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Press Statement

Richard Boucher, Spokesman

Washington, DC

October 15, 2004

Foreign Terrorist Organization: Designation of Jama'at al-Tawhid wa'al-Jihad and Aliases

As part of ongoing U.S. efforts against terrorism, the Secretary of State today announced his designation of the terrorist group Jama'at al-Tawhid wa'al-Jihad, along with its aliases The Monotheism and Jihad Group, the al-Zarqawi network, and al-Tawhid, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under the Immigration and Nationality Act and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224. Taken together, these designations make it illegal under U.S. law for persons in the United States or subject to U.S. jurisdiction knowingly to provide material support to the group; they block all property and interest in property of the organization and its members; and they provide a basis for the United States to deny visas to representatives and members of the organization. The Secretary of State took this action in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Department of Homeland Security.

The Jama'at al-Tawhid wa'al-Jihad is a radical Islamist terrorist organization led by Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, who has been designated and listed for international sanctions by the UN 1267 Committee for his ties to al-Qaida. The group's main goal is to undermine the establishment of a free and pluralistic Iraqi state by fomenting civil war in Iraq. Via Internet jihadi websites containing video broadcasts, this organization has publicly admitted responsibility for the brutal abductions and videotaped executions this year of seven civilians: Americans Nicholas Berg, Eugene Armstrong, and Jack Hensley; Briton Kenneth Bigley; South Korean Kim Sun-Il; Bulgarian Georgi Lazov; and Turk Murat Yuce. The group's operatives have also been responsible for the assassinations of the former Iraqi Governing Council President, the governor of Mosul, and U.S. diplomat Laurence Foley in Amman, Jordan in 2002. The Zarqawi network specifically targets those Iraqis attempting to rebuild their country and provide for its security. Hundreds of innocent Iraqis have died and many hundreds more have been injured during the last year in the group's targeted bombings throughout Iraq - in Mosul, Baqouba, Falujah, Ramadi, Najaf, and Baghdad. The group was also responsible for the U.N. headquarters bombing in Baghdad which killed U.N. Special Representative of the Secretary General for Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello.

The U.S. list of designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations now numbers 39.

Because this group and its leader, al-Zarqawi, have links to al-Qaida, the U.S. and others, including the U.K. and Iraq, yesterday asked that the U.N. 1267 Sanctions Committee include Jama'at al-Tawhid wa'al-Jihad and its aliases on its consolidated list of individuals and entities subject to international sanctions pursuant to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1267 and subsequent resolutions, most recently Resolution 1526. Once names are listed, all U.N. Member States are obligated to impose sanctions -- asset freezes, travel bans and arms embargoes -- and prohibit their nationals and persons in their territories from making available to the group's members any funds or other resources.

We hope these designations will continue to draw the attention of governments across the world and will encourage those governments to take action, as we have, to isolate these terrorist organizations, to choke off their sources of financial support, and to prevent their members' movement across international borders.

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