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**International terrorist organization "Islamic State":  
history, contemporaneity, future**

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This monograph is a comprehensive study of the activities of the international terrorist organization "Islamic State", which analyzes the history of its emergence, organizational structure, tactics of activity, participation of foreign militants in the ranks of a terrorist organization, the efforts of the world community, including Russia, in combating it, etc. key questions. With reference to the "Islamic state", the authors give recommendations on counteracting the spread of ideological concepts of terrorism in the Russian Federation.

The book is intended for civil servants, law enforcement officers, faculty members, media representatives, will be of interest to a wide range of readers.

*Dedicated to the bright memory of our Teachers and Mentors-Professors Yuri Il'ich Avdeev, Mir Pavlovich Tretyakov and Alexander Alekseevich Kokorin.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Today one of the most combat-ready, numerous and financially secured terrorist structures that have gained worldwide fame is the international terrorist organization "Islamic State" (also known as the "ISIS").<sup>1</sup>

Considering this phenomenon, it should be noted that from other terrorist structures the ISIS differs by the following **qualitative characteristics**:

- religious and ideological basis, which allows to form a significant cadre base;
- the availability of a strong resource and financial base through the sale of petroleum products, the withdrawal of financial resources from the banking sector, the collection of Islamic taxes and financial assistance from foreign sponsoring states;
- hybrid management system, which is a synthesis of the administrative and political structure and terrorist organization;
- global information and propaganda infrastructure for the radicalization of the population and an increase in the complicity base;
- adaptability to the applied anti-terrorist measures (dispersal of forces and means, refusal to concentrate on open communication lines, wide application of camouflage measures).

In addition to this, in many respects due to the terrorist and information propaganda activities of the ISIS, the use of this new tactical methods and means of terror in recent years for modern terrorism have following characteristics:

1. There has been *an expansion of the geography of the international terrorism*, which is reflected in the large-scale expansion of religious extremist ideology, the creation of conspiratorial terrorist cells in various countries of the world, and the commission of resonant terrorist acts;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> By the Decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of December 29, 2014 No. AKPI14-1424S, the international organization "Islamic State" (other names: "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria", "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant", "Islamic State of Iraq and Shama") was recognized as the terrorist organization and its activity is prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation.

<sup>2</sup> Actively implemented by the leadership of the ISIS, the idea of recreating a single Islamic "caliphate" finds wide support in Muslim communities from Western Europe to the South-East Asia, which causes the influx of militants and technical specialists from abroad into the ranks of

2. *Cross-border mobility of supporters of terrorist structures* has increased. Supporters of the radical pseudo-Islam began to move more actively to regions with increased terrorist activity with the aim of gaining combat experience, gaining connections among terrorists and establishing interaction between various terrorist groups;

3. *The internationalization of terrorism* has taken place. Terrorist organizations began to be international structures in which the nationality and citizenship of militants play a secondary role. A key integrating principle is adherence to the religious extremist ideology;

4. *The activity of autonomous terrorist cells, as well as single-player terrorists and minigroups, under the influence of destructive installations of the ISIS has increased.* At the same time, the leaders of the "Islamic state" began to resort more often to tactics of remote management by the actions of their supporters and to promote the concept of "autonomous jihad";

5. *Information support of terrorist activities, primarily on the Internet has intensified.* As a result of the activity of the supporters of the ISIS, a single world system of the Internet resources has been formed, forwarded towards religious and ideological training and recruiting future members of the extremist and terrorist underground;

The territorial expansion of the "Islamic state" also affected the Russian Federation. The range of actual terrorist threats for our country originating from the ISIS is represented by the emergence of stable organizational ties with the representatives of the North Caucasian bandit underground, the regular replenishment of the organization by immigrants from Russia and the CIS countries and the desire to transfer terrorist activities to the territory of the Russian Federation.

Currently, the activities of the ISIS already have a significant impact on terrorist groups in the territory of the Russian Federation. In particular, since the end of 2014, was noted the transition of the organizational core, combat groups and accessory networks of the terrorist organization "Imarat Kavkaz" to the control of the ISIS with the actual termination of the functioning of the "Imarat Kavkaz". In June 2015, in the territory of the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation the leaders of the ISIS created a structural subdivision of the organization - "Vilayat the Caucasus."

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the grouping and leads to the formation of new zones of terrorist activity outside the Middle East.

The purposeful recruitment of the ISIS emissaries allowed terrorists to attract more than 4,000 Russian citizens to their ranks. Only in Syria more than 30 different terrorist groups participate in the hostilities, some of them are manned by people from the North Caucasus and Volga Federal Districts of the Russian Federation. Among these structures are the battalions "Johar Dudayev", "Shamil Basayev" and "Amir Khattab". At the same time, militants of these formations can be transferred at any time to carry out terrorist activities in Russia.

In the course of training in the camps of the ISIS, the Russians are given specific tasks to establish contacts with the bandit underground after returning to their places of permanent residence and directly participating in the preparation and execution of terrorist acts. Recruits and future militants are actively trained in mine and explosives, tactics of conducting military operations in urban conditions, and develop channels for secret and emergency communications. Awareness of this category of individuals on the conduct of investigative activities and against them leads to the fact that their return to Russia is carried out in compliance with special measures of conspiracy.

Emerging threats and threatening trends associated with the terrorist activities of the "Islamic State" are not ignored by scientists - researchers, analysts and representatives of the media.

The analysis of domestic and foreign literature shows that the illegal activities of the ISIS and counteracting it are topical topics of scientific research.

*In the US*, the problems of countering the ISIS are at the center of attention of such analytical centers as the Institute for the Study of War<sup>3</sup>, the Hudson Institute<sup>4</sup>, the Congressional Research Service<sup>5</sup>, the Hoover Institution<sup>6</sup> and etc.

*In the UK*, the ISIS is studied by the International Institute for Strategic Studies<sup>7</sup>, the Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security Studies<sup>8</sup> and etc.

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<sup>3</sup> Institute for the Study of War [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.understandingwar.org> Date of circulation 12.11.2016.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas F. Lynch III The Impact of ISIS on Global Salafism and South Asian Jihad // Current Trends in Islamist Ideology, 2015. Volume 19. P. 85-108; Nibras Kazimi. Saudi Arabia's "Islamic Alliance": major Challenge for Al-Baghdadi's Islamic State, or Potential opportunity? // Current Trends in Islamist Ideology, 2016. Volume 20. P. 5-29; Farhan Zahid, Muhammad Ismail Khan. Prospects for the Islamic State in Pakistan // Current Trends in Islamist Ideology, 2016. Volume 20. P. 65-80.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher M. Blanchard, Carla E. Humud. The Islamic State and U.S. Policy / Congressional Research Service. 2017. 32 p .; Kathleen J. McInnis. Coalition Contributions to Countering the Islamic State / Congressional Research Service. 2016. 13 p.

<sup>6</sup> Jessica Stern, J.M. Berger. Isis: The State of Terror. 2016. 432 p.

*In Germany*, the analysis of the activities of the ISIS is carried out by the Institute for International Politics and Security (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik)<sup>9</sup>, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz), conducting seminars on countering this terrorist organization<sup>10</sup> and regularly publishing analytical materials on counteraction terrorist ideology: "Jihadists and their role in recruiting women for the "Islamic state", "Analysis of the radicalization and characteristics of persons who left Germany under the influence of Islam Ideology in Syria and Iraq"<sup>11</sup> and etc.

Talking about the German authors we should also mention the following works: Bruno Shira "ISIS - global jihad: how the "Islamic state" transfers terrorism to Europe"<sup>12</sup>, Christoph Reuter "Black Power." "The Islamic State" and the strategy of terror,"<sup>13</sup> as well as Janusz Bien and Martin Shmez "The Caliphate of Terror. Interdisciplinary views on the Islamic state."

*In France*, the issues of counteraction to the ISIS are considered by the French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs<sup>14</sup>, the French Institute of International Relations (Institut Français des Relations Internationales), and the European Institute for Security Studies Union Institute for Security Studies).

*In Italy*, the Institute of International Relations (Istituto Affari Internazionali)<sup>15</sup>, the Institute for International Political Studies (Istituto per gli Studi di Politica

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<sup>7</sup> Harsh Lessons. Iraq, Afghanistan and the Changing Character of War / The International Institute for Strategic Studies. 2017. 164 p.

<sup>8</sup> Gareth Stansfield What it Will Take to Degrade ISIS? [Electronic resource] Access mode: <https://rusi.org/commentary/what-it-will-take-degrade-isis> Date of circulation: 24.02.2017.

<sup>9</sup> Muriel Asseburg. All Eyes on the Islamic State? Repercussions of the Fight against Jihadists on War-Torn Syria / IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook 2015.

See: Der, Islamische Staat - Eine globale Bedrohung [Electronic resource] Access mode: <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/presse/pm-20160502-symposium-2016>. Date of circulation: 23.02.2017.

<sup>10</sup> Jihadistinnen und ihre Roller bei der Anwerbung von Frauen für den "Islamischen Staat" / Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz. 2015; .Analyse der Radikalisierungshintergründe und -verläufe der Personen, die aus islamistischer Motivation aus Deutschland in Richtung Syrien oder Irak ausgereist sind / Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz. 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Bruno Schirra. ISIS - Der globale Dschihad: Wie der "Islamische Staat" den Terror nach Europa trägt. 2015. 336 p.

<sup>12</sup> Christoph Reuter. "Die schwarze Macht". Der "Islamische Staat" und die Strategen des Terrors. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, München 2015. 352 p.

<sup>13</sup> Martin Schmetz. Kalifat des Terrors Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf den Islamischen Staat. 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Kader Abderrahim. DAECH: Histoire, enjeux et pratiques de l'Organisation de l'Etat 192 p.

<sup>15</sup> Omar Ashour. Why Does the Islamic State Endure and Expand? Roma, IAI, 2015, 18 p .; Tobias von Lossow. The Rebirth of Water as a Weapon: IS in Syria and Iraq // The International Spectator. 2016. №1 / 3. P. 82-99.

Internazionale)<sup>16</sup> and other analytical structures are engaged in the study of the ISIS. One can single out the work of the Italian historian Paolo Sensini "ISIS: leaders, directors and actors of international terrorism"<sup>17</sup> which contains a critical analysis of the role of Western countries in the institutionalization and the spread of the international terrorism and journalist Philippe Bovo "ISIS. A threat to Islam"<sup>18</sup>, in which the author in detail analyzes the reasons for the rapid growth of the influence of the ISIS.

Among the foreign works, one should also note the monographs: Dr. Adil Rashid, Senior Researcher at the United Service Institution of India "ISIS, the Armageddon Race," in which he examines the specifics of the fight against a terrorist organization in an ideological and military relationship<sup>19</sup>; American journalist Michael Weiss "ISIS: inside the army of terror"<sup>20</sup>; Editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Rai al-Yaum" Abdel Bari Atwan "Islamic State: Digital Caliphate"<sup>21</sup>; and the American journalist Joby Warrick "Black Flags: The Rise of the ISIS"<sup>22</sup>, in which the author traces the emergence and growth of the influence of the ISIS among terrorist groups.

*In Russia*, the organizational structure and some elements of the tactics of terrorist activities of the ISIS were investigated by the Center for Strategic Estimations and Forecasts<sup>23</sup>, the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies<sup>24</sup>, the Middle East Institute, the Center for Strategic Studies "Russia-Islamic World", the Center for Military and Political Studies, the Academy of Military Sciences<sup>25</sup> and etc.

Among the Russian authors it is necessary to note A. Kemal's book "ISIS. The Sinister Shadow of the Caliphate", in which the author analyzes the successes of the ISIS and the threats coming from it for the Russian Federation; monograph A.E. Nesmiyan "ISIS. "The Islamic State" and Russia. Is the collision inevitable?", which analyzes the prospects of the terrorist organization, including its operational terrorist potential in Russia; the historiosophical work of A.B. Widow's ranks

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<sup>16</sup> Arturo Varvelli. Jihadist Hotbeds. Understanding Local Radicalization Processes. Milano, 2016. 170 p. ; Andrea Plebani. Jihad e Terrorismo. Da Al-Qa'ida all'Isis: Storia di un nemico che cambia. 2016. 185 r.

<sup>17</sup> Paolo Sensini. ISIS: Mandanti, registi e attori del "terrorismo" internazionale. 2016, 298 p.

<sup>18</sup> Filippo Bovo. ISIS. Una minaccia all'Islam. 2015.160 p.

<sup>19</sup> Adil Rasheed. Race to Armageddon.2015. 184 p.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Weiss, Hassan Hassan. ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror. NY, 2015, 177 p.

<sup>21</sup> Abdel Bari Atwan. Islamic State: The Digital Caliphate. Saqi Books, London. 2015.256 p.

<sup>22</sup> Joby Warrick. Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS. 2015. 368 p.

<sup>23</sup> Pankratenko I.N. IGIL today: on the way to a full-fledged state. M., 2015.

<sup>24</sup> The ISIS as a threat to international security. Moscow: RISI, 2015. 188 p.

<sup>25</sup> Tsyganok A.D. Grouping of Russian troops in Syria in the fight against IGIL (strategy and scenarios) // Vestnik AVN. №1. 2016. and others.



"Battle for Syria. From Babylon to the ISIS", as well as the book by Alexander Prokhanov, Leonid Ivashov and Vladislav Shurygin "Syrian Armageddon. ISIS, Oil, Russia. The Battle for the East."<sup>26</sup>

Despite the fact that the problems related to the involvement of citizens in the terrorist activities of the ISIS in their work were touched by both domestic and foreign researchers, a comprehensive study of the place and role of the ISIS in the modern conglomerate of terrorist organizations, the structure of terrorist activities "Islamic state" was not conducted. The available scientific works are devoted only to certain aspects of the topic under consideration.

This monograph is an attempt to fill the gap in the domestic scientific literature on the subject of countering the terrorist and extremist activities of international terrorist organizations in general and the "Islamic state" in particular.

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<sup>26</sup> The ISIS. Sinister Shadow of the Caliphate / Comp. A. Kemal. M.: Algorithm, 2015. 224 p.; El Murid. IGIL. "The Islamic State" and Russia. Is the collision inevitable? M., 2016. 256 p.; Shirokorad A.B. The battle for Syria. From Babylon to the ISIS. M.: Veche, 2016. 384 p.; Prokhanov A., Ivashov L., Shurygin V. Syrian Armageddon. The ISIS, Oil, Russia. The Battle for the East. Moscow: Knizhni mir, 2016. 288 p.

# **Chapter 1. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE TACTICS OF THE ACTIVITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATION "ISLAMIC STATE"**

## **1.1. The history of the creation of the ISIS**

Despite the fact that the ISIS among the terrorist structures is a relatively "young" organization, it has a rather long background.

The first stage of formation of the organization is connected with the activities of the international terrorist who is Jordanian by birth - Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Az-Zarqawi began his terrorist activities in Afghanistan when the Soviet army was there. After his return to Jordan he spent seven years in prison for his subversive activities against the authority of the Jordanian king. After leaving in 1999 al-Zarqawi, with the aim of changing the political regime in the country and building an "Islamic state" there created a terrorist group "Jamaat at-Tahid Wal-Jihad" ("Jamaat of monotheism and jihad"). In addition to this, it is believed that al-Zarqawi in 2001 took a direct part in the creation of the terrorist group "Ansar al-Islam" operating in Iraqi Kurdistan and in the Sunni regions of Iraq.

At the same time, al-Zarqawi received wide popularity only in 2003 thanks to the speech of US Secretary of State Colin Powell at the meeting of the UN Security Council, who in his discussions about threats to the world community from Iraq and possession of weapons of mass destruction stated that the regime of S. Hussein is connected with the international terrorist organization "Al-Qaeda" through the terrorist Abu Musaba al-Zarqawi.

After the outbreak of the 2003 invasion of the coalition forces led by the United States into Iraq Jamaat at-Tawhid Wal-Jihad turned into a ramified terrorist structure with foreign militants in its ranks whose goal was to overthrow the transitional government and the formation of an "Islamic state". Similar goals were pursued by the terrorist group Ansar al-Islam<sup>27</sup>. It is worth mentioning that already at that time the militants "Jamaat at-Tawhid Wal-Jihad" actively used the so-called "shahidomobiles" to carry out terrorist acts and conduct military operations and to intimidate their opponents - to post video on the Internet with the executions of hostages.

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<sup>27</sup> Considering the grouping of Ansar al-Islam as the main future source of threats in post-Saddam Iraq, US aviation in 2003 inflicted multiple air strikes on its camps.

It should be noted that the continuity of the terrorist organizations "Jamaat at-Tawhid Wal-Jihad" and "Islamic State" is also traced in their symbolism (figure 1).



*Fig. 1 Flags of terrorist organizations: Jamaat at-Tawhid Wal-Jihad, Al-Qaida in Iraq and the Islamic State*

In October 2004, al-Zarqawi swore allegiance to Usama bin Laden and renamed his organization in "Al Qaeda in Iraq."

During this period the former soldiers of the army of S. Hussein and members of the banned Baath party who formed the organizational basis for resistance to the new Iraqi authorities actively joined the ranks of those who remained out of work in connection with the change of the ruling regime in Iraq.

In 2006, with the direct participation of Al-Qaeda with the help of an international terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a "Consultative Assembly of Mujahideen" ("Majlis Shura al-Mujahidin") was formed in Iraq which included eight Sunni Islamist insurgent groups, including Al Qaeda in Iraq.

