global character aiming to establish networks at global sphere, as well.

In sum, having considered the diversity and peculiarity of Al Qaeda targets, terrorist actions defying borders, organizational structure, and the existence of its networks operating at global level, one can argue that Al Qaeda has progressively been transformed from a local terrorist organization into a global terrorist organization, which is now globally operational.

3. The Historical Background as to Al Qaeda

The concept of 'Qaeda' is originated from Arabic language and it means 'basis, principle and rule'. 'Al', as the prefix of Qaeda, refers to a definite basis, principle or rule (thefreedictionary.com, 2014). Historically, the usage of the concept, "Al Qaeda" dates back 1980's.

The thought of global jihad was first introduced with the establishment of Afghan Service Bureau in 1984 and by initiatives of Abdullah Azzam who inspired Laden ideologically and played a key role while struggling against the Soviet invasion (Gunaratna, 2002, 18). The establishment of Afghan Service Bureau laid official foundations of Al Qaeda and first actions of Al Qaeda were aiming to eliminate the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Şen, 2011, 57).

Eyman Al Zewahiri who shaped the ideological vision of the organization and Usama bin Laden who ensured the financial resources of the organizations were the two key pioneers of Al Qaeda and they came together in 1980's in order to establish Al Qaeda. Laden, in the meantime, undertook a great mission for bringing together all Muslims from all around the world and organizing them against the Soviet Bloc (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 469). In later years, while putting the thought of the global jihad into practice, Laden made use of the experience obtained from struggling against the Soviet Bloc.

Immediate aftermath of the assassination of Abdullah Azzam in 1989, Laden undertook the supervision of Afghan Service Bureau (Gunaratna, 2002, 23). In the 1990's, Usama bin Laden got into contact with Eyman al Zewahiri who was the leader of Egyptian Islamic Jihad Organization, being as one of the significant and leading terrorist organizations in the Middle East and Laden fostered this cooperation toward leading to the strategic partnership. Thanks to this partnership compromised by paramilitary forces together, established the *World Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders* in 1998 (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 470-471).

Al Qaeda, previously known as the *World Islamic Front*, has maintained its activities till today, thus aiming to establish the Caliphate and/or Islamic state (Şen, 2011, 60). Having considered the historical background of Al Qaeda, it is obvious that Al Qaeda was established in order to take action against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the pre Cold War period, however, in the post Cold War period, Al Qaeda adopted a new organizational pattern comprising of a peculiar organizational structure, ideology, strategy and target profile.

4. The Organizational Structure of Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda, differ from other terrorist organizations in terms of its sui generis organizational structure, extensive ideological assumptions, and worldwide cell structures (Gunaratna, 2002, 54). Al Qaeda has a particular organizational framework and this framework can be better explained through the categories of its centralized organizational structure, ideology, affiliated terrorist groups being inspired by the similar ideology as Al Qaeda adopted and worldwide cell structures basing on a specific hierarchical foundation (mechanisms of command-control and chain of command). The emerging categories are illustrated below.

a. The Centralized Organizational Structure of Al Qaeda: Significant terrorist actions are carried out by a core and professional team and these terrorist actions are executed by the local units of Al Qaeda (Hoffman, 2007, 46).

b. Local Cell Structures of Al Qaeda: Al Qaeda has not solely adopted a central organizational structure in order to prevent any probable limitations or impediments, which may inhibit activities. The organizational structure of Al Qaeda exists of cell structures formed by small local groups and local units, which are still salient and active under the organizational structure of Al Qaeda (Payne, 2011, 136).

As argued by Şen (2011, 70), the local cell structures have some distinguishing features. Firstly, cells are decentralized in accordance with regions that they operate Secondly, cells are independent while distributing their own responsibilities and hiring new members so that others cannot interfere into the duties of cells. Lastly, cells are part of the horizontal hierarchy and they are autonomous in terms of planning and

performing their own activities, which, in turn, lead them to be more independent and free makers of decisions.

Cell structures of Al Qaeda can be categorized into two groups respectively as the ones having experiences of war and attack and the ones lacking of any kind of these experiences. In any circumstances, these individual groups are directly related to Core Al Qaeda (Hoffman, 2007, 47). Al Qaeda can make use of these groups while planning and carrying out terrorist actions. To give an example, both 2004 Madrid bombings and 2005 London bombings were planned and executed by local cell structures of Al Qaeda (Hoffman, 2007, 50).
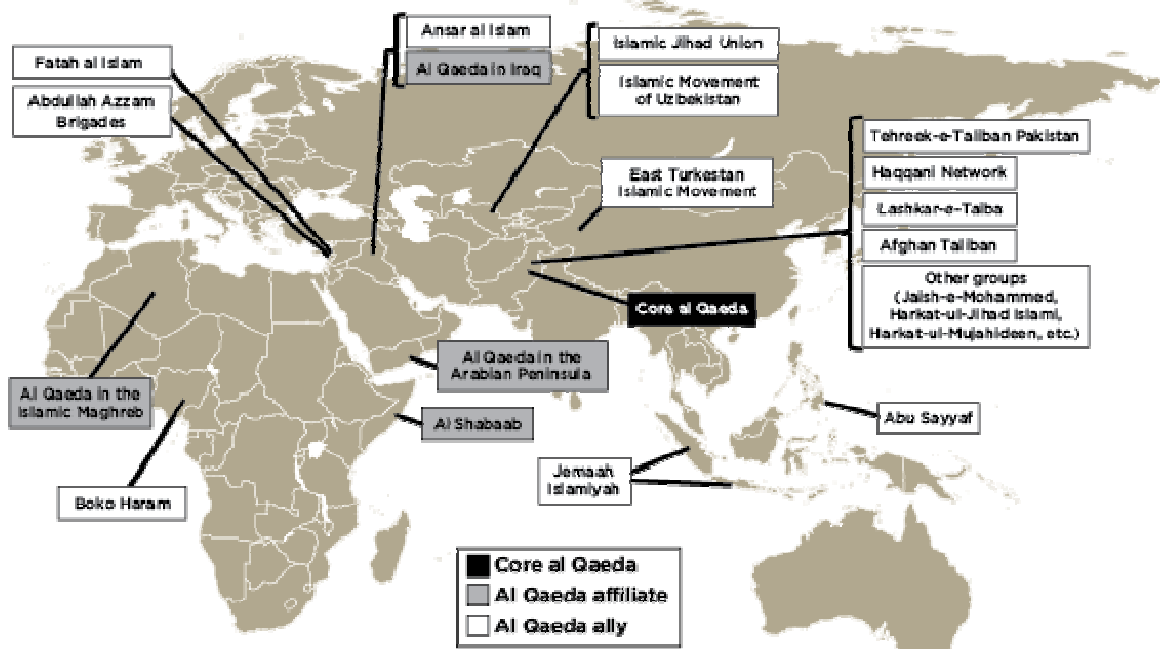
c. Terrorist Organizations Affiliated With Al Qaeda: Terrorist groups affiliated with Al Qaeda which are also called as Al Qaeda Networks, have played a crucial role within the organizational structure of Al Qaeda. This category refers to affiliated terrorist groups which are not inherently related to Al Qaeda but have some emotional ties with Al Qaeda in the sense that they share and act on similar ideology and agenda as of Al Qaeda. It is extremely difficult to identify and track terrorist groups under this category. Training and logistical needs of these groups, which are predominantly inspired by the leadership style and vision of Usama bin Laden have been provided by the Core Al Qaeda (Hoffman, 2007, 46-48).

