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> [Press Releases \(Other\)](#) > [2005](#) > [May](#)

Press Statement

Richard Boucher, Spokesman

Washington, DC

May 26, 2005

U.S. Department of State Designates the Islamic Jihad Group Under Executive Order 13224

The Department of State on May 25 announced the designation of the Islamic Jihad Group (IJG) as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224. This designation blocks all property, and interests in property, of the organization that are in the United States, or come within the United States, or the control of U. S. persons. 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 Islamic Jihad Group, active in Central Asia, broke away from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a Specially Designated Global Terrorist organization that is listed by the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee. On July 30, 2004, the Islamic Jihad Group conducted coordinated bombing attacks in Tashkent against the U.S. and Israeli Embassies, and the office of the Uzbek Prosecutor General, killing at least two people and wounding nine. The Islamic Jihad Group claimed responsibility for these attacks and indicated that future attacks are planned. The Islamic Jihad Group continues to target Americans and U.S. facilities overseas and is a dangerous threat to U.S. interests.

After an explosion at a safehouse in Bukharo, Uzbekistan, IJG suicide bombers attacked a popular bazaar and other locations in Tashkent in March and April 2004, resulting in the deaths of more than a dozen police officers and innocent bystanders and dozens of injuries. The attackers in the March and April 2004 attacks, some of whom were female suicide bombers, targeted the local government offices of the Uzbekistani and Bukharo police, killing approximately 47 people, including 33 terrorists. These attacks marked the first use of female suicide bombers in Central Asia.

Those arrested in connection with the attacks in Bukharo have testified to the close ties between the IJG leaders and Usama bin Laden and Mullah Omar. Kazakhstani authorities have declared that IJG members were taught by al-Qaida instructors to handle explosives and to organize intelligence work and subversive activities. Kazakhstan has arrested several IJG members and put them on trial.

2005/559



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