The death of al-Zarqawi in June 2006 marked a new stage in the formation of the terrorist organization. After his death the new leader of al-Qaida in Iraq was Abu Ayyub al-Masri. This stage was marked by the creation in October 2006 of the "Consultative Assembly of the Mujahideen" (without coordination with the leadership of Al-Qaeda) of the "Islamic State of Iraq" (the ISIS), into which 8 provinces were included (Baghdad, Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Salah-ed-Din, Ninewa and part of the provinces of Babil and Wasit), with the "capital" in the Iraqi city of Baquba.

Emir of the ISIS was elected Hamid Davud Muhammad Khalil al-Zawi, better known under the pseudonym of Abu Umar al-Baghdadi. At the same time, there was no complete gap between the ISIS and Al-Qaeda in Iraq at that time. For example, Abu Ayyub al-Masri, who led the terrorist organization Al-Qaida in Iraq after Abu Ayyub al-Masri's death in 2010, was also Abu Suleiman al-Nasir, the "military minister" in the ISIS.

After the death of Abu Umar al-Baghdadi in the same year of 2010, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (real name - Ibrahim Ali Avvad Muhammad al-Badri) became the new

ISIS emir, who in 2003 took part in the creation of the terrorist group "Jamaat Jaysh Aigl Sunnah Val Jama'a", in which he headed the "Shariah Committee".

It should be mentioned that in the biography of Abu Umar al-Baghdadi, who heads the terrorist organization at the moment, there are many "white" spots. For example, there is no doubt that he was a suspect in extremist activities in the American filtration (and actually - concentration) camp "Bukka" but if, according to "official" information, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was detained in the camp from February to December 2004, according to Colonel Kenneth King, commander of the Bucca camp, he was there until the summer of 2009 and then a small camp was moved near Baghdad, where he was eventually released<sup>28</sup>. There is a version that al-Baghdadi was transferred to Bucca after spending some time in another place (presumably Abu Ghraib prison)<sup>29</sup>.

At the same time supporters of "conspiracy" versions consider the fact of Al-Baghdadi's imprisonment in detention - as being in conditions favorable for the recruitment of a person as an agent of US special services (Israel). They note that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, in his qualities, like someone else approached the role of an agent - he possessed pragmatic thinking, high stress-resistance, organizational abilities, and easily established contacts with people. The elimination of the terrorists of Abu Ayyub al-Masri and Abu Umar al-Baghdadi in 2010 is associated with the need for further "promotion" of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to the leading link of terrorists. It is mentioned that in connection with the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, the US special services during this period were interested in exerting a controlling influence on the terrorist groups operating in the region to redirect their efforts in the interests of the United States.<sup>30</sup>

In 2013, the rebels Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi entered the civil war in Syria against the regime of B. Assad and ISIS changed its name to the "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant".

In early 2014, the ISIS fighters launched a successful offensive in Iraq as a result of which they managed to capture the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi and in June

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<sup>28</sup> ISIS Leader: 'See You in New York' [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/06/14/isis-leader-see-you-in-new-york.html> Date of circulation: 08.03.2017.

<sup>29</sup> Joshua Eaton. U.S. Military Now Says ISIS Leader Was Held in Notorious Abu Ghraib Prison [Electronic resource] Access mode: <https://theintercept.com/2016/08/25/us-military-now-says-isis-leader-was-held-in-notorious-abu-ghraib-prison/> / Date of circulation: 08/03/2017.

<sup>30</sup> It should be noted that there is no documented evidence of the existence of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's secret relations with Western intelligence services. At the same time, the fact that al-Baghdadi does not comment on his past, including that related to the period of his stay in the concentration camp, contributes to the popularity of "conspiracy" versions.

2014 - Mosul. The relative ease of their victories was associated with the support of the Sunni population of Iraq, who was de facto suspended from governing the country (Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki "gave away" virtually all the leading positions in the state of Shiites).

At the end of June 2014, the ISIS announced the creation of its own state, the "Caliphate", stretching from the city of Aleppo in northern Syria to the province of Diyala in the east of Iraq, and abandoned the geographic linkage in its name replacing it with the "Islamic state". These events marked the beginning of the next stage in the history of the terrorist organization.

Since that time, the ISIS has increasingly become the center of attraction and the recognized leader of the "anti-Western" part of the Islamic world speaking for Islamic radicals as a fighter for justice, restoring historical Arab identity. In the controlled territories militants managed to ensure the appearance of stability, order and social justice, which contributed to the support of the ISIS from the Sunni population of Syria and Iraq.

At the same time, in the expert community there is no unified conception of the reasons for the appearance and military-political success of the ISIS. At present, the following conceptual approaches can be singled out.

1. Many researchers believe that the emergence of this terrorist organization and the growth of its influence are associated with the opposition of Sunnis and Shiites (the so-called "Sunni Shiite war")<sup>31</sup>. Such a perception of the nature of the conflicts in Iraq and Syria is advanced by the Anglo-Saxon media, since it removes accusations of "double" standards from the countries of the West and involvement in the armed confrontation in the Middle East, shifting the blame on the Muslims themselves.<sup>32</sup>

2. Some researchers believe that the success of the ISIS is associated with the failure of the US foreign policy in Iraq and Syria. In particular, expert on religious extremism T. Dronzina believes that the emergence of this terrorist structure was a reaction of Iraqis to US aggression, and the terrorist structure itself originated in the Iraqi prison "Camp Buki", which contained former members of the Baath party

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<sup>31</sup> Beyond Sectarianism: The New Middle East Cold War / Brookings Doha Center Analysis Paper. Doha. 2014. 29 p.; Ivanov S. Middle East and the Sunni-Shiite contradictions [Electronic resource] Access mode: <https://interaffairs.ru/news/printable/14372> (reference date: 26.12.2015).

<sup>32</sup> The grand Shiite-Sunni struggle? [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://theweek.com/articles/547665/grand-shiitesunni-struggle> Date of circulation 04/22/2015; Zoe Mintz. Mode of access: <http://www.ibtimes.com/how-sunni-shiite-conflict-frames-current-crisis-iraq-1603528> Circulation date 22.04. 2015

and religious radicals. As a result, the presence of a common enemy in the person of the United States led to the unification of previously irreconcilable forces.<sup>33</sup>

3. There is an expert opinion, according to which the success of the ISIS is due to the financial and organizational support of the authorities of Qatar<sup>34</sup>. Supporters of this point of view emphasize that if originally the ISIS existed at the expense of private donations then later the main source of income was the monarchy of Qatar, which sought to weaken the position of Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. According to the analysts, Saudi Arabia while trying to overthrow the regime of Bashar Assad in Syria, assisted the al-Qaida militants and Qatar also trying to strengthen its influence on the situation in the region began to help the militants of the "Islamic state".

4. A number of experts see the activities of the ISIS as the realization of the US theory of "managed chaos". In their opinion, the ISIS and similar terrorist organizations are carrying out a plan to destabilize the situation in the Middle East region with the aim of putting pressure on the government of B. Assad and deterring Iran.<sup>35</sup>

It should be noted that the media reported on the contacts of al-Baghdadi, then known as Ibrahim al-Badri, with US representatives, in particular Senator D. McCain. Photographs were published where the future ISIS leader as part of the members of the Syrian opposition, meets with the American politician. Despite the fact that a number of researchers the authenticity of these pictures is being questioned D. McCain and al-Baghdadi did not refute the very fact of being at the same time in the same place.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> The ISIS is not a religious organization [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.islamsng.com/kgz/report/8608> Date of reference 06.05.2015.

<sup>34</sup> Satanovsky E. Hand of Qatar: coalition against the Islamic state is in no hurry with ground operation // Military Industrial Courier. 2015. No. 9 (575); Germany criticizes Qatar because of the support of IGIL [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://russian.irib.ir/news/ve-mire/item/230440> Date of circulation 22.04.2015; Who finances the ISIS / Deutsche Welle fighters, June 22, 2014 [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.dw.com/ru/tax-financier-beevideo-isis/a-17725571> Date of circulation: 12.12.2015 and Other

<sup>35</sup> Merkuriev V. V., Agapov P. V. "The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" in the system of threats to the national security of Russia // Newsletter of the ATC of the CIS. 2014. №23. Pp. 55-56; Pozdnyakov AI Transnational terrorism as a means of geopolitics // Bulletin of the National Antiterrorist Committee. 2014. No. 2 (11). Pp. 95-103; Who runs the chaos // Rossiyskaya Gazeta. 2015. 11 Feb. C.1-9 .; Mossad brought the disclosed agent from the leadership of IGIL .. The region goes into a state of total chaos [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://aftershock.su/?q=node/304439> Date of circulation: 16/05/2015.

<sup>36</sup> In particular, D. McCain answered on the journalists' question about what he was doing in the campaign against Islamists that he does not understand how these people got into the frame.

Contacts of the US officials with Islamists occurred during the civil war in Syria. So, in the spring of 2013, D. McCain illegally visited the city of Idlib, which is under the control of terrorist groups where he met with the leaders of the Syrian opposition. It is important that the trip of the American senator was not advertised and it became known only after his return to his homeland.

5. Many analysts see Israel's interest in the functioning of the logistics company ISIS. Supporters of this view point to the fact that Israel bought and resold North Iraqi oil from territories controlled by militants, and also refers to the "revealing" document, promulgated by Edward Snowden, according to which the ISIS was created by American, British and Israeli intelligence services as part of the "Aspen Nest" strategy to form public opinion that Israel is threatened by an enemy in the immediate vicinity of its borders.<sup>37</sup>

The experts say that the destruction of a single Syrian state and its split into several warring segments will allow Israel not only to get rid of the Assad's government and "squeeze" the Iranians out of Syria, but also to isolate Shiite areas of Lebanon from Iran.<sup>38</sup>

It is worth mentioning that the leaders of the ISIS did not call on their supporters to carry out terrorist activities against Israel and its citizens and the shelling of the country from the territory of the Sinai Peninsula and Syria where terrorist groups acted swore allegiance to al-Baghdadi were single and did not inflict Israelis any material harm.

According to the Turkish newspaper Yeni Şafak, the leader of ISIS al-Baghdadi during the year underwent intensive military training under the leadership of the Mossad special services while studying in courses on theology and oratorical skills.<sup>39</sup>

In the opinion of Professor Tim Anderson<sup>40</sup>, among the countries that carried out tacit support to the militants of the ISIS are:

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<sup>37</sup> Is "ISIS" a CIA-Mossad Creation? [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://americanfreepress.net/?p=19176> Date of reference 22.04.2015; ISIS is a Israeli controlled front - repeat Access mode: <http://smoloko.com/?p=10771> Date of reference 02.28.2017.

<sup>38</sup> Shurygin V. IGIL and Israel are partners and brothers? [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://americanfreepress.net/?p=19176> Date of reference 22.04.2015; ISIS is a Israeli controlled front - repeat Access mode: <https://nstarikov.ru/club/70910> Circulation date 28.02.2017.

<sup>39</sup> [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.yenisafak.com/yazarlar/CemKucuk/yeni-usame-bin-ladin-ebu-bekir-el-bagdadadi-55420> Date of circulation: 12.12.2015; "Islamic state": essence and opposition: Analytical report / Ed. Ya.A. Amelina and A.G. Aresheva. Vladikavkaz: Caucasian geopolitical club, 2015. P.21.

<sup>40</sup> Tim Anderson. The dirty war on Syria. 2016.

1. *Saudi Arabia*, which participated together with the United States in 2006 in the establishment of the ISIS and provided "jihadists" with financial and other material and technical assistance.

2. *Qatar*, which provided in 2011 – 2013 financial assistance to the ISIS (after 2013 Qatar began to support the "Army of Conquest").

3. *Turkey*, which allowed up to the end of 2015 foreign "jihadists" to use their territory as a transit and "recreational" site, as well as took part in the transportation and sale of oil from territories controlled by the ISIS.

Now, thanks to the reorientation of Turkey from the alliance with the United States and Saudi Arabia to the "Iran-Russia Union", the country's participation in the military operation "Shield of the Euphrates" and the construction of a protective concrete wall on the Turkish-Syrian border, assistance from Turkish Islamists to the militia of the ISIS has significantly decreased.

4. *The United States*, which armed and trained groups of Islamists to fight the political regime of B. Assad. Due to various circumstances, the "American" weapons supplied to the "opposition" later turned up in the militia of the ISIS.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to this, on the part of the Iraqi authorities and accusations have repeatedly been made against the US in supplying the ISIS with air from the air. Thus, in December 2014 the commission of the Iraqi parliament on security and defense established the fact of arms deliveries to the ISIS militants by the American military in the province of Salah ad Din where the US Air Force dropped weapons and ammunition to terrorists.

It should be noted that the militants of the ISIS actively use American armament and ammunition both in the Middle East and in the Afghanistan-Pakistani zone.

5. *Israel*, which armed and provided medical assistance to wounded militants in Syria. In particular, over the past three years Israel out of "humanitarian" considerations has provided medical assistance to more than 2 thousand Syrians (80% of whom were men of draft age) spending on their treatment about 50 million shekels.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> A similar situation arose with the weapons provided by Great Britain and France to the "moderate" opposition in Syria.

<sup>42</sup> Saving their sworn enemy: Heartstopping footage shows Israeli commandos rescuing men from Syrian warzone - but WHY are they risking their lives for Islamic militants? [Electronic resource] access mode: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3315347/Watch-heart-pounding-moment-Israeli-commandos-save-Islamic-militants-Syrian-warzone-risking-lives-sworn-enemies.html> Date of circulation: 28.02.2017.



It should also be mentioned that Israel's military aircraft have repeatedly violated Syrian airspace and Israeli special forces ("Yakhmam") regularly infiltrated Syrian territory near the Dutch heights. In addition to this, the transport from the territory of Israel to the Syrian settlements controlled by the Islamists recorded "unidentified cargo".

Thus, in spite of the fact that the events in Syria have largely lost the possibility of effective external governance and the spontaneity and unpredictability of developments are dangerous for all the states of the region, a number of states continue to try to use terrorist groups to achieve their own goals in the Middle East.

## **1.2. Goals and tasks of the ISIS**

According to the statements by the ISIS leaders, the main purpose of the organization is to overthrow secular regimes in the Islamic countries and the construction of the "Great Islamic Caliphate" - a Muslim state of equality and prosperity based on the Sharia system of government.

Recreating the "Caliphate" - led by the "caliphs" (figure 2), combines the unlimited supreme spiritual and temporal power, it has long been the aim of the Islamists in many countries around the world.<sup>43</sup>

Speculating on the feeling of religious solidarity and historical memory of Muslims, the leaders of the ISIS emphasize that their armed struggle restores historical justice.

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<sup>43</sup> Created after the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632, the Caliphate existed until the early 1920s. (From 1453 to 1923, the title and rights of the Caliph were owned by the Ottoman sultans). In its heyday, the Arab Caliphate included part of the Iberian Peninsula, a number of islands in the Mediterranean, North Africa, the Middle East, Anatolia, the Balkans, part of the Caucasus.



*Fig. 2 The Arab Caliphate in the VII-XI centuries*

At the same time, "jihadists" claim that they are building a system of state administration on the model of the caliphate that existed during the "four righteous caliphs" (632-661).<sup>44</sup> It is this period in the development of the Islamic world, in their opinion, is an example for imitation. The idea of an "Islamic state", built on the principles of social justice, is very popular today in the Muslim world. Disappointed in the "Arab Spring", Islamic youth actively



*The future borders of the "Caliphate" in the view of the militants of the ISIS*

use ISIS for the revival of Islam in the Shariah state. We must admit that the ideologists of the ISIS have an action strategy to expand the borders of the

<sup>44</sup> The rightful caliphs of the Sunnis are Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali.

"caliphate", which helps maintain the illusion of the power of quasi-state education and leads to the growth of adherents of the "Islamic state" throughout the world.

In 2014, a map of the future borders of the Caliphate was posted on the Internet resources of the ISIS (figure 3)<sup>45</sup>. ISIS planned to include in the "Caliphate" not only the territory of the former Arab Caliphate, but also a number of Balkan states, Austria, vast areas in the Middle East, Central Africa and Asia.

At the same time, among the militants of the ISIS there are contradictions between the so-called "statesmen" and supporters of "total external expansion".<sup>46</sup>

Supporters of the "state" approach, represented by former Baathists, officers of the armed forces, officials of the period of S. Hussein's rule, as well as representatives of the tribes, believe that the priority task is to keep the controlled territories.

Their opponents are, for the most part, foreign "jihadists" who believe that it is necessary to adhere to offensive tactics and try to spread Islam to all Muslim and subsequently non-Muslim countries including them in the "Caliphate".<sup>47</sup>

It should be noted that the goals publicly declared by the leaders of the ISIS and their supporters are far from the true aims of the leadership of the terrorist structure which are directly dependent on the development of the military-political situation in Syria and Iraq.

The analysis of the situation shows that the military potential of the ISIS is steadily weakening, the militants are gradually losing control of the territories including the predominant Sunni population. For example, in Iraq the territory controlled by the ISIS fell from 40% of the state to 10% (by early 2017). Moreover, at present "jihadists" are close to losing all the territories they occupy in Iraq.