There are also some other terrorist organizations adopting the similar Al Qaeda ideology and agenda however they have no formal relationship with the Core Al Qaeda. Thus, we can address these terrorist organizations respectively as Ansar al Sunnah (Caucasia), Al Ittihad Al Islami (African Horn, South Africa), Jaish al Mohammed (South Asia), Jemaah Islamiyah (Southeast Asia), Salafi Groups (North America, Europe and North Africa), and the Tunisian Warrior Group (Middle East) (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 477).

The organizational framework of Al Qaeda is illustrated visually in the below Figure-1 and Figure-2. As observed in the Figure-1, Al Qaeda with all its organizational structures is still operationally active in all around the world. For example, the core Al Qaeda illustrated with black color operates in Afghanistan and Pakistan; Al Qaeda in Iraq, Arabian Peninsula and North and South Africa are demonstrated with grey color; allies of Al Qaeda depicted with white color can be seen in various countries.

In the same vein, countries where the Core Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda Networks and Al Qaeda Affiliations operate actively are indicated in the Figure-2. Moreover, the Figure-2 demonstrates some terrorist attacks, including the attacks of Al Shabab, Boko Haram and Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham (ISIS) occurred between 2012 and 2014.
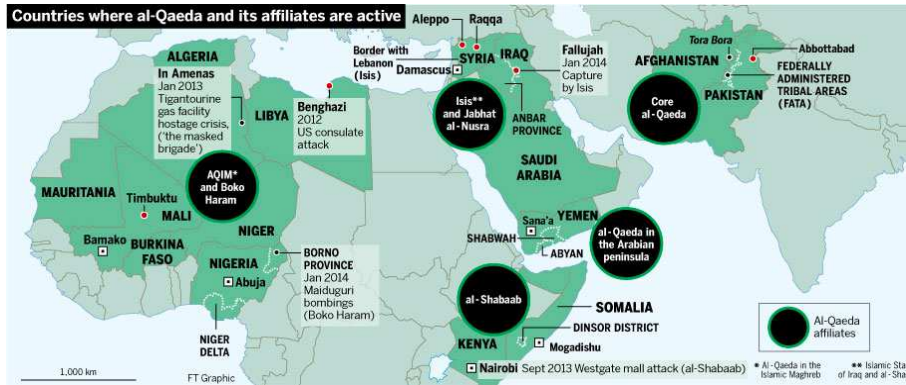
Figure-1: Operational Areas of the Core Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda Networks, Affiliated Groups

Source: www.vox.com and www.rand.org (Date of Accession: 05.09.2020)

Figure-2: Countries where Al Qaeda Structures (Core, Networks Affiliations) are active

Source: www.ft.com (Date of Accession: 05.09.2020)

d. Hierarchical Structure of Al Qaeda: Another emerging parameter while explaining the peculiarity of the organizational structure of Al Qaeda is that Al Qaeda retains hierarchical features. This peculiar hierarchical structure consists of some steps such as ordering, planning and implementing terrorist attacks (Hoffman, 2007, 50).
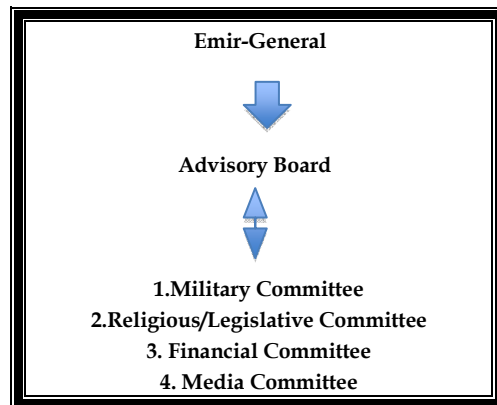

Figure-3: The Organizational Structure of Al Qaeda
Source: Borum ve Gelles, 2005, 474.

The hierarchical structure of Al Qaeda can also be observed within the organizational structure of Al Qaeda Committees. For example, the Advisory Board considered as the top level of Al Qaeda and ran by Emir-General holds tasks regarding the supervision of terrorist actions. There are four committees that function under the responsibility of the Advisory Board and these are from bottom to top classified as Media Committee, Financial Committee, Religious/Legislative Committee, Military Committee and Members of the Advisory Committee and directors of committees may be assigned to different tasks (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 474).

As seen from the above Figure-3, the military and political structures of the organization have been united under the Advisory Board ran by Emir General. Payne (2011, 127) argues that this kind of organizational structure have some similarities with the structure that was shaped by Che Guevara in 1960s. Immediate after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Al Qaeda adopted a new micro management strategy rather than following the conventional command-control mechanism (Hoffman, 2007, 53). The leadership of Al Qaeda has changed with the killing of Usama bin Laden in 2011 and since then Eyman Al Zewahiri has been undertaking the leading mission of Al Qaeda (bbc.com, 2014)

In sum, it can be inferred from the reorganization of Al Qaeda that the organizational framework of Al Qaeda has been divided into local structures at global level thus leading Al Qaeda to have a dynamic organizational structure, which can adapt to new conditions and circumstances. In order to analyze the organizational structure of Al Qaeda, there is a need to revisit some aspects, as well. Thus, the emerging aspects incorporate of resorting to the use of force, adopting a particular ideology, adhering to efficient strategies, and carrying out these strategies in an efficient way (Payne, 2011, 128).

5. Leading Ideologies of Al Qaeda

Organizational ideology, as described by Borum ve Gelles (2005, 474), is a significant motive, which contributes to find solutions, develop new methods and strategies, inspire new organizational actions, and meet a collective need aiming to internalize, justify and legitimize terrorist actions.

The fundamentals of Al Qaeda ideology have been formulated through the reinterpretation of Tawba Sura, one of Quran chapters, by Abdullah Azzam who was the prominent character of resisting against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s. In that articulation, violence or use of violence has been legitimized through various religious tenets and doctrines (Şen, 2011, 61). As argued by Şen (2011, 67), there is no contradiction with the respected argument. Thus, Abdullah Azzam, as a key scholar of Al Qaeda, framed the initial Al Qaeda ideology. As a result of that, Eyman Al Zewahiri and Usama bin Laden have always paid esteem to the philosophies of Abdullah Azzam.

In the masterpieces of Abdullah Azzam, previously known as the leader of Muslim Brothers and a pioneering theorist of Al Qaeda whom inspired Usama bin Laden (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 469), there are some controversial arguments which may cause misperceptions. For example, in the manuscripts of Abdullah Azzam's book, Sayyed Kuttub and Ibni Teymiyye emerged as mostly signified ideologists worshipping violence however, in line with the current literature review, it would be an over exaggeration to the claim that Sayyed Kuttub and Ibni Teymiyye justify the violence and jihad.

From the basis of Al Qaeda ideology, some ideas emerge thus aiming to generate a global riot and guerrilla strike. This kind of ideas has been explained through the articles of Ebu Ubeyd El Kureyshi, Ebu Musab el Suri and Ebu Bekir Naji (Payne, 2011, 128). With its disseminating ideology through the misusage of religious coverage, Al Qaeda has become a unique terrorist organization that one hasn't ever seen before (Hoffman, 2007, 50).

Having considered the aforementioned angles regarding how Al Qaeda ideology is, most of scholars have argued that Al Qaeda is a terrorist organization, which embraces ideological tenets and doctrines rather than excluding them (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 472). In this respect, in line with the current literature, we can respectively categorize the leading ideologies of Al Qaeda into four groups; the jihadist thought, the idea of an independent Arabic peninsula, enemification of the USA citizens and allies of the USA and lastly; establishment of the caliphate and Islamic State.

5.1. The Jihadist Thought

According to the book titled as "*the Defense of the Muslim Lands: The First Obligation after Faith*" written by Abdullah Azzam, who is the prominent theorist of Al Qaeda, the *jihad* (proclaiming war) is a religious obligation and the jihadist thought will be the main motive for Muslims seeking the liberation of Muslim territories invaded by Non-Muslims (Pankhurst, 2010, 533).

Another assumption, which is frequently postulated by Al Qaeda, is related to how violence or power would contribute to achieving political goals and enhancing the radicalization process (Payne, 2011, p. 129). By espousing ideological assumptions basing on violence Al Qaeda has planned and carried out terrorist actions on the ground of the jihadist thought.

5.2. The Idea of an Independent Arabic Peninsula

Among the ideologically references and approaches of Al Qaeda, the religious order (fatwa) addressed within the *Statement of the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders* adopted in 1996 has played a crucial role for understanding how Al Qaeda ideology is shaped. In line with the cited religious order (fatwa) accepted in 1996, the jihad is justified in order for the liberation of the Arabic Peninsula by targeting foreigner soldiers of the USA and its allies. The religious order (fatwa) dated 1996 is considered to be valid until the moment when Kaaba and al-Aqsa Mosque will be released from foreigner soldiers (Pankhurst, 2010, 541-542).

Furthermore, the religious order adopted through the declaration of 1996 establishes the ideological foundation for justifying the idea on an Independent Arabic Peninsula. To be more specific, Al Qaeda has continuously referred to holy words (sunnah) of the Prophet Mohammad whom addressed that two religions would not be together in the Arabic Peninsula (Pankhurst, 2010, 536).

According to the *Contemporary Approaches Regarding the Global Terrorism Report*, the USA invasion of Iraq and the existence of American military bases in some Muslim nations further invigorate the idea for

establishing an Independent Arabic Peninsula (Gerges, 2011, 39). Through the cited religious justifications focusing on ensuring the Independent Arabic Peninsula, Al Qaeda therefore has legitimatized and internalized its terrorist actions.

5.3. The Enemification of Americans and American Allies

Another ideological assumption that Al Qaeda holds is the enemification of the USA citizens and allies of the USA. The idea regarding the enemification of the USA citizens and allies of the USA was first raised within the Declaration of World Islamic Front in 1998. The religious order (fatwa) adopted within the Declaration of the World Islamic Front adopted in 1998 ideologically legitimized the personification USA citizens and allies of the US as enemy. The target profile of Al Qaeda has been diversified by including various nationalities thus leading to the globalization of jihad (Pankhurst, 2010, 541-542). Al Qaeda theorists interpreted the idea of jihad in a comprehensive way in the sense that all American nationals voting for the USA government have been targeted as enemy in the global sphere (Pankhurst, 2010, 547).

On the grounds of the cited interpretations regarding Al Qaeda ideology, the *takfeer* doctrine plays a crucial role, as well. In this respect, as emphasized by Esen (Esen, 2011, 109), the *takfeer* doctrine, which retains religious traits, has been used as a tool aiming to achieve political goals thus contributing to the creation of new 'us' and 'others'. The *takfeer* thought, which identifies the "us" as 'true believers' and the "others" as 'nonbelievers', is one of the significant ideological arguments that shapes the belief system of Al Qaeda. Esen (Esen, 2011, 98) argues that the *takfeer doctrine*, which is commonly used concept by Al Qaeda followers, has political, ideological, and theological aspects including the polytheist notion which refers to attributing a partner to God.

Al Qaeda leaders and pioneers refer to religious affairs while naming their primary targets and enemies. For example, Abu Musab Al Zarkawi playing a key role in executing terrorist actions of Al Qaeda has been the significant devotee of *takfeer* doctrine. Usama bin Laden being inspired by the Wahhabi fraction and Eyman el Zawahiri being enthused by the *takfeer* doctrine have concretely identified which person/group/society/nation should be the primary target of Al Qaeda (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 477). Therefore, considering USA nationals and allies as an enemy has formed the main target profile of Al Qaeda and this has been ideologically justified through religious orders (fatwas) and doctrines.