In Syria, taking into account the fact that various forces trying to influence their geopolitical interests are trying to influence the political situation in the country, the positions of the ISIS are somewhat stronger, however here again "jihadists" have recently suffered a number of serious defeats from government troops,

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<sup>45</sup> ISIS Releases Map of the 5-Year Plan to Spread from Spain to China [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2014/07/01/isis-releases-map-of-5-year-plan-to-spread-from-spain-to-china/> / Date of circulation 05/21/2015.

<sup>46</sup> "Islamic state": essence and opposition: Analytical report / Ed. Ya.A. Amelina and A.G. Areshva. Vladikavkaz: Caucasian geopolitical club, 2015. P. 154.

<sup>47</sup> Islamic State (ISIS) Says Only a Matter of Time Before Europe Is Conquered; Plan 'Largest Religious Cleansing Campaign' in History Access mode: <http://www.thecommonsenseshow.com/2014/12/28/islamic-state-isis-says-matter-time-europe-conquered-plan-Largest-religious-cleansing-campaign-history/> / Circulation date 21.05.2015.

Kurdish detachments and Shiite formations. In a negative way, the operational potential of the ISIS in Syria was influenced by the fact that the civil war in that country began to acquire a systematic and orderly character, transforming from semi-guerrilla warfare into a war of "system players" (states).<sup>48</sup>

Attempts of the ISIS to extend military operations to other Muslim countries and to start "world jihad" failed. Despite the support of some of the radical Muslims most of the people of the Islamic world do not want to repeat on the territory of their states what is currently happening in Syria and Iraq.

Thus, it can be stated that the situation developing for the ISIS is in line with the declared by its leader's task "to keep and expand the controlled territories" and testifies to the inability of the terrorist organization to preserve the results achieved in the past.

Numerous statements of the militant leaders about the "new" directions of the external expansion of the "Caliphate" are purely propagandistic and pursue the goal of diverting attention from the Middle East theater of military operations.

At the same time, the inclusion of other terrorist groups in the ISIS is of interest to its leadership or if they operate in areas capable of securing a particular resource (logistical opportunities in Libya and Sinai, access to the "black" arms market in Yemen and etc.), or as a source of replenishment of the personnel of armed formations operating on the territory controlled by the ISIS.<sup>49</sup>

So, as the center of terrorist activity in the north of Africa, the leaders of the ISIS are considered Libya. The militants of the ISIS from the "Brigade al-Battar" operating in the Syrian Deir ez Zor and Iraqi Mosul appeared in Libya in spring 2014. Currently, Libya has three "branches" of the ISIS: "Islamic The state in the province of Barca, the Islamic state of the province of Fezzan and the Islamic state in Tripoli with a total of about 2,000 people. From the territory of Libya militants are trying to expand the area of activity of the organization to other states, as well as to create a logistics network in the region. The commanders of the "Al-Murabitun" battalions - Mokhtar Belmohtar, "Ansar ash-Sharia Tunisia" - Safe Alla Ben Khasin and others announced their loyalty to the ISIS. However, the loss of control of Sirt by the militants of the ISIS in 2016 significantly weakened the organization's position in Libya.

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<sup>48</sup> El Murid. ISIS. "The Islamic State" and Russia. Is the collision inevitable? M., 2016. 256 p.

<sup>49</sup> Pankratenko I.N. The ISIS today: on the way to a full-fledged state. Moscow: Center for Strategic Assessments and Forecasts, 2015. P. 24.

Al-Qaeda in the countries of the Islamic Maghreb (hereinafter referred to as the "AKIM") generally supported the activities of the ISIS. A number of members of the Council of Elders of the AKIM openly expressed their support for the "Islamic state", and one of the key field commanders of the Jund al-Khalifat battalion, Abdelmalek al-Guri (liquidated in 2014), swore allegiance to the "Caliph".

The Nigerian terrorist organization Boko Haram also recognized the supremacy of the ISIS. Now Boko Haram has managed to secure its presence on Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, bordering Nigeria, and to accumulate serious potential for large-scale terrorist attacks.

"Jihadist" ideas have become widespread among radical Islamist organizations operating in Southeast Asian countries, primarily in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. In these countries there has been an increase in the number of Muslims who travel to the Middle East to take part in hostilities on the side of the ISIS as well as providing militant complicity. In addition to this, such terrorist structures as the "Abu Sayafa Group" and "Jemaah Islamiya" swore allegiance to the ISIS (a number of its leaders swore allegiance to al-Baghdadi).

Recently, the presence of the ISIS in India has expanded. In particular, the growth of supporters of this group in a number of its western states was noted. The total number of supporters of the ISIS in the region is about 10 thousand people.

The military defeats of the ISIS in the territory of Iraq and Syria make its leaders think about creating "reserve" bridgeheads. As such, they now consider the territory of Afghanistan, as well as North Africa. In Afghanistan, for example, the ISIS attempted to win over some of the militants of the Taliban terrorist organization<sup>50</sup>. In addition to this, the ISIS has activated terrorist activities in this country. On February 7 in 2017, militants of the ISIS carried out a major terrorist attack near the Supreme Court building in Kabul, killing 70 people and injuring more than 200 people and on March 8 more than 30 people were victims of a terrorist attack in the Kabul hospital.

Estimates of the number of militants of the ISIS in Afghanistan are very different: from 500 to 6000 people (the maximum figures indicate the authorities of Afghanistan).

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<sup>50</sup> Attempts to integrate the ISIS and "Taliban" were seriously complicated by the following factors. First, the overwhelming majority of the Taliban remain loyal to Mullah Omar's ideas and are aimed at solving tactical tasks at the regional level, while the activities of the IG assume an "international" scale. Secondly, many Taliban leaders have kept in touch with Al Qaeda's core. Not surprisingly, in January 2017, the ISIS and the Taliban declared "jihad" to each other.

The most active presence of the ISIS militants is observed in the provinces of Kunar, Nangarhar, Takhar and Badakhshan. The Nangarhar province is for them a trans-shipment point where they recruit recruits among local youth, as well as recruitment and distribution of recruits from abroad.

It is noteworthy that the ISIS militants are actively assisted by persons who were responsible for delivering weapons, ammunition and money to the mujahideen during the period of the deployment of the Soviet Army in Afghanistan and their main bases in Nangarhar province are located in the area where Al-Qaeda Headed by Osama bin Laden.<sup>51</sup>

Despite attempts to create "spare airfields", the Middle East theater of military operations is a priority for the ISIS, since it is the control of the ISIS over the part of the territories of Syria and Iraq that allows it to declare the existence of the "Caliphate" and claim the leading position among other terrorist Organizations. In view of this, the main task of the ISIS is the development of the supporting infrastructure, training camps for terrorists in the region and the recruitment of new foreign militants there.

### **1.3. Organizational structure of the ISIS**

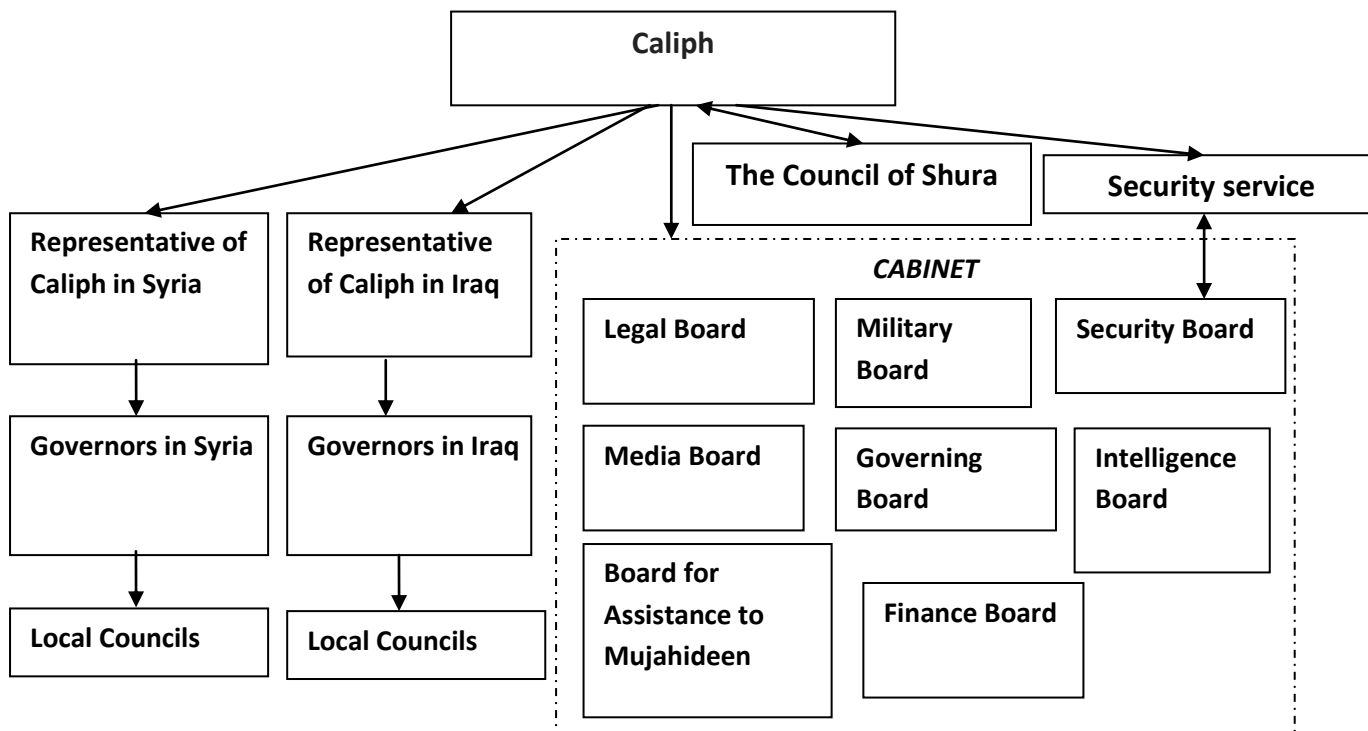
The goals pursued by the ISIS largely determine its organizational structure. In recent years there has been a transformation of the organizational core of the ISIS into an administrative bureaucratic apparatus. On the territory controlled by the Islamists an extensive executive system has been created to date and the organization itself is characterized by a hierarchical management structure.

The most reliable data on the organizational structure of the ISIS were obtained from the chief of staff of the terrorist group in Iraq, Abu Abdul Rahman al-Bilawi.

According to this information, the head of the ISIS is the "caliph" (supreme commander-in-chief), to which two of his representatives are subordinate - one responsible for the Iraqi part of the territory (representative of the "Caliph" in Iraq), the other for the Syrian (representative of the Caliph in Syria) (figure 4).

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<sup>51</sup> Sannikov V. The activity of the ISIS in Afghanistan [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.ca-portal.ru/article:29973> Date of circulation: 04/03/2017.



*Fig. 4 Structure of management bodies of ISIS*

Each representative of the "Caliph" directs the governors of the regions, who, in their turn, coordinate the activities of local councils for the execution of decrees of the executive branch of power. The governors have advisers responsible for the administration in the regions.

While making decisions, the "Caliph" consults with his advisers. The highest advisory body in the "Caliphate" is the Council of Shura, engaged in religious and military affairs. The Council is appointed directly by the "Caliph" and ensures that the local councils implement "Islamic law" in the territory controlled by the militants. At the same time, the Council of Shura has the right to displace the "Caliph" from office in case of violation of the laws of the ISIS.

The Cabinet of "Caliph" advisers includes:

*The Governing Board*, responsible for passing laws and preparing the most important political decisions (these decisions should be approved by the "Caliph").

*Military Board*, deals with the supply and defense of the territories of the "Islamic state".

*The Security Board*, which implements law and order in controlled territories and protects the borders of the ISIS.

*Intelligence Board*, responsible for gathering information about the opponents of the "Islamic state".

*Financial Board* deals with financial issues related to the functioning of the Islamic state, including the sale of oil, the conclusion of deals on the purchase of weapons and etc.

*The Board for Assistance to Mujahideen*, coordinates the transfer of foreign militants to the territories controlled by Islamists.

*The Media Board*, which is responsible for outreach activities in the organization.

*Legal Board* deals with issues of family law and religious violations.<sup>52</sup>

The structure of higher and local executive bodies varies periodically.

At the central level, the councils are subordinate to the "caliph". At the local level, similar councils are subordinated to the assistants of the "caliph" in Iraq and Syria.

In most territories which are controlled by the ISIS administrative bodies have been established that collect taxes provide public safety and so on. In some regions the ISIS delegated the management functions of local tribes.

According to the adviser of the Iraqi government, Dr. Hisham Al-Hashimi, in 2015 about 25,000 people in Iraq were engaged in the management of the militia-controlled ISIS territories receiving wages of between \$ 300 and \$ 2,000 per month.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Nick Thompson, Atika Shubert. The anatomy of ISIS: How 'The Islamic State' is run, from oil to beheadings [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/18/world/middleeast/isis-syria-iraq-hierarchy/> Date of circulation 04.03.2015.

<sup>53</sup> Inside the leadership of the Islamic State: how the new 'caliphate' is run [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/10956280/Inside-the-leadership-Of-Islamic-State-how-the-new-caliphate-is-run.html> Date of circulation 04.03.2015.



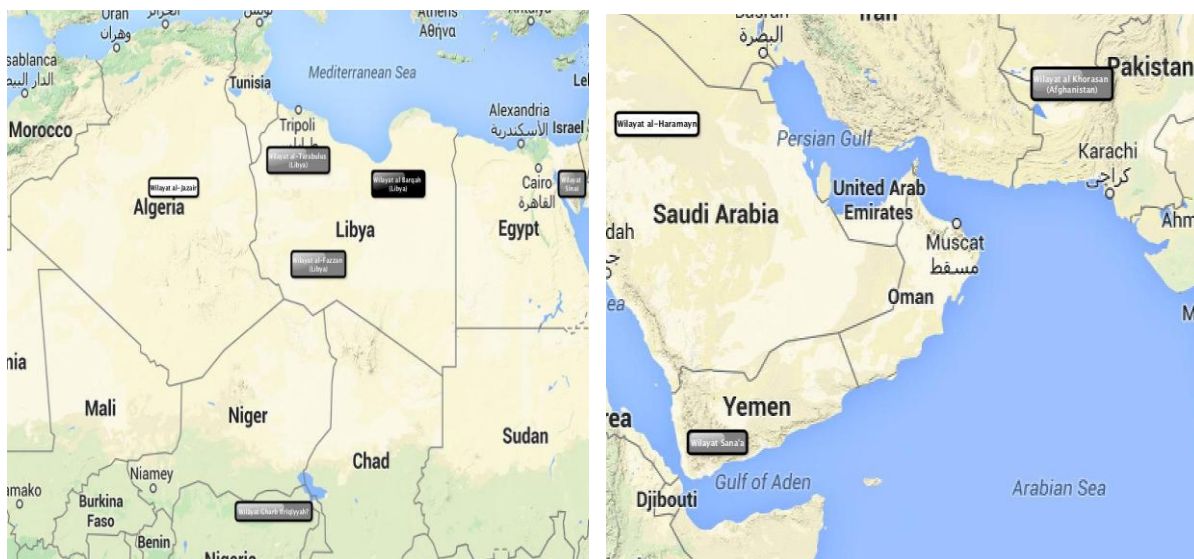


*Fig. 5 Administrative-territorial organization of the ISIS*

The administrative-territorial units of the "caliphate" are the Vilayats (gubernias). The territory of Syria and Iraq is divided into vilayats (figure 5).

Such a division of the territory is due to the need for exercising the powers and functions of state administration on the ground.

The ISIS through the controlled terrorist organizations is trying to extend the system of the vilayat to a number of countries in Africa and Asia (figure 6).



*Fig. 6 Vilayats "ISIS" in the territory of Africa and Asia*

Militarily, the territory of Syria is conditionally divided into sectors in which military groups consist of brigades ("liva" - a group of up to 500 people) and battalions ("katibs") numbering 100-200 people operate. Thus, in the grouping of the first sector there are the following detachments: Jamaat Yarmuk, Jamaat Khalid (headed by a native of the Republic of Dagestan), Jamaat Adam (headed by a native of the Chechen Republic), Kazakh Dzhamaat, Azerbaijani Jamaat, Crimean Jamaat" (headed by Abdula Krymsky), "Arab Jamaat", "Turkish Jamaat", "Uzbek Jamaat", "Jamaat of persons who left the "Ahraru Sham" grouping.

The units are divided into groups of 12-20 people. In addition to this, in the detachments there are small groups (from 5-7 people) - snipers, grenade launchers, suicide bombers (fidaev).

The most important element of the organizational structure of the ISIS is the Security Service ("*amanat*"), whose functions include filtering activities among recruits and militants, as well as ensuring the security of the caliphate.