5.4. Establishment of the Caliphate and Islamic State

Discourses pertaining to the establishment of the global caliphate and Islamic state have always been the primary Al Qaeda ideology. It is evident from the explanations of Usama bin Laden, operational leader of Al Qaeda and Eyman al Zewahiri, the leading theorist of Al Qaeda that most of the Al Qaeda ideology concentrates on the establishment of the caliphate and an independent Islamic state (Pankhurst, 2010, 531/534).

Having said that the current war is between Muslims and global crusaders as well as between so called believers and nonbelievers, the establishment of the caliphate has been urgently called for the Muslim nations. In this respect, in line with Usama bin Laden's statements, the establishment of an independent Islamic state has been frequently emphasized (Pankhurst, 2010, 540/545). The establishment of the caliphate and Islamic state will be the desired output of Al Qaeda ideologies and these are also related to other ideological assumptions such as the jihadist thought, the idea of an independent Arabic peninsula and the enemification of American nationals and allies of the USA.

The ideology is of utmost importance in terms of achieving political goals aiming to alter the regime type of a country. This is also valid for all terrorist organizations abusing Islamic religion including Al Qaeda. Therefore, it can be argued that the foundation of the caliphate and Islamic state depends upon putting Al Qaeda ideologies into practice. Moreover, Al Qaeda needs some organizational strategies in order for achieving political goals and altering the ruling system of the individual country. Thus, some organizational strategies of Al Qaeda will be discussed in the next section.

6. Organizational Strategies of Al Qaeda

Organizational strategy, as described by Payne (Payne, 2011, 138), is the logical relationship between discourses regarding political violence and how those discourses could be practically applied. From this point of view, one can argue that organizational strategy focuses on how to design the terrorist action basing on a definite ideological assumption.

As discussed above, Al Qaeda has followed a similar organizational strategy as followed by Che Guevara in the 1960's (Payne, 2011, 124). Having referred to the case of Che Guevara, Al Qaeda can be considered as a terrorist organization, which aims to take over a specific territory by adopting a unique ideology, holding political aspirations, retaining specific characteristic features of a global insurrection and espousing particular organizational strategies in order for achieving political goals.

In order to accomplish political goals, which are described in detail above, Al Qaeda has made use of some organizational tools in line with its ideologies. Among those strategies, there are emerging categories respectively as use of violence, religious doctrines and values, propaganda, media coverage and the dynamic state of tactics.

6.1. Use of Violence

Al Qaeda has adopted the strategy that violence would radicalize nations and justifying the use of violence would galvanize a wide spectrum insurrection in societies where social upheavals are witnessed (Payne, 2011, p. 140). In line with the addressed strategy, terrorist attacks of Al Qaeda have always targeted the USA which is literally known as a far-enemy and allies of the USA which are factually considered as a close-enemy (Zarate and Gordon, 2011, 107).

Thus, Payne (Payne, 2011, 131) argues that the main reason for embracing the use of violence is to encourage so called Islamic nations and societies in their struggles and achieve strategic goals. In this respect, one can claim that the adherence to using violence as a strategic tool has also proven the idea that violence begets violence and Al Qaeda has made use of this kind of vicious circle.

6.2. Religious Doctrines and Values

In order to internalize the thought of global jihad by followers of Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda has been inclined strategically to revisit religious discourses regarding the liberalization of holy lands (Kaaba and Al Aqsa Mosque) and the establishment of Caliphate (Pankhurst, 2010, 550). In relation to the cited strategy, Al Qaeda aims to legitimate the jihadist thought by considering religious doctrines and rules, and henceforth, terrorist actions are accordingly being justified.

The basis of the call for the global Islamic resistance relates to acknowledging the idea of jihad as a result of strategic approach. In this respect, according to the argument cited from Kilcullen (Payne, 2011, 139), there shouldn't be any political goal of Al Qaeda whereas the main target is to search for the sake of the God. Therefore, Al Qaeda strategically exploits religious aspects such as winning the sake of the God by calling for jihad and being a martyr, however there are certain conditions of declaring jihad which should not be only the best option for acquiring the sake of the God.

6.3. Propaganda

Al Qaeda generally makes use of propaganda targeting Muslim youths who are socially disorder and discontented with the society where they live. Besides propaganda activities, Al Qaeda has also adopted some strategies aiming to create an environment of cooperation in order for having support of locals who are discontent with their lives (Payne, 2011, 125/137). With this strategy focusing on sad Muslim youths, Al Qaeda has acquired new recruitments and support of locals at global level.

Having considered that there is a widespread participation in the societies where social ties are very strong; Al Qaeda has initiated a new strategy aiming to ensure further recruitments by constructing loyalty and group identity (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 473). In this respect, as seen in other terrorist organizations, Al Qaeda has taken the advantage of propaganda tools in order for having new members and recruitments by acquiring social support and mobilization at global level. In order to apply propaganda tools in an efficient way, Al Qaeda has also benefited from media coverage including social media, which will be examined in the next section.

6.4. Media Coverage

Today, all media facilities can be used by terrorist organizations in order to achieve strategic goals and distort perceptions. Discourses regarding the enemification of the USA citizens and allies of the USA can be circulated and disseminated through media particularly by Al Sahab, a media unit of Al Qaeda. The common discourse of Al Qaeda particularly, the statement of Eyman Al Zewahiri, one of the leading actors

of Al Qaeda addresses that 'we are now on war and half of the war is being conducted through media' (Ciovacco, 2009, 853). Therefore, the cited discourses prove the importance of media coverage.

Al Qaeda, as an umbrella organization having ideological tenets, aims to reach out diverse groups by means of global media instruments and communication technologies (Ciovacco, 2009, 868). In the same vein, Borum and Gelles (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 480) argue that Al Qaeda has frequently resorted to media and Internet in order for having new members and recruitments.

Among strategically used media instruments, video and audio files play also a crucial for designing propaganda-based arguments. During the course of the time, there has been an increase in the number of video files. Thus, the capacity of Al Sahab, media unit of Al Qaeda has dramatically grown. When we examine the disseminated and circulated video files it is obvious that Al Qaeda targets diverse groups categorized as Muslims and Non-Muslims (Americans and Europeans) (Ciovacco, 2009, 865-866).

Furthermore, in the media statements, Al Qaeda can refer to verses of the Quran and justify violent actions by inspiring from the events of Islamic history. Among the emergent arguments declared in the media statements of Al Qaeda, there are some salient discourses such as 'the clash of civilizations', 'call for jihad', 'secular Muslim leaders are betraying', and 'the USA is stealing the oil belonged to Muslims' (Ciovacco, 2009, 857-858). Through this kind of media statements and by means of media coverage, Al Qaeda aims to reach out a wide spectrum of groups thus pursuing further sympathy over its actions.

6.5. Dynamic State of Tactics

Al Qaeda can also be regarded as a learning terrorist organization. Al Qaeda takes lessons from its faults and drawbacks thus leading it to be a dynamic terrorist organization holding new strategies. Al Qaeda manages to implement new tactics by considering 'lessons learned policies' in line with the shortcomings of terrorist actions occurred in the past. To give an example, considering the drawbacks from the attack in the Gulf of Aden, Al Qaeda resorted to modus operandi of getting insider information, which resulted in success for subsequent terrorist actions of Al Qaeda. Therefore, Al Qaeda has frequently revisited its tactics and developed new approaches, which contributed Al Qaeda to retain dynamic organizational structures (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 479).

In other words, Al Qaeda has been in pursuit of developing new tactics and strategies in its terrorist actions. Having considered the sustainability of terrorist actions as well as the novelty and creativity of its tactics, it wouldn't be overgeneralized to claim that Al Qaeda cannot be totally terminated (Hoffman, 2007, 45). Henceforth, Al Qaeda has always aimed to impact the public opinion and perception in the sense that Al Qaeda is still having dynamic structures and following contemporary strategies by implementing new tactics and methods which in turn changed the public opinion towards the idea that Al Qaeda is still active and operational all around the world.
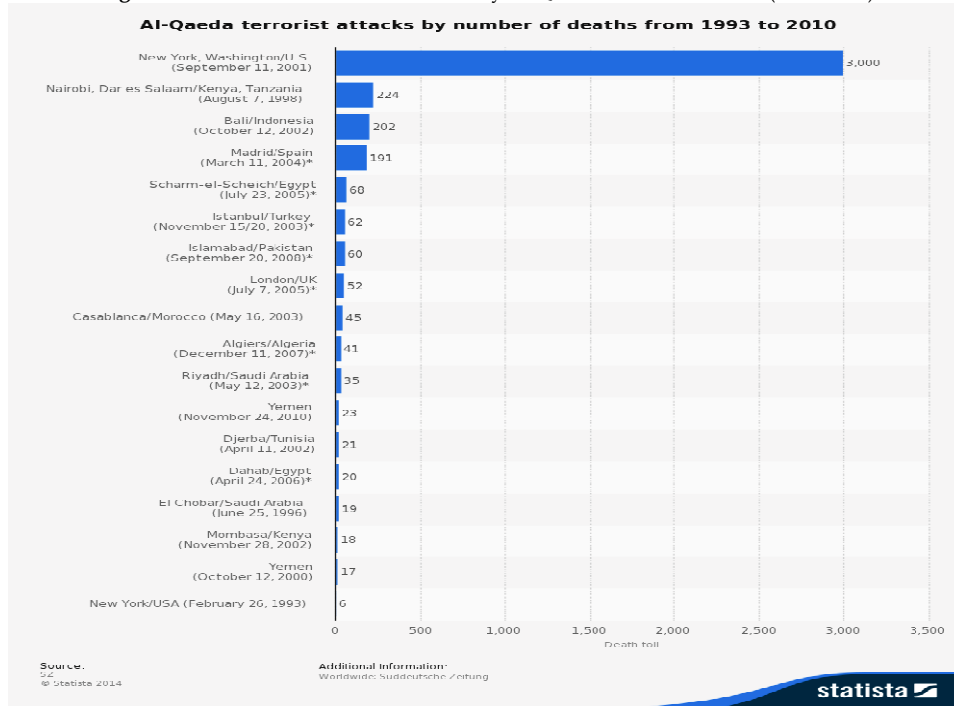
7. Salient Terrorist Attacks of Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda has own adherents who are expert on preparing bombs, suicide attacks and kidnapping. In the Iraq War of 2003, Laden called all Muslims for struggling against the USA and allies of the USA. Terrorist attacks of Al Qaeda targeted the areas where Muslims densely populated. In accordance with the type of violent actions of Al Qaeda, there are two emerging categories of attack. For example, the first category is about symbolic targets and the second category is related to actual targets (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 475-476/479).

Al Qaeda executed a number of terrorist attacks in various countries. Since 1996, Al Qaeda has conducted many bloody terrorist attacks. Among these attacks, the salient ones can be historically classified as; Khubar Towers Attacks (1996), attacks against US Embassies in Nairobi and Dar-Es-Selam (1998), attacks on the USS Destroyer, USS Cole (2000), 9/11 terrorist attacks (2001), attacks on the synagogue which is situated in the Island Djerba in Tunisia (2001), Kenya Mombasa Attacks (2002), attacks targeting synagogue, branch of the HSBC Bank and the British Consulate in Istanbul, Turkey (2003), Madrid train bombings (2004) and London bombings (2005) (Şen, 2011, 83). As seen from the cited figure (Figure-4), over time Al Qaeda has diversified its attacks in terms of space and it has become a global terrorist organization.

Figure-4: Number of Casualties Caused by Al Qaeda Terrorist Attacks (1993-2010)

Source: Statista, 2014. (Date of Accession: 05.09.2020)

Thus, the Figure-4 demonstrates the casualties resulted from terrorist attacks of Al Qaeda between the period of 1993 and 2010. In accordance with the Figure-4, it is obvious that Al Qaeda enforced terrorist attacks targeting countries all around the world. Having considered the Figure-4, it is certain that the most striking terrorist attack was the 9/11. In September 11th, 2001, the terrorist attacks targeting Pentagon and World Trade Center simultaneously led to revisit the concept of security and security policies at global level. Thus, 9/11 terrorist attacks has dramatically changed counter terrorism policies which will be discussed in the next sections.