According to the management system, the ISIS is a synthesis of an army type structure and a terrorist organization. This management mechanism was formed as a result of the fact that the organization united in its membership:

a) *followers of the "Naqshbandi Tariqat"*, considered close to General Izzat Ad-Duri - the closest aide to the former head of Iraq S. Hussein. Their number is estimated at about 5 thousand people. The operational zone of action is in the provinces of Ninewa and Kirkuk;

b) *supporters of the "High Command of Jihad and Freedom"*. This organization was established in October 2007 and includes more than 20 groups with a total number of 10 thousand people. The organization is led by former Baathists;

c) *former officers of the armed forces and special services of S. Hussein*. This category of ex-servicemen now constitutes the command nucleus of the terrorist structure and up to a third of all the deputies of the "caliph".<sup>54</sup> They use the religious factor as an ideological cover for their main task - building a Sunni state in the territory of Syria and Iraq;

d) *members of radical Sunni groups*. In particular, from the so-called "Council of the Tribes" (uniting more than 70 Arab Sunni tribes), armed detachments operating in the cities of Ramadi, Khalidiya, Karama, Fallujah, in the provinces of Anbar, Ninawa, Salaheddin and Dale were established.

e) *foreign volunteers* prone to use the most severe forms of violence. The total number of foreign "jihadists" is about 15-20 thousand people.

Expert estimates of the number of militants of the ISIS vary greatly. Currently, data on their numbers vary between - 20 to 80 thousand people.

The complexity of the assessment lies in the definition of membership in the organization, since there are several levels of initiation in the ISIS. So, to become a full-fledged member of the organization, it is required by blood on the battlefield or during the massacre of captives and the population of the occupied territories to prove their loyalty to the group. At present, the number of "core" of militants is several thousand people.<sup>55</sup>

The number of militants taking part in hostilities on a permanent basis is about 15 thousand people.

According to the CIA, the number of the ISIS is about 30 thousand fighters.

The total number of militarized formations in the territories controlled by the ISIS is up to 200 thousand people. This number includes: combat brigades, Ansar support groups, Hissa security forces, police forces, militia (militia, local self-defense units: Mukhabarat, Assas, Amniyat, Ain al-Has and etc.), conscripts

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<sup>54</sup> Stepanova E. The main trends in the field of modern terrorism: regionalization of armed radical Islamist movements on the example of the ISIS // Security Index. 2014. No. 4 (111). P.52.

<sup>55</sup> Mukhametov R.M. The phenomenon of the "Islamic state" // Russia in global politics. 2014. № 5.

undergoing combat training in training centers and training camps, and foreign "jihadists".<sup>56</sup>

Numerical characteristics of the ISIS and personnel training of participants in the terrorist structure largely determine the tactics of its activities.

#### **1.4. The tactics of the activities of the ISIS**

Proceeding from the main directions of illegal aspirations of the ISIS the tactics of its activities seem appropriate to analyze within the framework of four structural blocks:

- conducting military operations;
- terrorist activities;
- recruiting;
- information and propaganda activities.

##### ***Conducting military operations***

During 2014, the ISIS fighters used tactics that they used during the fighting in Syria. It includes three main stages.

During the first stage, the militants of the ISIS secretly enter the settlement under enemy control, commit acts of sabotage and acts of terrorism against its armed forces, intimidate the local population and actively propagate their views among the sympathizers, primarily the youth.

At the second stage, the capture of key positions on the borders with the settlement and the partial or complete encirclement takes place.

During the third stage, there is a full-scale military offensive of militants on a demoralized settlement.

Similarly, Rakka was captured in Syria, Mosul and other Iraqi cities were taken.

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<sup>56</sup> Sharkovsky A. All the facets of the "Islamic state" // Independent Military Review. 2015. No. 17 (853). P.4-5.

However, in autumn 2014 such a tactic of warfare began to malfunction. Despite all the efforts of the militants they never managed to capture the Kurdish city of Kobani (in Syria) and successfully complete the offensive against Baghdad.

Currently, the ISIS militants do not fully control the territories they occupy but only periodically raid to remote areas.

The military defeats and regular air strikes of the Russian Air Force, as well as the forces of the international coalition, led to changes in the *combat tactics of the ISIS*:

1. The militants began to spread their forces and means more refusing to concentrate on open communications. They relocated their units from open areas to localities and also dispersed heavy weapons and weapons stores.
2. Movement of detachments and equipment began to be carried out mainly at night while during the daytime militants prefer to move in desert areas outside highways. They also abandoned large convoys and began to use more to move motorcycles and bicycles. In this case, the main combat and transport means of the ISIS militia is a pickup truck with a machine gun or antiaircraft gun mounted on it the advantage of which along with high traffic is the difficulty of its identification by aviation and space reconnaissance as a military vehicle.
3. The militants have become more active in applying measures of disguise which seriously complicates the conduct of reconnaissance of the places of the deployment of militants. For the purposes of misinformation, members of the ISIS purposefully give out houses of civilians for their positions, hang their flags over abandoned buildings and etc.
4. Despite the presence of armored vehicles, they try only with extreme necessity to use heavy weapons preferring mobility so that "jihadists" manage to concentrate their forces as quickly and secretly as possible in the places of planned attacks.
5. The loss of the ISIS as a result of the military defeats of the previously controlled territories causes the guerrilla methods of guerrilla warfare to be used more and more, the use of suicide bombers and ambushes to attack their opponents. The areas that were repulsed by the ISIS militia continue to remain dangerous for transportation for a long time due to the presence of specially left snipers and saboteurs on it.

It should be noted that in the arsenal of specialized groups of the ISIS snipers there are "high-precision" American rifles M82A1 "Barret" and their training and training in Syria are engaged including instructors from the United States.

The following trends can be traced in the *control system of the troops* of the "Caliphate":

1. Despite of the fact that the management system in the ISIS is characterized by centralized planning and decision-making recently the leadership of the organization began to provide the initiative to the commanders on the ground. The leaders of the terrorist group set common tasks and the ways to achieve them are determined by the commanders of the detachments themselves.
2. The meetings of field commanders have been reduced to a minimum, their headquarters have disappeared from the streets of Rakki, Abu Kemal and Madin. Members of the IG try to move constantly.

In the field of *defensive tactics* of the ISIS one can single out the following trends:

1. Recently, militants of the ISIS have resorted to forced mobilization of the population more often.
2. To prevent the emergence of guerrilla formations of the enemy Islamic state militants in a number of areas began deliberately to expel the non-Ninian population from the front-line territories.

Distinctive features of the ISIS are still well-organized intelligence and flexibility in the choice of tactics of combat. Strong concentrated attacks militants combine with multiple small but effective raids and subversive and terrorist acts exhausting the enemy.

It should be mentioned that the commanders of the militant units carefully worked out the plans for military operations which are based on intelligence obtained with the help of visual observation, quadrocopters, as well as GPS navigators and electronic maps of the terrain.

Communication with their supporters in other states and the transfer of necessary instructions to the members of the ISIS is carried out using modern technologies and means - e-mail, mobile applications ("Skype", "Viber" and "WhatsApp"), and also through the network controlled by the Security Service Intermediaries (transfer of flash cards with audio or video recording of messages).

In uncontrolled or abandoned territories, the ISIS applies guerrilla warfare tactics trying to clamp down on the forces of the government troops of Iraq and Syria.

## *Terrorist activity*

In order to intimidate and demoralize its opponents the ISIS regularly conducts terrorist actions, as well as mass executions of captured soldiers, hostages and civilians.

At the same time, the main task of militants is the so-called "negative marketing" - drawing attention to themselves in order to undermine the morale of "distant" (Western countries) and "close" (countries of the Arab world) opponents.

The large-scale terrorist activities of the grouping and massacre of hostages attract radicals from all over the world including from Western countries.

The arsenal of methods used by the ISIS to commit terrorist acts is unlimited, but in most cases it is used by suicide bombers (usually drivers of vehicles stuffed with explosives).

Suicide bombers in most cases are citizens of Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

In the tactical model of the actions of the ISIS in the commission of terrorist acts, the following typical stages can be distinguished:

- reconnaissance of the object;
- the choice of the method of carrying out the terrorist act and the perpetrators;
- bringing the plan of the operation to the performers and their additional psychological treatment;
- the deployment of auxiliary forces;
- carrying out of a terrorist action.

Attacks on populated areas and strategically important targets militants of the ISIS, as a rule, begin with terrorist acts including suicide bombers. Such tactics of intimidation has already proved its effectiveness and more than once allowed militants of the ISIS to capture settlements in Syria and Iraq with minimal losses.

A new trend was the involvement in the commission of terrorist acts, as well as the executions of children (aged 12 years). At the same time, they participate in executions both as performers and as spectators. It should be noted that to date no fewer than 350 children have been trained in the ISIS camp in the Syrian city of Rakka.

An effective element of the tactics of the ISIS is their active recruiting activities.

## ***Recruiting work***

Recruitment activity underlies the maintenance of the high operational potential of the ISIS and is closely linked to their active outreach, which allows for a qualitatively high level to build a system for recruiting new members.

The use of modern means of telecommunications allows terrorist organizations to effectively conduct their recruiting activities: to select and study new participants, remotely control the actions of recruits and etc.

Active campaigning for going to the "Caliphate" is carried out by persons who are already taking part in the activities of the ISIS.

The main object of recruiting recruiters is young people aged 16 to 30 years. The attractiveness of this age group is due to the fact that in youth the instinct of self-preservation is lowered and social responsibilities (responsibility for family and others) are less.

When recruiting into a terrorist structure, recruiters use the psychological characteristics of the recruited persons conditioned by their unformed worldview, superficial knowledge of religious canons and discontent with the acting authorities. While communicating with males the main emphasis of recruiters is on heroizing the soldiers of "jihad" extolling their military successes, the need to restore justice and protect "true" followers of Islam from oppression. Often recruiters seek to reproach Muslim men for inaction and passivity because of which women are forced to "protect Islam".

When women are involved in the activity of the ISIS, the main object of recruiters are as a rule young unmarried girls who profess or have shown interest in Islam. For their recruitment the desire of girls to acquire a family and children (to create a strong Muslim family) is used.

In relation to the ideology of the ISIS citizens involved in terrorist activities can be divided into:

- *"ideological" ("fanatics")* - sincerely believing in the dogmatic attitudes of the terrorist organization, ready for the most extreme and brutal measures for the sake of their convictions;
- *the "sympathizers"* who share the ideology of the ISIS as a whole but due to a number of peculiarities (fear of death, family obligations and etc.) that do not want to take direct part in hostilities but are ready to help and support them;
- *people who use membership in the ISIS to "improve" their status over others;*



- *people who support ISIS due to a number of circumstances* (related to land ties, the need to comply with commitments, etc.);
- *people who support ISIS in order to obtain a specific benefit* (power, material means, realization of ambitions and etc.).

Affiliation of a person to one of the above categories determines the extent and limits of his readiness for unlawful acts, as well as the required level of his ideological treatment by the recruiter.

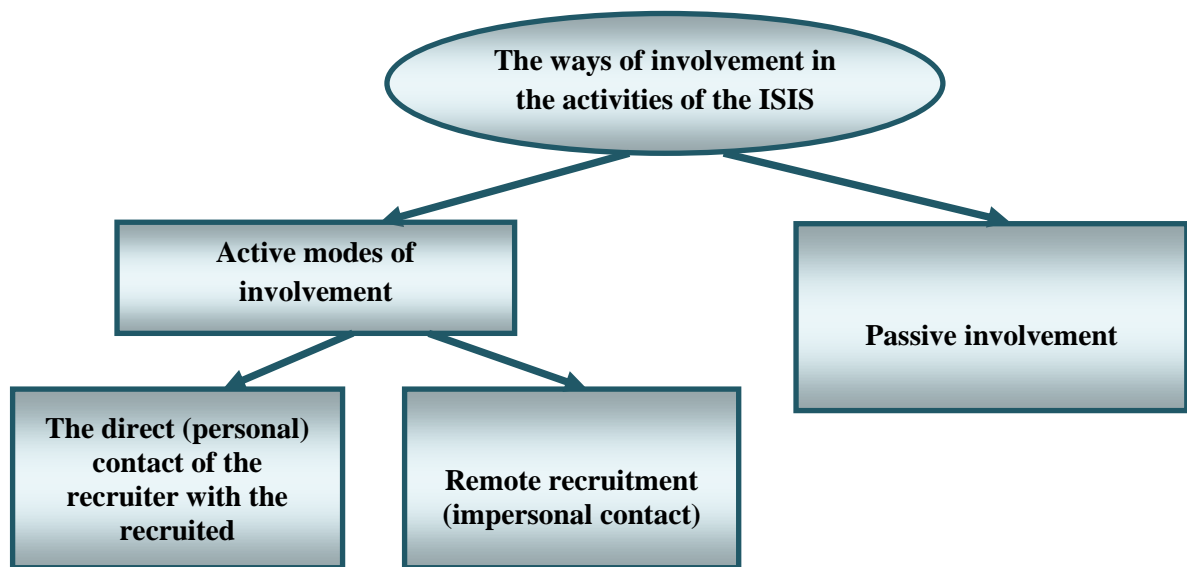
The recruiting activity of the ISIS has its own specifics and is oriented towards certain social groups depending on the regions and countries of the world. In particular, in the countries of the South-East Asia, the propaganda of the ISIS largely focuses on the recruitment of young single students, juvenile delinquents and youth from families associated with the activities of radical religious organizations. Membership in the ISIS gives to these categories of citizens a sense of belonging to the "great noble cause".

The recruiters of the ISIS, as a rule, are young people under the age of 35 who have high communicative abilities, the ability to persuade and externally strictly observe the norms of Islam.

Recruiters can be divided into four main categories:

1. *"Professional" recruiters* - persons engaged in recruiting activities among Muslims, usually through personal meetings and conversations with recruits.
2. *Persons who are abroad as part of the formations of the ISIS*. They lead recruiting work (primarily in relation to their relatives and friends), by means of communication.
3. *Supporters of Islamist and terrorist ideology*. Being organizers or active participants of groups and communities in social networks they promote the ideas of "jihad" and incline citizens to participate in these activities.
4. Former members of the armed formations of the ISIS, including those returned to the country of exodus (the so-called "returnees").

At present, the ISIS uses both active methods of involving citizens in its activities, in which its emissaries themselves identify potential candidates, carry out their verification and subsequent psychological treatment (targeted impact) and ways of passive involvement when terrorists sympathizing with citizens try to establish Contacts with the ISIS on its own initiative as a result of its large-scale information and propaganda activities (figure 7).



*Fig. 7 Ways of involving citizens in the activities of the ISIS*

With active involvement in the activities of a terrorist organization, the success of recruitment or declination is determined by two interacting factors: the effectiveness of the psychological techniques used by the ISIS emissaries and the individual "vulnerability" of the candidate to ideological processing.

At present, the activities of the ISIS in attracting new recruits are carried out both with the direct (personal) contact of the recruiter with the recruited and the remote when the recruiter (he may be in the territory of third countries) carries out his illegal activities with the help of modern information and communication technologies, the Internet and mobile communications.

The greatest activity of the ISIS emissaries is shown in social networks, such as "VKontakte", "Twitter", "Facebook", where the selection and primary communication with possible candidates takes place. For further communication recruiters, as a rule, use phone applications-communicators: "Viber", "What's App", etc.

The global network is considered by the leaders of the ISIS as one of the main channels for disseminating information of control influence, propaganda of the ideas of "jihad" and, as a consequence, the passive involvement of new supporters in their ranks.

The bright, regularly updated content of supporters of the ISIS in the Internet is the main motivating factor of the interest in the activities of the terrorist organization by radical Muslims. Some of them tend to initiate contact with the ISIS emissaries or go to Syria where they join the ranks of terrorist organizations. For this category of citizens the ISIS emissaries develop and deploy on the Internet step-by-step instructions for unimpeded access to areas of armed conflict.

### *Advocacy*

The ISIS stands out among other terrorist groups with a high level of possession of advanced information and communication technologies.

The organization has its own media centers engaged in the creation and dissemination of propaganda content. Among them are the media agency Al-Furqan Institute for Media Production, the media agency Itisaam Media Foundation, the Alhayat Media Center media center and the media fund "Ainad" (Ajnad Media Foundation).

Media agency Al-Furqan ("Distinction") was established by Al-Qaida and the Islamic State of Iraq in 2006 and has by now become the main center for the production of a wide range of propaganda products: films, videos, brochures and also information materials for distribution on the Internet.

In 2013, the ITIA media agency created ITISAM, a media agency dedicated to the creation and distribution of propaganda content in Arabic (with subtitles in English), including video clips, audio recordings and photographs. In addition to this, the media agency "Itisaam" produces "annual reports" of the terrorist organization.

In 2014, under the auspices of the "Islamic state", the news agency "Amak" emerged which is currently carrying out an active information and propaganda activity including in Russian. The Agency regularly creates accounts in social networks which publish reports of military operations, reports on the peaceful life in the territory controlled by the militants, highlights other vital issues of life and so on.

In 2014, in order to expand the target audience at the expense of the population of the countries of Europe, the United States and the CIS countries, the "jihadists" established a new media center - Al-Hayat (Life), which began to produce materials in English, German, Russian and French. The products it distributes are aimed primarily at attracting new recruits to the terrorist group.

The Center issues brochures "IslamicStateReport" and "IslamicStateNews", as well as the magazine "Dabiq", which are printed in several languages and are available on the Internet. The purpose of the magazine "Dabiq" is to give legitimacy to the "Caliphate" and attract new supporters. The journal also contains articles of a religious-ideological nature and a summary of military operations.

The publications "IslamicStateReport" and "IslamicStateNews" are newsletters (8-10 pages in length) about the activities of the management bodies of the ISIS and the policy pursued in the economic and social spheres.

Since 2015, the media center of Al-Hayat has been issuing a Russian-language magazine Istok, aimed at attracting new supporters from Russia and the CIS member states, primarily the Central Asian region, to the ISIS.

The information and propaganda activities of the ISIS in Russian are led by Islam Atabiev (Abu Jihad). In June 2015, he founded the media agency Furat Media which unites all the Russian-language resources of the organization on the Internet and is engaged in the production of video products in Russian.

Since January 2014, the ISIS began distributing extremist products of the media fund Ainad, specializing in the production and dissemination of sermons and chants, the so-called Nashidas, an important element of the propaganda of the "global jihad".

It should be noted that the media agencies mentioned above are inherently virtual brands of the ISIS, behind which there are "external" companies, working, including on an outsourcing basis. In this regard, the military defeats of the ISIS in Syria and Iraq do not actually affect the functioning of its media agencies.

It is important to bear in mind that the informational and propaganda activities of the ISIS are targeted at different target audiences, one of whom is convicted - "brothers suffering in the Tagut prison".

Among the current trends in the criminal environment, caused by the aggressive information and propaganda activities of the "Islamic state", include the intensification of religious extremist propaganda of international terrorist organizations in prisons and the associated increase in the number of convicts who approve of their activities.

In places of deprivation of liberty, conspiratorial cells are formed - "prison jamaats", carrying out active religious extremist treatment of convicts and influencing the administration of correctional facilities to strengthen their status in the prison hierarchy and to facilitate conditions of detention.

Propagandists from among members of radical religious structures call for the formation of armed groups led by the amir to "mujahideism", "shahidism," to sacrifice their lives on the path of Islam, to complete subordination of man to the will of Allah, to fulfill any of his "orders" to commit violent acts including terrorist ones.

The main moderators of religious extremist ideas are convicts who underwent sabotage and military training in the militant camps in the Middle East, as well as persons who took part in hostilities on the side of the ISIS in the zone of armed conflicts in Syria and Iraq.

As a rule, propaganda activities are carried out in a "soft form". For example, with the daily viewing of prisoners of news programs by ideologists of radical Islam, active support is expressed for the actions of the leaders and functionaries of the ISIS. The ISIS is represented as a model of the structure acting in the interests of all "true" Muslims. The subsequent ideological processing of propaganda for convicts is carried out in individual conversations.

The tendency of growth in correctional institutions of the number of people convicted for short periods of imprisonment for the complicity of the ISIS combined with their further consolidation and further radicalization, contributes to the formation of real prerequisites for the implementation of terrorist threats.

### ***1.5. Information and propaganda activities in the Internet***

The main information and propaganda activities of the ISIS are carried out on the Internet where an extensive information and propaganda infrastructure has been created.

The following characteristics of the Internet network contribute to the active use of Internet space by members of the ISIS and their accomplices:

A low-cost way of disseminating information and an effective feedback mechanism;

Simplicity of connection to the Network (including laptops, game consoles, smartphones, tablets and mobile phones);

High speed of data transmission;

The extraterritorial nature of the Network and the existence of a mass audience of users;

A wide range of interactive services;

High degree of anonymity of the user.

The competent distribution of its interactive presence in the global network, the use of various platforms and techniques of psychological influence allow the ISIS to carry out large-scale information activities. So, according to the Quilliam fund, the volume of media propaganda produced by the ISIS on average is 38 unique audio, video, photo and text publications a day.

At the same time, various Internet sites are used by its supporters for various purposes, in particular - Twitter and Facebook - for propaganda of "jihadist" ideology and studying candidates for recruitment, Instagram and Flickr - circulation of campaign materials, Ask.FM - ideological discussions, Tumblr - for recruitment of mercenaries, JustPaste.it and dump.some - placement of content removed from other platforms.

The main platform for the information and advocacy activities of the ISIS is social networks. Supporters of this terrorist organization created and maintained accounts on the most popular resources, such as "Facebook", "Twitter", "Instagram", "VKontakte." With the help of these web resources, information about the activities of the terrorist organization is disseminated, new recruits are recruited and funds are raised for the needs of "jihadists."

The most popular of social networks among the supporters of the ISIS is "Twitter". The choice of the latter as the main platform for propaganda of the "jihadist ideology" is largely explained by the fact that it is the most popular information service for Internet users, which provides high speed and targeted direction of the disseminated messages, as well as the ability to search for interested users of information on hashtags. In addition to this, supporters of the ISIS organize a hashtag campaign in Twitter. For example, in one of them, under the title "Prevention of American citizens" in June 2014, numerous messages from the supporters of IT "IG" were distributed with threats under a common hashtag #CalamityWillBefallUS - "the disaster will overtake the United States."

About three-quarters of subscribers to Twitter-accounts that distribute the "jihadist" ideology, use Arabic for communication, every fifth supporter of the ISIS communicates in English.

In the Russian-language segment of the Internet, among social services, the social network "Vkontakte", whose functionality is best suited to the activities of religious radicals, is the most popular among the supporters of the ISIS followed by "Twitter" and "LiveJournal".

Despite the fact that administrators of social networks block extremist and terrorist content, supporters of the ISIS find ways to avoid its complete removal from the Internet, promptly placing remote materials in new groups and social networks communities, as well as text-based electronic bulletin boards, Such as JustPaste.it, dump.to, etc.

The use of Swarmcast technology allows the supporters of the ISIS to distribute content on various platforms and create distribution networks that react to the removal of information by creating new accounts and redirecting subscribers to them.

In view of the blocking of groups that justify the activities of the ISIS their administrators have to resort to various tricks. One of them is the creation of a "neutral" group, usually of a Salafi type, and a "jihadist" group. If the latter is blocked its participants are informed of the need to move to a "neutral" group which, by the time received a significant number of participants for further propaganda of the "jihadist" ideology.

In addition to this, the administrators of groups supporting the ISIS try to "disguise" destructive content: they do not publish photos of militants, their video calls and other content that allows immediately to classify the group as "jihadist", instead articles, sermons, quotes, extracts from the Qur'an and hadith that justify the actions of the militants of the ISIS. At the time of their closing, such groups succeed in gaining a sizeable audience.

To increase the "credibility" of their communities and groups in social networks in a number of cases the supporters of the ISIS artificially increase their numbers - they "buy participants" through special services specializing in marketing in social networks.

It should be noted that the support of the functioning of the most numerous and active communities is not carried out by the forces of individual activists but by whole groups of such people, including those who are professionally trained. At the same time many communities in social networks are affiliated with each other which is reflected in the similarity of their appearance and content as well as in the coincidence of a significant number of their participants.

Recently, in connection with the total blocking of radical content in the Russian-language segment of the Internet and primarily in the social network V Kontakte, supporters of the ISIS have to teach their target audience by circumventing locks and using anonymous technologies that make it difficult to conduct law enforcement agencies and special services of operational-search activities. To do this social groups create special groups for training in the use of anonymous work on the Internet.

For private communication supporters the ISIS, as a rule, use instant messengers, which maintain a high level of confidentiality. The use of anonymous or enhanced personal data protection platforms such as Fren dica, Quit ter and so on has increased. In addition to this, the supporters of the ISIS use the service of the online radio "Zello", which allows anonymous listening to lectures by radical preachers.

Thus, social networks are used by the supporters of the ISIS to propagate Islamist ideology, organize communication, gather and exchange information, recruit new members, finance organizations and etc.

From the point of view of the content, the informational propaganda materials of the supporters of the ISIS on the Internet can be conditionally divided into:

1. *Reports on the military success of the ISIS.*

Demonstration of the military trophies, training camps and victories of ISIS is aimed at raising the fighting spirit of the militants and forming an image of a successful military and organizational structure of the terrorist structure.

2. *Materials about self-sacrifice ("istishhade") of the so-called "shahids".* Their images are idealized, materials about their combat path, good deeds and so on are published.

Recently, the topic of children's participation in "jihad" was actively used for propaganda purposes. At the same time, there is speculation on the feelings of Muslims - even if children are fighting with "infidels" then adult men especially should not "sit out at home."

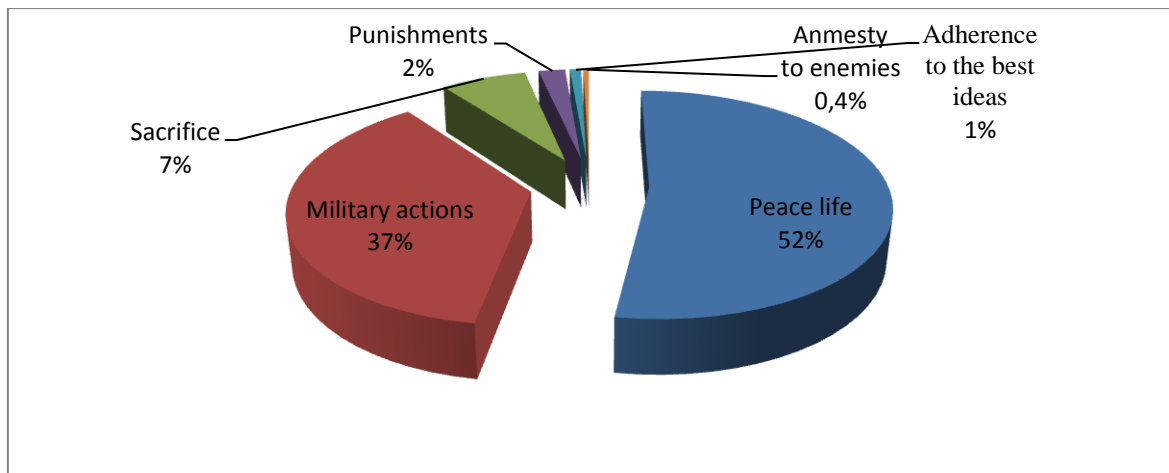
3. *Scenes of executions and punishments of opponents of the ISIS.* The scenes of violence are intended to demonstrate the power of "jihadists" and serve as an effective means of intimidation.

4. *Materials showing the attractiveness of a peaceful life on the territory controlled by the ISIS.*



Recently, in the information and propaganda activities of the ISIS there has been a tendency to move from the stage of "intimidation" to more "creative" propaganda, which, according to the leaders of the organization, should positively affect the results of the work on recruiting new members.

So, according to the information of the leading employee of the British fund "Quilliam" C. Winter, in approximately 52% of his propaganda messages the ISIS seeks to show the attractiveness of peaceful life in the territories controlled by it and demonstrate its social function - helping the poor, widows of militants, infrastructure and etc. (see figure 8).



*Fig. 8 Subjects of the propaganda of the ISIS (according to the "Quilliam" fund)*

The use of social rhetoric based on the ideas of justice and expressed in the form of simple and understandable Internet users of the Internet slogans is in line with the propaganda aims of moral legitimization of violence and serves as an effective means of justifying the internal policy of the ISIS.

Pointing to the fact that institutions such as social assistance to the poor and pension were introduced in the Arab Caliphate as early as the 7th century. In the form of "zakat" the leaders of the ISIS emphasize the need to build a socially just state. At the same time, the head of state - the "caliph", who is the "viceroy of the Prophet Muhammad on Earth", is given the role of guardian of justice in society.

It should be noted that the positioning of the ISIS as a full-fledged state (the "caliphate") is an essential component of its information and propaganda policy and allows the recruitment of members of "competing" terrorist groups.

*5. Publications that substantiate the need for "jihad".*

To justify the need for conducting the "jihad" supporters of the ISIS use excerpts from the Koran. For the purpose of interpreting them in their favor they cite quotations, as a rule, without an explanation of the meaning relevant to the context. A simple reading of Qur'anic verses without a deep understanding of their essence can create the impression that Islam is a militant religion of Muslims.

#### *6. Materials that are a reaction to current information events.*

Thus, the focus of the supporters of the ISIS is the "crimes" of the Syrian army and the Russian Air and Space Forces, the activities of the forces of the international coalition, the "harassment" of Muslims in various countries of the world.

The tactics of the activity of ISIS in social networks is built taking into account the best practices in the field of information and psychological impact and differentiated depending on the target audience.

So, with the convinced opponents of the radical religious ideology, the supporters of the ISIS, as a rule, do not enter into discussions. Instead, they concentrate on criticizing and condemning the way of life of the "infidels", thereby distancing themselves from direct dialogue with them (from the "unrighteous" deed in their understanding). In the groups created by them, the rules of communication with "infidels" are published which prescribe not to offend opponents, not to argue with them and so on.

Neutral-minded or professing traditional Islam, the supporters of the ISIS are trying to impose their own opinion on the activities of the terrorist organization.

The main task of working with those who sympathize or showed interest in religious extremist topics is further information and psychological treatment in order to involve them in their activities.

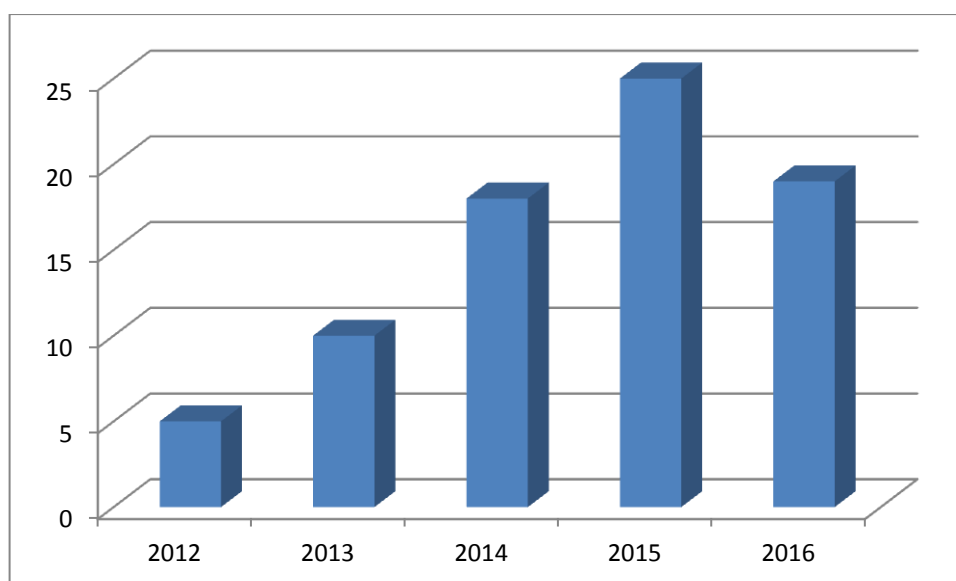
Thus, the information and propaganda activities of the ISIS in the Internet are characterized by a high level of adaptation to changing conditions, skillful manipulation of the image of a terrorist organization that allows "jihadists" to portray themselves as martyr heroes. Thanks to its advocacy, the ISIS managed to create the image of a well-structured, disciplined and effective organization. The tactics of the activity of the ISIS in the information sphere are characterized by the use of advanced information and communication technologies, which together with the availability of own media centers engaged in the creation and dissemination of propaganda content, significantly distinguish it among other terrorist structures.

## Chapter 2. EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ISIS

### 2.1. Participation of foreign militia volunteers in the terrorist activities of the ISIS

Through the promotion and recruitment of established mechanisms the ISIS managed to recruit a large number of foreign volunteers. According to US intelligence, by the end of December 2014 more than 18 thousand. Foreign militants fighting in Syria and Iraq<sup>57</sup> and the end of 2015. Their number has exceeded 25 thousand people from more than 100 countries.<sup>58</sup>

Currently, because of the significant losses suffered by the ISIS complicating logistics capabilities to penetrate in the territory controlled by the ISIS, the number of foreign "jihadists" in the ranks of the organization began to decline (figure 9).



*Fig. 9 Dynamics of the number of foreign militants in the ranks of the ISIS in 2012-2016, thousands of people.*

<sup>57</sup> ISIS / Caliphate - Funding and Strength Access mode:

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/isil-2.htm> Date of circulation 04.03.2015.

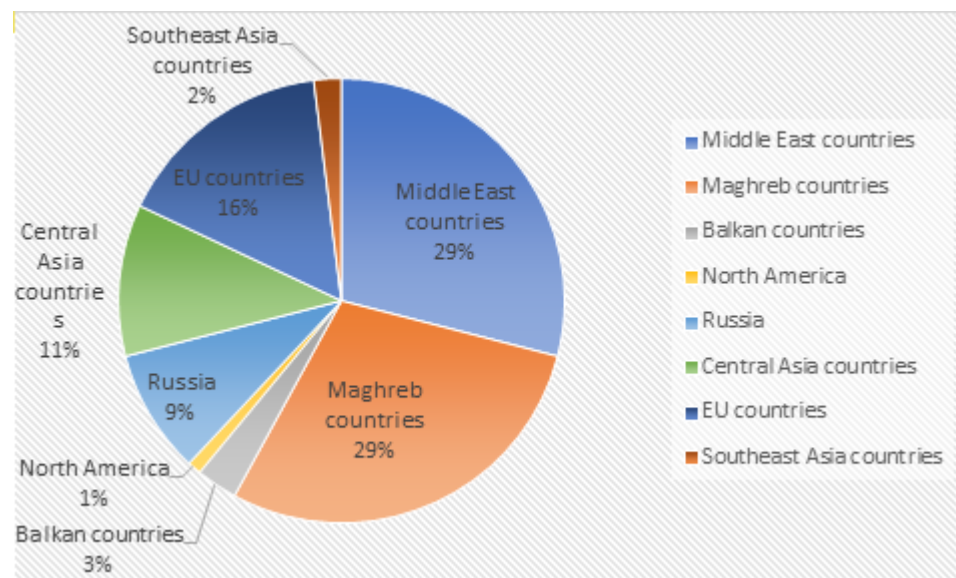
<sup>58</sup> Final Report of the Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel / Homeland Security Committee. September 2015. p.11.