8. Financial Resources of Al Qaeda

In order to survive and maintain their existence, all terrorist organizations need finance and financial resources. Terrorist organizations make use of finance for sustaining their survival and budgeting terrorist actions. Henceforth, the cycle of terrorism financing includes some steps such as the procurement of the budget, resorting to both legal and illegal means for ensuring the finance, transferring the finance through registered or unregistered systems and eventually ends with using the finance for planning and executing terrorist actions.

In terms of ensuring finance, terrorist organizations may refer to not only illegal means such as human smuggling, drug trafficking and extortion but also legal means such as incomes acquired from social activities of associations, trade unions and corporations as well as donations provided by charities and nongovernmental organizations. In the case of Al Qaeda, fund raising activities concentrate more on donations obtained from the activities of civil society organizations rather than smuggling (Gunaratna, 2002, 61-62).

In the same vein, the obtained funds are being circulated within the financial system of Al Qaeda by means of standardized banking and money transfer systems as well as alternative money transferring methods likewise '*havalas*' and 'cash couriers'. Recently, Al Qaeda has been resorting to informal money transferring systems called as *havalas* that cannot be easily detected and controlled by official authorities and financial intelligence units (Şen, 2011, 75).

Furthermore, in order for planning and executing of terrorist actions of Al Qaeda, the financial committee undertakes all necessary actions for ensuring the finance and funds (Gunaratna, 2002, 60). As seen from the Figure-3 demonstrating the statue of the financial committee under the organizational structure of Al Qaeda, the financial committee coordinates financial issues of Al Qaeda at institutional level.

The financial system of Al Qaeda is very complex however Gunaratna (Gunaratna, 2002, 69) argues that this vague financial structure can be better explained through some familiarities and similarities as compared to the structures of multinational companies. In this context, affiliated groups being operatively active within the financial system of Al Qaeda are as if franchising companies of a certain multinational company and Al Qaeda resembles to that multinational company which aims to generate investments by setting up businesses in multiple countries.

Moreover, the yearly financial capacity of Al Qaeda has been a matter of interest for researchers and practitioners. Thus, there is a concrete data regarding financial resources of Al Qaeda. According to the report of IHS Global Limited (2013), in the first years of Al Qaeda, that is to say in the 1980s, Usama bin Laden donated his all assets to Al Qaeda for financing the war against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. As cited in the report of the 9/11 Commission (July 2004), the overall financial asset of Al Qaeda is beyond Laden's own financial resources thus comprising of 30 million dollars annual financial capacity, which is mostly acquired from charity institutions. Again, in accordance with the 9/11 Commission report, Al Qaeda invested approximately 500,000 dollars for planning and executing the 9/11 terrorist attacks. By doing so, Al Qaeda has made use of global market tools and financial investments in order for ensuring its terrorist actions.

9. Counter Terrorism Policies Concerning to Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda has been still existent in spite of the fact that the USA has been targeting the core leadership profiles of Al Qaeda. Thus, as argued by Borum and Gelles (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 472) Afghan and Iraqi wars have facilitated the process of hiring new members for Al Qaeda's terrorist actions. Therefore, it is inevitable to develop contemporary strategies and effective policies aiming to struggle against Al Qaeda.

By focusing on propaganda tools, strategies, ideologies and recruitment tactics of Al Qaeda, an important step would pave the way for struggling against Al Qaeda. In this context, it would be necessary to identify the capabilities of Al Qaeda with regard to recruiting new members, establishing dynamic structures, and using media coverage. By means of having an idea on targets, scope of actions and recruitment tactics of Al Qaeda a proactive approach would be acknowledged and henceforth this kind of approach would contribute to counter terrorism policies of states vice versa (Hoffman, 2007, 55-57).

In addition to considering the importance of actions against propaganda efforts and tactics of Al Qaeda, concentrating on concrete steps at high politics level is also vitally important in terms of defining counter terrorism strategies. In this respect, in line with the organizational structure, ideologies and strategies which are analytically categorized and clustered while profiling Al Qaeda, there is a need to take concrete actions at macro level respectively as 'the construction of liberal and open society', 'the prevention of the exploitation of religious values' and 'the enhancement of international cooperation activities'.

9.1. The Construction of Liberal and Open Society

In the countries where Al Qaeda is operatively active, one can see that tyrannical regimes still sustain their existence, socioeconomic conditions are dramatically poor and oppressive state system are in power. Al Qaeda strategically exploits these circumstances and conditions thus arguing this kind of drawbacks in order for having new members, ensuring recruitments, and radicalizing its sympathizers (Gerges, 2011, 39). Among the policy actions focusing on dealing with these circumstances, the construction of liberal and open society emerges as a key issue, and accordingly this requires serious considerations and necessitates efficient infrastructures, as well.

The interest-based relationship of the USA with tyrannical regimes in the Middle East and some African countries has contributed to enhance ideological arguments of Al Qaeda by claiming that the USA is exploiting the soil of Islamic countries. The Arab Spring has emerged as promoting human rights and liberties thus aiming to contribute counter perceptions that Al Qaeda has made profit while shaping its arguments and ideologies. Therefore, democratic rights and expectations focusing on a liberal and open society would deter ideological assumptions of Al Qaeda (Zarate and Gordon, 2011, 120). Henceforth, among the ideologies that Al Qaeda frequently has referred, the idea on establishing an Independent Arabic Peninsula has been a key motivation for Al Qaeda while planning and executing terrorist actions. In this respect, it would be appropriate to concentrate on the construction of liberal and open society, which in turn, would contribute to the elimination of the cited ideology of Al Qaeda.

Accordingly, individuals living in oppressive or tyrannical regimes would get into contact with illegal groups, would belong to a social group and hold a new identity. By contrast, individuals living in a liberal

and open society would leave illegal organizations likewise Al Qaeda and integrate his/her own identity with legal structures like civil society organizations. Thus, the construction of open society is considered as a crucial issue in order for preventing the radicalization process.

However, it seems too hard to predict how liberal and open society would be constructed thus necessitating further research and remaining a specific topic of a subsequent study. Having considered the experiences from the Arab Spring, the idea on liberal and open society might be too utopic. In other words, there might be prejudgments over the efforts focusing on ordering so called democracy and establishing a liberal state system through interventions, impositions or intrusions of other states rather than inherent and internalized political motivations of relevant states. In this respect, one can argue that the reason behind the evaporation of the liberal thought and democracy in countries such as Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Libya and being unable to institutionalize the democratic system in those countries can be explained through prejudgments over interventions and impositions as well as expectations from top rather than bottom's interests or inner demands.

Therefore, there is a need to develop strategies concentrating on the construction free, liberal, democratic and open society, which should be shaped in accordance with own needs of the individual society and disseminated into all bottoms of the society without sudden and unexpected interventions and impositions of other states or great powers. Since there is no such a social agreement or social contract being in line with the perception of the West (the USA and the European Union) as theorized by Jean-Jacques Rousseau it would be too utopic to establish a liberal and open society and copy/paste the desired model of democracy to the Middle Eastern countries, which are inherently retaining unique cultural, historical and political features.

9.2. Manipulation and Abuse of Religious Values

Another ideological assumption of Al Qaeda justifying terrorist actions is claimed to be the jihadist thought (Zarate and Gordon, 2011, 112). In accordance with the holy word *(hadith)* of the Prophet Mohammad excerpted from Tirmizi, 'the virtuous act of the one proclaiming jihad must firstly wage war on egocentric acts and desires' (Şen, 2011, 62).

Having considered the assessments on sacrificing the self, the jihad literally can be classified into two categories respectively as the actual jihad and fictional jihad. It is obvious that the jihadist thought having various connotations thus requiring more of sacrificing the self as an individual obligation which is currently misperceived. Furthermore, as argued by some Muslim scholars, there are certain rules and conditions in order to proclaim the jihad. The cited misperceptions could be eliminated through seeing the jihad as waging the war on the self rather than state or society.

Among the religious values, which are currently being exploited there are practicing deeds for the sake of the God and being martyr. This kind of religious rituals and values can be strategically highlighted by Al Qaeda and religious doctrines therefore can be acknowledged as a source of inspiration for justifying and legitimatizing the execution of terrorist actions.

In this respect, Islamic clerks' and scholars' common attitudes and efforts aiming to prevent misperceptions at national, regional, and even at global level are of utmost importance. Thus, there is a need to initiate further efforts for informing the public opinion through international conferences and symposiums thus arguing how Al Qaeda type terrorist organizations exploit the Islam and Islamic values by clarifying the actual meanings of religious concepts such as the jihadist thought, martyrdom, acquiring the sake of the God. By doing so, notable contributions in the field of academia would be achieved in order to counter Al Qaeda and affiliated groups with Al Qaeda.

9.3. Global Efforts on Countering Al Qaeda

The ultimate success in countering terrorism cannot be assured with the self-capacity of individual states. Thus, the importance of international efforts while dealing with global problems emerges as an inevitable fact. Through these cooperation mechanisms, the consideration of the responsibility to act and common approach between states and international organizations can be enhanced, as well. However, the European Union (EU) emerges as a soft power being able to ensure international cooperation in the area of countering terrorism, the questionable military capacity of the EU as compared to the USA, NATO or the United Nations, is too limited which in turn impact over dealing with terrorism at regional level as desired (Calleo, 2002, 13). Accordingly, the Europe rejects merely use of power however the USA believes in using power vice versa. In addition to this, the ethical responsibility regarding the use of power leads to have

different opinions held by the Europe to the USA (Kagan, 2002, 13).

Having considered the aforementioned statements, in order to have global support in the area of countering terrorism, there is a need to focus on efforts regarding international cooperation. However, the 9/11 terrorist attacks led to transatlantic divergences, disagreements, and individual policies at global level, the ongoing process after 9/11 terrorist attacks requires further international cooperation initiatives and mechanisms thus aiming to achieve the community based support at global level (Kaya, 2003, 81).

In this respect, one can claim that 9/11 terrorist attacks have caused profound impacts thereby leading to be a milestone in terms of shaping the new world order. Thus, many international legal instruments within the scope of the European Union, the United Nations and the European Council, have been enacted, relevant institutional actions have been taken, and there has been proactive strategy moving from short run solutions toward long run solutions in the area of struggling against terrorism. To be more specific, with the impact of 9/11 terrorist attacks executed by Al Qaeda, the PKK terrorist organization, which has been operatively active in Turkey since 1990s, has been included within the list of terrorist organizations created by the USA and the European Union which in turn, gave a way to international sanctions toward any terrorist organizations which are on the list. Therefore, 9/11 terrorist attacks have led to call for common approach among countries suffering from devastating impacts of terrorism and accordingly, to raise awareness for taking actions against terrorism not only at local level but also at global sphere.

In the same vein, the 9/11 terrorist attacks have caused root discussions on the concepts of terrorism and terrorist organizations. For example, listing terrorist organizations has become the concrete step since 9/11 terrorist attacks. Thus, immediate after attacks, on April 27, 2001, the European Council agreed on composing the list of terrorist organizations and terrorists and the relevant principles was issued in the official journal of the EU on April 28, 2001. The verdict of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the European Communities (COREPER) on adding the list of terrorist organization and terrorists was entered into force with the issue of the EU Official Journal on May 3, 2002 (excerpted by Kaya, 2003, 84). In addition to listing the terrorist organizations, the European arrest warrant has become another concrete outcome of judicial cooperation among the EU countries. The common arrest warrant contributes to facilitate the judicial process and ensure the establishment of the arrest warrant by all European countries (Kedikli, 2006, 72). Another area of judicial cooperation is concerning efforts in the area of countering financing of terrorism. Through efficient actions to be taken in order for freezing financial resources and seizing these assets would contribute to counter financing of Al Qaeda terrorist organization.

In this respect, in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolutions (Resolution 1267 dated 1999, Resolution 1373 dated 2001 and Resolution 1989 dated 2011) adopted by the Committee on Al Qaeda Sanctions under the UN, the list of affiliated groups, people and organizations with Al Qaeda has been kept. By means of these lists, which are periodically updated, economic sanctions are proposed for those whom are affiliated with Al Qaeda. In line with the updated version of the list dated November 24, 2014, there are 231 people and 70 organizations that are affiliated with Al Qaeda (The UN Security Council, 2014). However, the list has been expanded with the inclusion of the ISIL (Da'esh) in line with the resolutions 1267(1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) of the UN Security Council Committee. Thus, in accordance with the updated list of January 26, 2018, there are 679 people and 385 entities and other groups that are affiliated with Al Qaeda (https://www.un.org, Accesion date: 01.02.2018). When we compare 2014 and 2018 figures with regard to the listing, it is evident that the estimated number of people, entity or other groups affiliated with Al Qaeda has tripled dramatically.