Foreign militants of the ISIS are distinguished by cruelty and intransigence. About 70% of military operations involving suicide bombers in Syria were carried out by foreign volunteers.<sup>59</sup>

Unlike local militants, foreign "jihadists" tend to receive higher salaries live in more comfortable conditions and are supplied in a better way.

Foreign militants try to organize the arrival of their close relatives to them, primarily wives and children. This initiative is encouraged by the leadership of the "Islamic state". At the same time, children and adolescents not only receive education in the spirit of hatred for "infidels" but also acquire skills in possession of weapons.

Among the foreign militants in the ISIS are citizens of Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Russia, France, Turkey, and Morocco are predominant (figure 10).



As can be seen from fig. 10, the ranks of militants are not only residents of socially disadvantaged countries and regions but also residents of European countries.

Most experts believe that currently more than 3 thousand citizens of the countries

*Fig. 10 Participation of foreign militants in the ISIS*

of the European Union are fighting in the ranks of the ISIS. According to US officials, their number in 2015 could reach 5000 people.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Matthew Liddy, Colin Gourlay. Explained: Where do foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria come from? [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-06/map-foreign-fighters-iraq-syria/6052544> Date of circulation 04.03.2015.

The age of "jihadists" from the countries of the European Union is from 17 to 56 years but most of them are between the ages of 20 and 35 years.<sup>61</sup> Mostly they are descendants of immigrants in the second or third generation. Islam for them is an ideology designed to restore justice, the lack of which they felt at home in the country of exodus.

Among foreign volunteers from the countries of the European Union there are ethnic Chechens. In particular, according to Europol, 52 militants from Austria had Chechen roots and knew each other well before they went to the war zone.<sup>62</sup>

In July 2014, the British sociological agency ICM Research conducted a study on the attitude of the population of a number of countries of the European Union to the logistics company IG. The results of the sociological survey showed that about 15% of France's residents, 7% of UK residents and 2% of German population estimate positively the activity of the organization.<sup>63</sup>

In general, the activity of the ISIS is supported by about 60 million Muslims in various countries of the world.<sup>64</sup> At the same time, the share of citizens positively related to the ISIS is the highest in countries such as Syria, Nigeria, Tunisia, Malaysia, Senegal, Pakistan, and others (figure 11).

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<sup>60</sup> Robert Windrem. ISIS By the Numbers: Foreign Fighter Total Keeps Growing Access mode: <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/isis-numbers-foreign-fighter-total-keeps-growing-n314731> Date of call 03/04/2015.

<sup>61</sup> Situation report - Update. Travel for Terrorist Purposes (focus on Syria) .2014. P. 12.

<sup>62</sup> IBID

<sup>63</sup> Madeline Grant. 16% of French Citizens Support ISIS, Poll Finds [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://europe.newsweek.com/16-french-citizens-support-isis-poll-finds-266795> Date of reference 04.24.2015.

<sup>64</sup> Islamic Expert: More Than 60 Million Muslims Hold Favorable Views of ISIS, Pew Data Access Mode: <https://muslimstatistics.wordpress.com/2016/06/17/pew-data-more-than-60-million-muslims-hold-favorable-views-of-isis/> Date of circulation 02/24/2017.

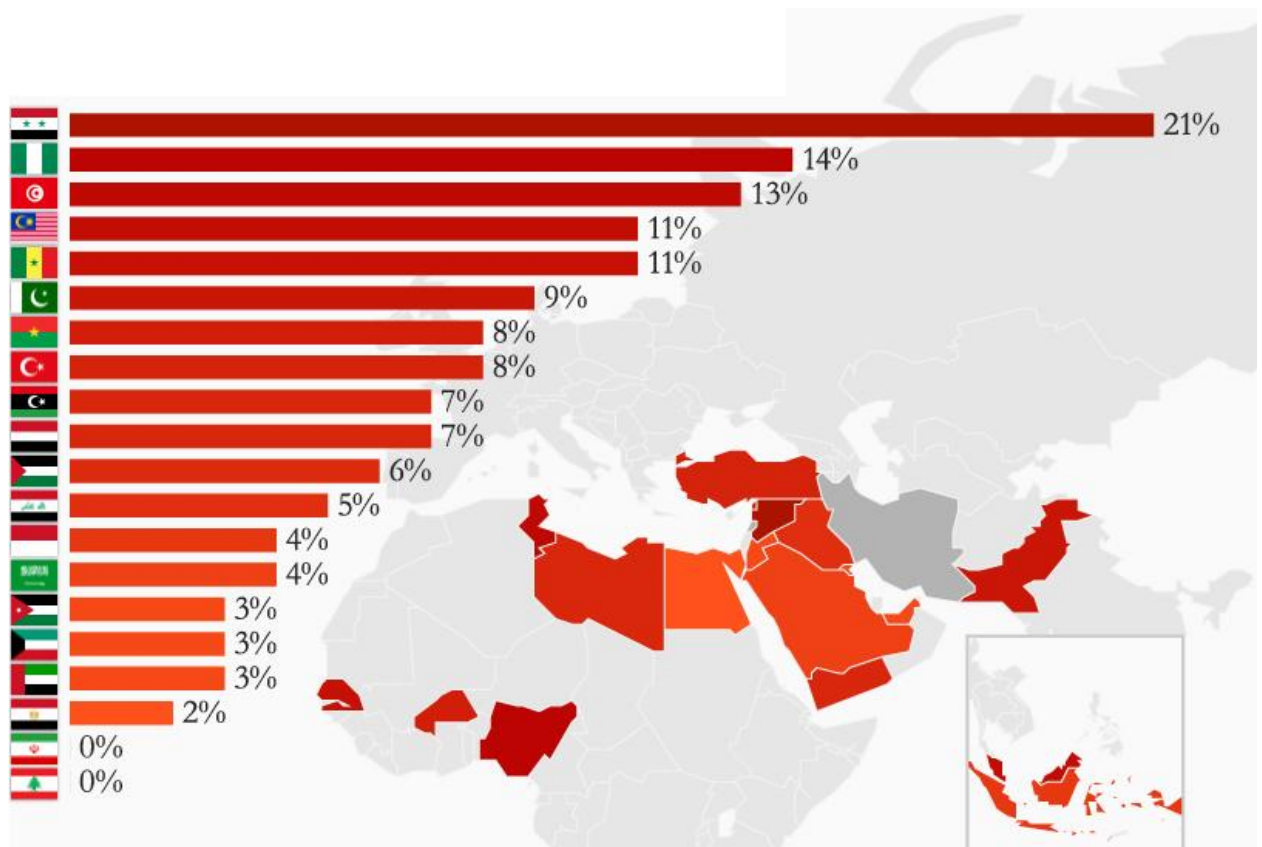


Fig. 11 Proportion of citizens who positively *perceive* the activities of the ISIS (for 2015)  
 Source: Pew Research, Washington Institute, ORB International, CSIS, ACRPS, Zogby

Persons wishing to take part in the fighting in Syria and Iraq use different types of transport to move to the war zone with Turkey acting as the main transit channel for the transfer.

Movement of foreign volunteers is carried out mainly by air transport (according to original documents). At the same time, militants, trying to avoid possible detention by the authorities, prefer to take off from the airports of nearby countries.

A number of militants prefer to travel to Syria by road, which allows them to take more luggage and equipment with them.

Russian citizens intending to take part in the armed conflict in Syria also in most cases use international air communication channels.<sup>65</sup>

Consider the participation of Russian citizens in combat operations on the side of the ISIS in more detail.

## **2.2. Participation of citizens of the Russian Federation in the terrorist activities of the ISIS in Syria and Iraq**

The flow of Russian citizens from among the adherents of radical Islam, who are leaving for Syria to participate in combat operations on the side of the ISIS, has remained at a rather high level in recent years.

By now, more than 4,000 Russians are known to have traveled to Syria to participate in the activities of terrorist structures most of whom have joined the ISIS.<sup>66</sup>

Given that the loss among foreign militants (due to deaths, injuries, return to the country of exodus, desertion, moving to third countries) has by now amounted to about a third of their number, we can assume that the number of Russians in the ranks of the ISIS is currently is slightly more than 2 thousand people.

It should be noted that about 10 formations operating against government forces in Syria are made up of citizens of Russia, Georgia, Ukraine and the states of the Central Asian region.<sup>67</sup> In particular, the grouping of the first Syrian sector of the ISIS includes such detachments as: "Jamaat Khalid" headed by a native of the Republic of Dagestan; "Jamaat Adam" headed by a native of the Chechen Republic; "Crimean Jamaat" headed by Abdul Krymsky and etc. The total number

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<sup>65</sup> Despite this circumstance, the cooperation of the European Union countries with Turkey is reduced to the inclusion of "jihadists" from European countries in the list of persons who are prohibited from entering Turkey, as well as to provide information about the crossing of the Turkish border by them.

<sup>66</sup> Putin: there are up to nine thousand fighters from the former USSR in Syria. [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://izvestia.ru/news/666884#ixzz4ZXlQb4h6> Date of appeal. 06.03.2017.

<sup>67</sup> Director of the FSB told of whom the ISIS gang is composed / Rossiyskaya Gazeta [Electronic resource] Access mode: [www.rg.ru/2015/10/28/sostav-site.html](http://www.rg.ru/2015/10/28/sostav-site.html) Date of circulation 29.10.2015.

of inhabitants of the countries of Central Asia, who left to participate in military operations on the side of terrorist structures is about 5 thousand people.<sup>68</sup>

At the same time, bandit groups consisting of Russian citizens are the most combat-capable among the formations of the ISIS.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to this, the leaders of the terrorist organization are significantly influenced by immigrants from the Russian Federation (Chataev AR, Atabiev IS, Izmailov Sh.M. and etc.) which is due to the presence of their combat experience and control over significant number of armed groups, which include Russian citizens.

The main goal of Russian citizens traveling to combat zones in Syria, in addition to assisting "brethren in faith" in overthrowing the Syrian ruling regime and building a "global caliphate," is the acquisition of combat experience and its subsequent use to activate terrorist activities in Russia. Participation in the ISIS allows them to acquire practical skills in organizing subversive activities, conspiracy, recruitment of recruits and their subsequent ideological processing and establish stable links with spiritual mentors and leaders of terrorist structures.

The participation of a significant number of Russians in the ranks of the ISIS is due, above all, to the high level of propaganda and the well-established mechanism of recruiting this terrorist organization.

In the field of view of recruiters are young people from various social strata of society while the most vulnerable are people from a socially unfavorable environment.

The channels for the movement of "jihadists" from Russia to Syria and Iraq run mainly through Turkey, where they come directly and through third countries including Georgia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Ukraine. Channels of entry to Syria from Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon and Russian citizens are practically not used.

Departure from Russia often occurs under the legend of a trip to rest, sports gathering, treatment and etc.

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<sup>68</sup> Putin: there are up to nine thousand fighters from the former USSR in Syria. [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://izvestia.ru/news/666884#ixzz4ZXlQb4h6> Date of appeal. 06.03. 2017.

<sup>69</sup> Khazanov A.M. "The Islamic State" proclaims "world jihad" // East between West and Russia / Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences / M.: IAS RAS, 2015. C. 10.



It should be noted the presence in the bandit formation of the ISIS residents of Russia (mainly the Chechen) who had previously emigrated to European countries and who have the potential to return to our country for terrorist activities.

The main factor in the possible complication of the situation on the territory of the North Caucasus and other regions of the Russian Federation is the return of Russian citizens who participated in armed conflicts in Syria and Iraq (including as a result of defeats and retreat of militants). Despite the fact that their share is still small as a whole, having received the practical skills of a mine-explosive war, fighting in the city, maintaining secret communication, returning militants pose a threat to the security of the Russian Federation.

It should be noted that the main condition for the return of militants from among Russian citizens to their homeland, as a rule, is their continued participation in recruitment and terrorist activities in the territory of the Russian Federation. On the instructions of the heads of the ISIS, these individuals must create conspiratorially religious extremist cells, carry out terrorist acts and conduct recruiting work.

At the same time, the awareness of these individuals about the possible conduct of investigative measures against them leads to the fact that the return to Russia of this category of citizens is carried out in compliance with special measures of conspiracy. In particular, when crossing the Russian border they remove the compromising contents of their phones, add their accessories to their luggage that are not in accordance with the Muslim way of life (cigarettes, spirits, photo and video materials of obscene nature and etc.).

Two main variants (route) of penetration into the territory of Russia are used to return from the war zone. The first one presupposes an illegal crossing of the State Border of Russia with Georgia. The second option is legal entry to Russia, usually from the territory of Belarus, Ukraine or Azerbaijan.

After returning to Russia, they often try to change their place of residence and settle in other regions of the country for the purpose of further resource support for the bandit underground, recruiting militants to commit sabotage and terrorist acts and participating in combat operations within the logistics organization abroad.

The recent trend connected with the operation of Russian military aviation in Syria and the transfer of government troops to the offensive has become an increasing number of attempts by militants to deceive Russia's law enforcement agencies about their own deaths in Syria (imitation of death) with a view to subsequent legalization under other regulatory data.

The active participation of Russian citizens in the ISIS is facilitated by the availability of significant financial and other material resources for the organization, allowing it to pay for the movement of "jihadists" and their families to the territory of the "Caliphate", to pay them a monetary reward and etc. In this regard, financial and other material resources of the ISIS require separate consideration.

Separately, it is worthwhile to dwell on the problem of the ties between the ISIS and the bandit underground in the North Caucasus.

Beginning in late 2014, the militants of the international terrorist organization "Imarat Kavkaz" (hereinafter referred to as "IK") began to move into the structure of the ISIS. Its leaders were sworn: the leader of the Dagestan militants Asselder R.M. (neutralized in 2016), the leaders of the "Makhachkala sector" Kambulatov AG. (neutralized in April 2015), the "central sector" M.M. Zalitinov. (neutralized in December 2014), the "southern sector" of Abdullaev G.A., the "Shatoi sector" Abu Muhammad Agachulsky, the leader of the "Aukhov" bandit group Zainalabidov SA. (neutralized in June 2015), the amir of the "Vilayat Nokhchicho" Saidov M.Sh. and etc.

The mass transition of the militants of the "IK" to the structures of the ISIS is primarily connected with their desire to continue their offensive struggle against the federal forces in the North Caucasus, which is impossible under conditions of a decrease in terrorist activity and organizational degradation of the logistics company. In addition, the oath of the bandit underground leaders for the loyalty of the ISIS is partly dictated by their interest in obtaining material and technical support from this terrorist organization in the face of a reduction in financial assistance from Turkey and M. Udugov.

The reorientation of the North Caucasus militants at the ISIS led to a review of the tactics of their terrorist activities, previously defined by the head of the "IK", A.A. Kebekov. (neutralized in April 2015), which significantly "softened" the methods of action of militants. In particular, A.A. Kebekov. Forbade them to attack civilians, use women as suicide bombers, etc. Thus, the transition of militants under the control of the ISIS also meant their departure from milder methods of warfare.

Despite the fact that up to now the main goal of the Islamists has been to enlist new supporters to participate in the fighting in Syria and Iraq, recently the efforts of the gang leaders began to focus more and more on the formation of a terrorist bandit underground in the North Caucasus for subversive activities. In particular, the

leaders of the ISIS tasked the leaders of the bandit groups to conduct work on the territory of the North Caucasus on the preparation of shelter bases, laying down caches with weapons, ammunition and foodstuffs to organize the arrival of militants from among Russian citizens from Syria.

Supporters of the ISIS are trying to create an extensive network of terrorist cells on the territory of the North Caucasus Federal District.

The main tasks of the ISIS cells in the North Caucasus are currently:

1. *Recruiting and organizing the transfer of militants from among the citizens of the Russian Federation to participate in military operations in the territory of Syria and Iraq.* This activity is carried out with the aim of compensating for the losses incurred by militants during clashes with government forces and other militant groups.<sup>70</sup>

2. *Collection of financial resources in the interests of the ISIS. It is aimed at covering the costs of transporting militants to the territory of Syria, as well as to replenish the organization's financial base.*

To date, more than 4,000 citizens are known from 77 constituent entities of the Russian Federation who took part in the financing of the ISIS.<sup>71</sup>

3. *Organization of information and propaganda activities in the Internet. The main directions of this work are: information support of the activities of the ISIS, propaganda of the ideas of terrorism, as well as replenishment of the social base of the organization.*

It must be acknowledged that, in general, the organization and effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in countering the ISIS are adequate to the severity of the emerging situation and identified threats. As a result, the terrorist activity of the bandit underground in the territory of the North Caucasus and other regions of the Russian Federation has recently declined significantly.

The lack of considerable support among the population of the North Caucasus by the ISIS and the measures taken by law enforcement bodies significantly reduce the effectiveness of their subversive and recruiting activities. Thanks to this, it was not possible to establish stable organizational ties with the leaders of the bandit

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<sup>70</sup> The losses of militants in Syria and Iraq since the beginning of 2015 amounted to no less than 6 thousand people.