Conclusion

Having considered the killing of Usama bin Laden in May 2011 with a successful squad operation executed in Pakistan, toppling of oppressive regimes with the help of the Arab Spring, noticing more salient actions in order for ensuring democratic rights and freedoms in the regions and countries where Al Qaeda is operatively active, one can argue that all these events have caused ideologically and operationally devastating impacts over Al Qaeda (Zarate and Gordon, 2011, p. 104). In the same vein, as emphasized by Zarate and Gordon (2011), killing of Usama bin Laden, one of the leading actors of Al Qaeda, is a symbolic message implying that there is a management deficiency of Al Qaeda and the termination of Al Qaeda is very soon.

According to contradictory arguments as raised by Farral (2011) while critiquing Zarate and Gordon (2011), Al Qaeda is still active in terms of planning and executing terrorist attacks due to the fact that Al Qaeda has a powerful and centralized organizational structure, a solid ideological background, and efficient

strategies. In other words, however the leadership has always been targeted; Al Qaeda continues to sustain its existence owing to its ideologies, organizational structure, strategies, and more importantly thanks to its global vision.

During the course of the time Al Qaeda has retained global features which explained through the parameters of its worldwide cell structures, affiliated groups operating at global level, religious values and doctrines defying borders and nation states, media coverage, diverse target profile including the USA and allies of the USA, and its global terrorist actions and attacks. Furthermore, among the ideological references of Al Qaeda, the jihadist thought, the idea of independent Arabic peninsula, enemification of the USA and allies of the USA, and the establishment of the caliphate and Islamic state system have some global connotations, as well.

In accordance with the organizational structure of Al Qaeda including its centralized organizational charter, cell structures, and affiliated groups with Al Qaeda, one can argue that Al Qaeda retains a peculiar organizational character as compared to other terrorist organizations. Thus, Al Qaeda holds a dynamic and novel feature, which can adapt new conditions and risks. By contrast, in line with its leadership profile, the components of organizational framework including military, political and financial committees, as well as command-control mechanisms and hierarchical foundations, Al Qaeda can be regarded as a classical or conventional terrorist organization.

Another distinguishing feature of Al Qaeda is related to the originality of its strategies and tactics. Immediate after terrorist actions Al Qaeda revisits its strategies and tactics, which leads Al Qaeda to act proactively. For example, strategies and tactics applied in 9/11 terrorist attacks were so unique that any other terrorist organization hasn't used before. Therefore, it can be claimed that the tactics and strategies used by Al Qaeda retain unique and dynamic features.

Furthermore, Al Qaeda has frequently referred to the use of violence as a strategic tool. Al Qaeda emphasizes and prioritizes the use of violence as a strategy in order for radicalizing its new members and achieving political goals. By contrast, in accordance with the questionnaires conducted in 2007 and 2008 in Muslim countries, the strategies and terrorist actions including suicide attacks are not anymore regarded as a legitimate reaction by most of Muslims (Gerges, 2011, 37).

Among the strategies followed by Al Qaeda, the exploitation of religious ideas and doctrines still remains important. By abusing the religious values, Al Qaeda has developed a pragmatic strategy in order for having new members and ensuring further recruitments. Another unique feature of Al Qaeda is related to having own media facilities and using social media in an efficient way. Through media coverage, Al Qaeda manages to make propaganda, which is also strategically important for having more recruitments and sustaining its existence.

Having considered the cited strategies and tactics, there is a need to shape and frame counter policies concentrating on the elimination of cited strategies and tactics of Al Qaeda. However, until today, still the leadership of Al Qaeda has been targeted rather than concentrating on draining the swamp, which requires shaping and framing counter terrorism strategies and policies aiming to terminate Al Qaeda. Over time, Middle Powers (Coalition Powers) including the USA has focused on the termination of leading images of Al Qaeda. It wouldn't be too oversimplified to claim that Al Qaeda continues to exist and maintain its connections with networks, affiliated groups and its cell structures and inspire new leader nominees (Borum and Gelles, 2005, 481). Therefore, countries need to enforce contemporary strategies and revisit their counter terrorism policies in line with the counter strategies, tactics and ideologies that the Al Qaeda embraces. Thus, in accordance with the given arguments, there are emerging policy aspects including the prevention of the exploitation of religious values, the construction of liberal and open society, and the enhancement of international cooperation efforts, which are the core arguments of the present study.

In terms of preventing the exploitation of religious values, scholars or clerks need to clarify actual meanings of some holy concepts including the jihadist thought, conditions of proclaiming war, winning the sake of the God, and martyrdom which are currently misused and misinterpreted by Al Qaeda in order for legitimizing and justifying its terrorist actions. Furthermore, scholars' efforts in symposiums, conferences or through social media explaining how these concepts are misinterpreted and abused remain as a key issue. By doing so, an important step would be taken in order for countering Al Qaeda.

Accordingly, by constructing and enhancing liberal and open society, all individuals would refrain themselves from secret and illegal structures likewise Al Qaeda. By contrast, they would integrate his/her own identity with civic society institutions, associations and nongovernmental organizations rather than Al Qaeda type illegal organizations. Therefore, the construction of open society where civil liberties and

fundamental rights have been blossoming is of utmost importance in terms of preventing the radicalization process.

In the same vein, efforts focusing on international cooperation, including institutional and legal actions would contribute to countering Al Qaeda, which is still active at global level. Immediate after 9/11 terrorist attacks, the creation of Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee under the UN, the adoption of some specific UN Security Council Resolutions (Resolution 1989 and Resolution 1373) aiming to freeze financial assets of Al Qaeda, and the introduction of the EU directive dated 2005 into the EU acquis communataire can be given examples for international efforts which are also crucial for countering Al Qaeda at global level.

In sum, Al Qaeda is a unique terrorist organization with its core organizational structure and affiliated groups, which is still operationally active and continues to plan and execute terrorist attacks at global level. Thus, the present study aiming to profiling Al Qaeda, argues that there is an urgent need to shape and frame contemporary policies and strategies thus considering the current dynamics and trends that form Al Qaeda's organizational structures, ideologies, strategies and tactics. In this respect, having referred to those dynamics and trends, the construction of liberal and open society where civil liberties and freedoms are emphasized and highlighted, the prevention of abusing religious values and the enhancement of international cooperation efforts emerge as key policy areas which need to be considered while countering Al Qaeda.

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