<sup>71</sup> The head of the FSB: in Moscow. 12 supporters of the ISIS who were preparing the terrorist attack were detained [Electronic resource] Access mode: <http://tass.ru/politika/2343071> (circulation date 23.10.2015).

groups in the North Caucasus and organize their material and technical supply to the leaders of the ISIS.

### **2.3. Financial and military-technical resources of the ISIS**

Unlike many other extremist and terrorist organizations, the ISIS financially is a self-sufficient organization. The main sources of its financing are:

1. Revenues from criminal activities - robberies, ransom obtained after the taking of hostages, appropriation of property thrown during the war and etc. So, escaping from the ISIS militants, Alawites, Druze and Yezidi left about 50 thousand houses and apartments, their movable and immovable property, which was distributed among the supporters of the ISIS. Receiving criminal proceeds insurgents justified by references to the eighth Sura ("Mining") of the Koran. In this case, the distribution of military trophies occurs, as a rule, according to the proportion also determined by the eighth Sura of the Koran - 4/5 - mujahideen, 1/5 - to Allah (the "caliphate").<sup>72</sup>

2. Assignment of financial assets of Iraqi banks. In particular, in Mosul in June 2014, militants robbed a branch of the Central Bank of Iraq, appropriating \$ 429 million.<sup>73</sup>

3. Donations from their supporters from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the countries of the European Union and other states.

4. Incomes derived from the use of natural resources controlled by the militants. In particular, at dumping prices militants sell oil to Turkey and Jordan.<sup>74</sup>

Since the beginning of the air strikes of the Russian Air Force, the positions of the ISIS in Syria of the oil and oil refining infrastructure of the terrorist organization have caused considerable damage.

5. Collection of taxes from the population. In particular, on the territory controlled by ISIS, the "Treaty for the Safety of Christians" is in effect, according to which Christians are considered to be protected by the traditional system of Islam -

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<sup>72</sup> The Quran / Translation from Arabic and commentary M.-N. Osmanov. SPb.: Publishing House "Dilya", 2012. P. 169.

<sup>73</sup> Volodina N.V. The activities of the "Islamic State" as a threat to the constitutional security of Russia // Russian investigator. 2015. № 3. P.45.

<sup>74</sup> Audrey Kurt Cronin. The ISIS is not a group of terrorists // Russia in global politics. 2015. № 2. P. 148.

zimmiyyuda.<sup>75</sup> According to this agreement, Christians are required to pay tax ("jizyu") annually on adult men in currency (dollars).<sup>76</sup> So, when the capture of the ISIS militants Mosul by Christians, according to some sources, it was paid about \$ 2 million.<sup>77</sup>

In the sphere of economic management, the main task of the ISIS is the creation of an economically self-sufficient zone in the territory under its control, independent of the rest of Syria and Iraq.

At present, quasi-state education created by militants has many features inherent in a fully-fledged state. In particular, in cities controlled by "jihadists", taxes are collected, the police operate, the justice system is functioning, the activities of the Islamic State Health Service (ISHS) are organized and etc.<sup>78</sup>

From a military point of view, the ISIS also has significant military-technical resources. "Jihadists" use tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery installations and mortars, obtained as a result of the seizure of warehouses of the Iraqi and Syrian armies. In particular, militants are armed with small arms (automatic rifles M16, M4, AB Stayer (Austria), AKM (and analogs), RPK, M14, SVD, KSVK, M249, PK, DShK), anti-tank weapons, BGM71, RPG7, M79, ATGMs: "Fagot", "Red arrow 8" (manufactured by PRC)), air defense weapons (MANPADS (boom 2, Stinger, FN6), ZU 23-2, ZSU 23-4), artillery 130 mm guns M46, D30, 155-mm howitzer M198, Gvozdika), missile technology (BM14, BM21 (Grad), Elbrus missile systems), armored vehicles based on Hammer (HMMWV, MRAP, M1117, M113, BMP1), tanks (T55, T62, T72, M1 (Abrams)).<sup>79</sup>

To conduct reconnaissance, the militants of the ISIS use squares. At the same time, recently "jihadists" are trying to use them for bombing.

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<sup>75</sup> Zimmitud is the system of submission of Christian minorities to Sharia law traditionally formed in Muslim countries.

<sup>76</sup> On the Druze, Yezidi and Alafi, the provisions of the "Treaty for the Safety of Christians" do not apply. The ISIS militants offer them to abandon their faith and accept Islam Salafist sense, and in case of refusal - they are executed.

<sup>77</sup> Volodina N.V. The activities of the "Islamic state" as a threat to the constitutional security of Russia // Russian investigator. 2015. № 3. P.44.

<sup>78</sup> Islamic State unveils the ISHS - its own version of Britain's NHS: Islamists promote a new health service with a poster campaign. Access mode: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3053585/Islamic-State-unveils-ISHS-version-Britain-s-NHS-Islamists-promote-new-health-service-poster-campaign-nearly-identical-UK-s.html> # ixzz3YbGknTFy Date of circulation: 04/19/2015.

<sup>79</sup> Sharkovsky A. All the facets of the "Islamic state" // Independent Military Review. 2015. No. 17 (853). P.4-5

The ISIS has ammunition equipped with poisonous substances. They were repeatedly used by terrorists during the fighting in Syria.

Despite the fact that the ISIS has a variety of weapons, the militants lack ammunition, artillery, anti-tank guided missiles, etc. In this regard, they are forced to resort to handicraft production of weapons, ammunition and military equipment.

Significant forces and resources "jihadists" have to be diverted to military operations with other terrorist groups operating in Syria and Iraq.

#### **2.4. Mutual relations of the ISIS with other terrorist structures operating in Syria**

The ISIS militants as legitimate only recognize their organization and its leader al-Baghdadi.

On April 9, 2013, the ISIS, proclaiming the creation of a single "Islamic state", demanded that all groups and groups operating in Syria and Iraq either swear to the leader or leave the "caliphate".

The largest ISIS operating in Syria - Jabhat al-Nusra ("JAN"),<sup>80</sup> did not recognize the primacy of the ISIS, which led to an armed confrontation between them (on January 9, 2014, the Jabhat an Nusra officially declared war to the ISIS).

Currently, the ISIS is engaged in armed struggle not only with "Jabhat al-Nusra", but also with all terrorist groups that are members of the "Jays al-Fatah" coalition ("The Army of Conquest"). The latter was established in March 2015 to conduct joint battles in the north of Syria, primarily in the province of Idlib. In addition to JAN, it includes: "Akhrar ash Sham", "Free Syrian Army", as well as smaller terrorist groups - "Ajnad ash Sham", "Jund al-Aksa", "Jaysh An Nasr".

Despite the offensive of Syrian government troops in October 2015, the ISIS continues to conduct military operations with other terrorist organizations operating in Syria. So, on February 2, 2016, the ISIS launched an offensive against the positions of Islamists from JAN and "Ahrar ash Sham" in the Kalamun mountains in the suburbs of Damascus.

B. Asad's opponents from other terrorist groups are accused by the leaders of the ISIS either in disbelief ("Free Syrian Army") or in apostasy (JAN, "Islamic Front"). At the same time, the intensity of the military operations of the ISIS

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<sup>80</sup> In July 2016, Jabhat al-Nusra changed its name to Jabhat Fatah Al-Sham.

against militants from other terrorist organizations is low. The main military opponents for the ISIS are still government troops of Syria and Iraq.

The management of the ISIS, by virtue of its "international" orientation, and also taking into account the operational-tactical goals and the dynamics of the military-political situation, seeks to establish close ties with related terrorist structures not only in the Middle East but also beyond.

The main allies of the ISIS are the following groups:

- in the Afghan-Pakistani zone, separate groups of former Taliban and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan warlords, united in the structure of the Khorasan Shura terrorist structure (the Khorasan Council). There are reports of the establishment of contacts with such regional Islamic and anti-Shiite organizations as Jash-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Union of Islamic Jihad and Lashkar-e- »;

- in Saudi Arabia and Yemen - sworn allegiance to the IGO "IG" radical structures that split from Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as the Yemenite groups Ansar ash Sharia and Jund al-Hilaf;

- in Jordan - "Ma'ahan Shaheed Battalion", "Council of Shura of the adherents of Sharia in Jordan" and a number of other local extremist structures;

- in Egypt - the extremist groups Ansar Beit al Makdis, Afnan Misr and Jund al-Hilaf in the land of Canaan, which formed the basis of the Sinai the ISIS;

- In Lebanon, there are numerous radical Sunni groups based in the Bekaa Valley and large camps of Syrian and Palestinian refugees in the southern part of the country, in particular, "Ahrar al-Sunnah Baalbek", "Abdullah al-Azzam Brigades", "Fatah al-Islam" "Jund ash-Sham" and others;

- in Libya - "Shura Council of Islamic Youth" and several regional offices of the Libyan group "Ansar ash Sharia." The leadership of the ISIS was appointed emir, responsible for operations in Libya, whose tasks include the unification under the auspices of the ISIS of local Islamist structures and the establishment of control over large cities and natural energy deposits;

- Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco - the Jund al-Hilaf group, the Okba bin Nafaa Brigade, Jund Al-Hilaf in Algiers, Al-Hunda, Al-Mantika, and part of the brigade "Al-Farouk "and" Ali ibn Abu Talib ". In addition, since early 2015, the idea of establishing a caliphate in Mali and Algeria has been further developed;

- in Nigeria - part of the commanders of "Boko Haram" decided to withdraw from the group and create a new structure "Islamic State in West Africa", representing the interests of the ISIS;
- In South Africa, supporters of the ISIS actively carry out recruitment and financing of terrorism, urging local Muslims to join the group;
- In Southeast Asia, the Islamic Movement of the Mujahideen Pattani (Thailand), Islamic Fighters for the Freedom of Bangsamoro, Abu Sayyaf (Philippines), Jemaah Islamiyah (Philippines, Singapore), the Islamic Movement of the Mujahideen Pattani (Thailand) Jama'ah ansaru tawhid and a number of other jihadist groups;
- In the Russian Federation and Georgia - cells of the "Caucasus" vilayat operating in the Russian North Caucasus, as well as the Pankisi Gorge and the Kvemo Kartli region of the Republic of Georgia.

The majority of regional extremist groups, claiming to have ties with the ISIS, are striving, therefore, to strengthen their own positions, attract new supporters and get additional funding, but in fact they continue to act independently. In general, the strengthening of contacts between the ISIS and foreign terrorist structures, as well as the growing number of foreign fighters within the ISIS, lead to the formation of long-term terrorist threats for their countries of origin.

Thus, the analysis of the policy of the ISIS in relation to other terrorist groups shows the pragmatism of its leaders who are trying to demonstrate the dominant role of their organization among other terrorist groups.

An important factor that influences the capabilities of the ISIS in the Middle East region is the efforts of the international community, primarily the Russian Federation, to counteract the activities of this terrorist organization.



## **Chapter 3. PROBLEMS OF COUNTERING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATION "ISLAM STATE"**

### **3.1 Anti-terrorist efforts of the International Community and the Russian Federation to counteract the activities of the ISIS**

The counter-terrorism efforts of the Russian Federation to counteract the activities of the ISIS are an integral part of the current international agenda in the field of combating terrorism.

Russia has traditionally taken an active part in international counterterrorism cooperation. Such work is carried out and within the framework of counteraction of the so-called. "Islamic state", JAN and affiliated organizations and individuals. Mechanisms of interaction with partners are realized:

- at the universal level;
- at the regional level;
- within the framework of bilateral cooperation.

The universal level of cooperation is of paramount importance. The leadership of the Russian Federation proceeds from the need to jointly combat the terrorist threats emanating from the ISIS, with the coordinating role of the UN and respect for the norms of international law. In the format of this approach, the Russian Federation, as a permanent member of the Security Council, actively promoted the adoption of UN Security Council resolutions aimed at combating terrorism and its financing.<sup>81</sup> These international documents ensured the need to resolve conflict situations on the basis of respect for the principles of independence and territorial integrity of states, non-interference in their internal affairs.

According to the Russian side, an international coalition with a UN mandate should become the institutional basis for the fight against the international conglomerate of terrorist structures led by the ISIS. Any enforcement actions of the said coalition in relation to the "Islamic state" and its affiliated structures must be carried out with the consent of the states on whose territory the anti-terrorist operations are conducted.

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<sup>81</sup> UNSC Resolutions 2199 and 2253 (2015)

Unfortunately, the issues of multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation in the fight against the ISIS remain largely "frozen" because of the unconstructive position of the US associated with the disengagement of the so-called "moderate opposition" and terrorist insurgents. For this reason, the Russian-American agreements reached in 2016 are not being implemented.

A key role in the creation of a comprehensive international legal system for countering terrorism is played by the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the anti-terrorist resolutions of the Security Council and the UN General Assembly and the universal anti-terrorist conventions.<sup>82</sup>

A unique global document combining national, regional and international efforts to combat terrorism is the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (adopted in the form of the UN General Assembly Resolution 60/288 on September 8, 2006). The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy includes 4 groups of coordinated and consistent measures to combat terrorism: measures to eliminate conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; measures to prevent and combat terrorism; measures to strengthen the capacity of states to prevent and combat terrorism and strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this field; measures to ensure universal respect for human rights and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for combating terrorism.<sup>83</sup>

The UN Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014), which regulate the issues of counteraction to the "Islamic state" and the fight against foreign terrorists-militants, are of primary importance in the structure of the current legal framework for international counter-terrorism cooperation. Resolution 2170 (2014) contains measures aimed at counteracting the recruitment of "the ISIS ", "JAN", terrorist organizations affiliated with them, as well as preventing and suppressing the migration of foreign terrorist militants. In the framework of the UN sanctions regime, this resolution imposed sanctions against six key functionaries of the "the ISIS " and "JAN".<sup>84</sup> Resolution 2178 (2014) provides for a set of measures aimed at countering foreign terrorist fighters including: preventing the radicalization, recruitment and mobilization of foreign terrorist fighters; prevention of the

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<sup>82</sup> The International Convention against the Taking of Hostages (New York, December 17, 1979), the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (New York, December 15, 1997), the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (New York, New York, 9 December 1999), the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (New York, 13 April 2005) and etc.

<sup>83</sup> The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy / <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy>

<sup>84</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2170 (2014), adopted at its 7242 meeting on August 15, 2014 / <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/undoc/pro/N14/507/35/pdf/N1450735.pdf>

crossing of foreign borders by foreign militants for the commission, planning, preparation or participation in the commission of terrorist acts or for training in terrorist training camps; prevention and suppression of financial assistance to foreign militants; development and implementation of strategies for prosecuting, rehabilitating and reintegrating returning terrorist fighters.

In the context of antiterrorist efforts, special attention is paid to the fight against financial support of the ISIS: in 2015, with the participation of Russia, UN Security Council resolutions 2199 and 2253 were adopted, which prohibit direct and indirect trade with the "Islamic state" of Syrian and Iraqi oil, petroleum products, block refineries and associated materiel including chemicals and lubricants.

Resolution 2253 (2015) regulated the format of the UN sanctions list for the ISIS and "Al-Qaeda" and the activities of the relevant sanctions committee of the UN Security Council ("Committee 1267/1989/2253").<sup>85</sup> As criteria for inclusion in the sanctions list for the ISIS and Al-Qaeda the following were fixed:

- a) participation in financing, planning, facilitating, preparing or perpetrating of acts or activities of "the ISIS" or "Al-Qaida", in connection with them, under their name, on their behalf or in their support;
- b) supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel to the ISIS or Al-Qaida;
- c) recruitment for Al-Qaida, "the ISIS" or any of their cells, affiliates, splinter groups or offshoots, or otherwise supporting their acts or activities.

In order to protect human rights the Resolution 2253 (2015) also provides for the removal of individuals and organizations from the sanctions list.

According to Resolutions 2161 (2014) and 2253 (2015), the UN sanctions regime for "the ISIS", "Al-Qaeda" and related individuals, groups, enterprises and organizations includes: assets freeze, ban on entry or transit and arms embargo.

The UN Security Council welcomed the reports on the financing of terrorism (published in February and October 2015) and recommended that the relevant UN structures regularly update the materials on the ISIS and related individuals, groups, enterprises and organizations that support this terrorist organization.

The Russian Federation took an active part in the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) research to identify the ISIS's financial supply channels, as well as non-

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<sup>85</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2253 (2015), adopted at its 7587 meeting on December 17, 2015 / <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/undoc/GEN/N15/437/48/pdf/N1543748.pdf>

traditional sources of terrorist financing.<sup>86</sup> Thanks to the efforts of Russia at the FATF plenum held in Paris in October 2016, fundamental changes were made to the FATF universal standards for countering the financing of terrorism. Innovations made it possible to introduce a ban on rendering any material support to "the ISIS", including trade with oil and other natural resources.<sup>87</sup> On the Russian initiative, information on the sources and channels of financing for the ISIS began to be considered at all plenary sessions of the FATF.

The regional level of counter-terrorism cooperation has a significant potential. This format of cooperation is implemented mainly within the framework of the CIS Antiterrorist Center (CIS ATC), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Regional Counterterrorism Structure (RATS SCO).

The CIS ATC is an independent standing body of the CIS responsible for coordinating the interaction between the special services and law enforcement agencies of the Commonwealth member states in the field of combating international terrorism and other manifestations of extremism. This activity is carried out within the framework of the Program of Cooperation of the CIS Member States in Combating Terrorism and Other Violent Manifestations of Extremism for 2017 - 2019. At the initiative of the ATC of the CIS, the issues of countering the logistics of the ISIS including the need to create a legitimate international anti-terrorist coalition were fixed in the September 16, 2016 Statement of the CIS Heads of State on further joint efforts to counter international terrorism.

The CSTO is a significant element in the system of ensuring regional security, including the counter-terrorism dimension in the post-Soviet space. The organization maintains close cooperation with the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, the SCO RATS and other counter-terrorism structures. In October 2016, the CSTO approved a single list of organizations recognized as terrorist in the CSTO format. The Collective Security Council of the CSTO adopted a Joint Statement of the Organization Member States on Countering International Terrorism. In order to increase the CSTO's capacity to counter a wide range of threats (including terrorist ones), decisions were taken on reforming the Joint Staff of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the establishment of

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<sup>86</sup> The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an intergovernmental organization that develops international standards in the field of combating money laundering, financing of terrorism, financing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as assessing the compliance of national anti-money laundering systems and the financing of terrorism.

<sup>87</sup> See also the FATF Statement on Countering the Financing of the ISIS (October 24, 2014).

the Organization's Crisis Response Center, the CSTO Collective Security Strategy for the period up to 2025, the List of Additional Measures to Counter International Terrorism and Extremism, the Regulation on the formation of a single list of organizations recognized as terrorist.

RATS SCO has a serious potential as a participant in the international counterterrorism cooperation of the Russian Federation. This body coordinates and co-operates the competent bodies of the SCO member states in the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism. On the initiative of the Russian delegation on April 8, 2016, the Council of the RATS SCO approved the algorithm of joint actions of the competent bodies of the SCO member states to counteract the challenges and threats emanating from the "Islamic state".

The most effective is the bilateral format of international counter-terrorism cooperation in the fight against the ISIS, which is based on a differentiated approach and long-term partnership.<sup>88</sup> The level of development of such a format is determined by the nature of the interstate relations of the Russian Federation and the specifics of the issues of the bilateral antiterrorist agenda.

To develop coordinated approaches and coordinate interstate positions, the Russian Federation conducts regular bilateral consultations in the field of countering international terrorism with CIS member states.

Russian approaches are based on the need to consistently increase pressure on terrorist structures operating in Syria and Iraq, as well as ensuring tight coordination of anti-terrorist efforts of states interested in stabilizing the Middle East and North Africa. The further promotion of the initiative of the President of the Russian Federation, voiced in the UN General Assembly in 2015, about the peaceful Syrian settlement and the formation of an international anti-terrorist coalition against the "Islamic State" remains in demand.<sup>89</sup>

January 23-24, 2017 at the initiative of the Russian Federation in Astana (Kazakhstan), an international meeting on Syria was organized. Representatives of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the armed opposition confirmed their readiness for dialogue. Following the meeting, a statement was adopted on

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<sup>88</sup> Unfortunately, the Western partners have attempts of domination and double standards in relation to Russian initiatives through the desire to build relationships through unilateral benefits and benefits.

<sup>89</sup> Under the pretext of fighting terrorism, the United States is also negotiating with the leadership of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan on the possible deployment of its military bases on the territories of these countries, as well as preparing a draft new basic agreement on cooperation with Kyrgyzstan.

behalf of Russia, Turkey and Iran on the settlement of the Syrian crisis on the basis of the comprehensive implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2254. The document reflects the determination of the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkey to continue their joint struggle against the ISIS and JAN (Jabhat Fateh Al-Sham) and to facilitate the disengagement of these terrorist structures and groups of "moderate" armed opposition.

Unlike Russian initiatives, the anti-terrorist efforts of the US and its allies to counter the ISIS were not always transparent and consistent. The fight against terrorism in some cases was conducted on a two-faced and selective basis. The pretext of "combating terrorism" was often used to limit state sovereignty and overthrow undesirable political regimes in the so-called countries. The Greater Middle East by forces of "moderate" armed opposition.<sup>90</sup>

In August 2014, under the pretext of protecting national minorities in Iraq, Washington authorized the military operation "Resolute Determination" against the ISIS in the Middle East region and proceeded to launch missile and bomb strikes against Iraq. In September, it was decided to expand the scale of the operation and strike on the territory of Syria.<sup>91</sup>

The undeclared targets of the military operation were squeezing out militants into Syria and legitimizing the use of military force against it with the subsequent overthrow of the lawfully elected government of B. Assad. In addition to this, in an attempt to further weaken the capabilities of the Syrian leadership to oppose the radical opposition and anti-government illegal armed groups, to cause discontent among the population by the authorities, the coalition aviation group, under the pretext of destroying the positions and facilities of the ISIS, systematically disrupted economic infrastructure in Syria.

More than 40 countries have joined the US anti-terrorist operation. At the same time, three levels of participation were initially identified.

*The first group* was composed of states directly participating in the military operation. At present, combat aircraft of the United States, Australia, Belgium,

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<sup>90</sup> "Combating terrorism" was also an instrument of access to raw materials in the Middle East region. Thus, the ISIS and "JAN" for a long period carried out smuggling and sale of Syrian oil through European and Turkish intermediaries.

<sup>91</sup> After the first bombings on September 22-23, 2014, the Syrian authorities announced the inadmissibility of air strikes of foreign states on the Islamic state militants in Syria without the consent of Damascus. Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem said that "such actions will be regarded as aggression".

Great Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands and France participate in striking the positions of the ISIS in Iraq, and in Syria - the United States, Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

This group includes Iran, whose armed forces directly support government troops in Syria and Iraq.<sup>92</sup>

*The second group* includes states that provide financial, intelligence and logistical support to coalition forces (Austria, Albania, Hungary, Israel, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Canada, Kuwait, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Turkey, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Sweden, Estonia and Japan).

*The third group* consists of states that provide political support to the forces of the international coalition. To date, the authorities of Egypt, Greece, Georgia, Iceland, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Macedonia, Morocco, Moldova, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Taiwan, Ukraine, Croatia, Montenegro and Finland .

The general management of the operation against the ISIS is carried out by the BCC of the US Armed Forces, the zone of operational responsibility of which includes the Middle East.<sup>93</sup>

According to official statements of the White House, the objectives of the complex of events implemented by the Pentagon are: undermining the military potential of terrorists, preventing expansion of their influence in the region and inflicting full military defeat on them. In practice, the US-led coalition forces are now seeking to drive out the ISIS militants from Iraqi territory to Syria.

To date, the coalition forces have managed to destroy more than 6,000 militants, several hundred units of military equipment, separate ammunition depots, as well as infrastructure facilities, including oil refining.<sup>94</sup> Despite this, the activities of the international coalition forces could not significantly reduce the size of the terrorist group and cause significant damage to its material and technical support. Thus, the strategy and tactics of the forces of the international coalition do not correspond to the scale and nature of the threats coming from the ISIS.

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<sup>92</sup> On the territory of Iraq are the militarized formations of the Guard Corps of the Islamic Revolution, as well as Iranian military advisers and specialists engaged in the formation and training of Shiite armed formations.

<sup>93</sup> Yakovlev D. Operation of the US and its allies "Unshakable determination" // Foreign military review. 2015. № 1. P. 65.

<sup>94</sup> Sydney J., Freedberg Jr. 4,817 Targets: How Six Months Of Airstrikes Have Hurt ISIL (Or Not) Access mode: <http://breakingdefense.com/2015/02/4817-targets-how-six-months-of-airstrikes-have-Hurt-isil-or-not/> and (date of circulation on February 14, 2016).

The antiterrorist operation of the Russian military security services against the international terrorist organizations operating in Syria began on September 30, 2015. Its goal was to support the overland offensive of the Syrian government troops and the destruction of the terrorist infrastructure.

It was assumed that at the initial stage of the operation the Syrian army, with the help of Russian aviation, would liberate the territories controlled by the so-called "moderate" opposition, the JAN and the ISIS. Further, coming to the border with Turkey, the Syrian army will launch an offensive on the positions of militants in the south and east of Syria. At the same time, the establishment of control on the Syrian-Turkish border was to deprive the ISIS and other terrorist groups of their main channels of resource support. At the final stage, after the expulsion of terrorist groups from the territory of the country, it was planned to conduct political transformations (organize presidential and parliamentary elections, following which to form a coalition government).<sup>95</sup>

The US formally remains the main "foreign" enemy of the ISIS. This is evidenced, in particular, by the fact that Abu Muhammad al-Adnani (liquidated in 2016) announced the beginning of the "jihad" not only with Russia, but also with the United States, and pointed out that it was the US having failed to defeat the ISIS, were compelled to call for help to Russia.

Despite the significant numerical superiority of government forces over terrorist groups operating in the region, the Syrian authorities have to divert considerable forces (about 50% of the armed forces) to protect the rear communications. At the same time, the morale of the Syrian army is weakened by years of civil war and significant losses among the country's most devoted Al-Assad population.

By the beginning of the air strikes of the Russian Air Force, government forces, thanks to the supplies of Russian and Iranian weapons and equipment, managed to create certain reserves, which enabled them to advance.

The success of the Syrian army is facilitated by the participation on its side of several thousand military personnel from Iran and the Hezbollah movement under its control.<sup>96</sup> In addition, according to the Pentagon, the Syrian army is assisted by military experts from several other states.

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<sup>95</sup> Mirzayan T. Pre-emptive strike // Expert. 2015. No. 41 (960). P.20.

<sup>96</sup> Iran and Russia Ready to Pound Aleppo [Electronic resource] Access mode: [www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/10/14/iran-and-russia-ready-to-pound-aleppo.html](http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/10/14/iran-and-russia-ready-to-pound-aleppo.html) (circulation date. 19.10.2015 ).



The further course of hostilities will depend not only on the offensive potential of the Syrian army, but also on the political decisions of the Middle Eastern and Western countries and the scale and nature of their military and technical assistance to the opponents of the B. Assad regime.

### **3.2 Directions for improving the state system of measures on countering the ISIS**

Attempts by the ISIS to form their cells on the territory of the Russian Federation and create on their basis an underground network of religious extremist groups that include, among others, fundamentalists with experience in conducting military operations capable of resisting special services and possessing an adaptable system of measures of conspiracy, form a serious threat to the security of the Russian state and require the state to take timely, adequate measures of a preemptive nature.

Targeted work on recruiting supporters of extremist views for their subsequent use in international terrorist activities occupies a key place in the arsenal of terrorist methods and means of the ISIS. After training, militants are sent to terrorist groups operating at "hot spots", or form deeply conspiratorized "sleeping terrorist cells" in the regions of exodus.

The legislation of the Russian Federation provides for a range of organizational and legal measures related to preventing the entry of members of the ISIS into the territory of the Russian Federation and the involvement of Russian citizens in terrorist activities abroad. The implementation of this system of measures as a whole makes it possible to monitor the situation on the migration channels, neutralize attempts of penetration of members of the ISIS and extremist associations into the Russian Federation and to stop the transit of recruits to the zones of armed conflicts.

The complex of organizational and legal measures begins to "work" from the moment of receipt of information about the planned or held departure of a person abroad for participation in hostilities on the side of illegal armed formations.

In the absence of the composition of preparation for Part 2 of Art. 208 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, law enforcement agencies conduct preventive and preventive measures to induce a person to renounce criminal activity.

The current legislation guarantees freedom of departure from the Russian Federation. The right of a citizen of the Russian Federation to leave may be temporarily restricted in respect of:

- secret bearers (persons admitted to information constituting state secrets) and persons serving (working) in the bodies of the federal security service;
- Citizens enlisted in military service or alternative civilian service;
- suspects and accused of committing crimes;
- convicts (before serving or being released from punishment);
- evading the fulfillment of obligations imposed by the court;
- persons who reported themselves knowingly false information when processing travel documents;
- bankruptcy (until the completion of the insolvency (bankruptcy) case).

The lack of a legal basis for a citizen to restrict his departure from the Russian Federation means the possibility of unimpeded realization of the right to leave the territory of the Russian Federation. Refusal to a citizen of the Russian Federation in the right to leave the Russian Federation may be appealed to the court.

If information is received about the exit of a citizen to the zone of armed conflict for participation in terrorist activities on the side of the logistics department, operative-search activities are conducted to locate the object of interest and document its participation in hostilities.

In order to prevent the uncontrolled return of the militant to the Russian Federation, he is declared wanted and arrested in absentia.

An important legal measure aimed at preventing the penetration into Russia of members and accomplices is the non-permission of entry to foreign citizens and stateless persons on the territory of the Russian Federation. The decision on non-admittance of entry is made by the authorized federal executive body in the presence of grounds provided for by Federal Law No. 114-FZ of August 15, 1996 "On the procedure for leaving the Russian Federation and entry into the Russian Federation" (reporting knowingly false information about yourself or about the purpose stay in the Russian Federation, use of forged documents, the need to ensure the defense capability or security of the state, public order, the existence of a decision on administrative expulsion, a deportee or transfer to a foreign state and etc.).

Decision-making on the non-admission of entry into the Russian Federation against foreign citizens and stateless persons who violate the law is an effective measure of impact on them. At the same time, a number of foreign citizens who have been denied entry to the Russian Federation continue their attempts to penetrate into Russian territory, changing their initial data in their homeland and cross the State border by new documents. To identify such persons, dactyloscopic identification is used, which is conducted when migrants obtain a patent or work permit, as well as in case of administrative or criminal liability.

Unlike foreigners, a citizen of the Russian Federation can not be deprived of the right to enter the Russian Federation (Article 2 of the Federal Law "On the Procedure for Departure from the Russian Federation and Entry into the Russian Federation"). This feature of the legal status should be taken into account when organizing operational search activities and investigative actions against persons who took part in armed conflicts abroad on the part of the terrorist organization or who were trained in the training camps of militants, since the possibility of unimpeded return to Russia at any time requires special services and law enforcement bodies of the organization of immediate operational control over the "returnees".

In the case of entry into the territory of the Russian Federation of foreign emissaries, foreign militants and accomplices, these individuals may make active attempts to settle and subsequently legalize in the Russian Federation. For this purpose, they submit applications for recognition as citizens of the Russian Federation or for admission to the citizenship of the Russian Federation. The legislator envisaged the possibility of neutralizing such threats to security and preventing related terrorist crimes in articles 16 and 41.2 of Federal Law No. 62-FZ of May 31, 2002 On Citizenship of the Russian Federation.

Persons whose applications for recognition as citizens or for citizenship have been rejected in connection with participation in terrorist (other extremist) activities, the provision of false personal data for the processing of documents, the use of stolen (lost) passport forms, the issuance at the request of a foreign state, must leave Russian Federation. In case of failure to comply with the requirements of the law, the said persons are subject to deportation.

In the framework of preventive activities, the practice of issuing official warnings on behalf of security agencies on the inadmissibility of actions that create conditions for the commission of crimes, the inquiry and preliminary investigation

of which is assigned to the jurisdiction of the security bodies, has proved to be positive.<sup>97</sup>

In accordance with Art. 25.1 of the Law of the Russian Federation of January 17, 1992 No. 2202-1 "On the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation", in the presence of information on the upcoming unlawful acts containing signs of terrorist activity, prosecutors are warned against the inadmissibility of violation of the law.

The announcement of official warnings and acts of the prosecutor's response often causes potential recruits to give up their intentions to join the ranks of the terrorist organization or continue their terrorist activities after returning to Russia.

To improve the Russian experience of neutralizing security threats related to the penetration of the ISIS members into the territory of the Russian Federation and the involvement of Russian citizens in terrorist activities abroad, it is possible to use the regulatory decisions of foreign law-making bodies that are not inconsistent with the legislation of the Russian Federation and the advanced foreign law enforcement practice.

Currently, in order to increase the effectiveness of countering the recruiting activities of the ISIS and the departure of persons for training in the training camps for militants and subsequent participation in armed conflicts abroad, the authorities of several states toughen national anti-terrorism legislation.<sup>98</sup> In particular, amendments to the Citizenship Act have been adopted in Australia, according to which persons with dual citizenship and suspected of involvement in terrorism are deprived of Australian citizenship and are subject to deportation from the country.<sup>99</sup>

In January 2015, the Parliament of Great Britain enacted the Law on Counter-Terror and Security Act 2015, which provides for a temporary ban on the entry into Britain of persons suspected of involvement in terrorism abroad.<sup>100</sup> The basis of the ban is a judicial decision to temporarily obstruct (for a period of up to 24 months) the entry into the country of persons suspected of terrorism (Temporary Exclusion Order). This measure is implemented by bringing suspects in terrorism to the list of "non-permitted to air flights" and the removal of passports at border control points.

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<sup>97</sup> Point "d2" of Article 13 of the Federal Law "On the Federal Security Service".

<sup>98</sup> Mercer P. Unease Grows over New Australian Dual Citizenship Rules // BBC. 2015. June 1.

<sup>99</sup> Australian Citizenship Act [electronic resource]

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/details/C2006C000317> (circulation date is April 22, 2016).

<sup>100</sup> Counter-Terror and Security Act 2015 [electronic resource]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/factsheet-counter-terrorism-and-security-bill> (circulation date is April 22, 2016).

Persons entering the UK in case of suspicion of involvement in terrorist activities may be subjected to interrogation and temporary detention.<sup>101</sup>

Police officers and border guards have the right to seize passports and tickets for British citizens on the border for a period of 30 days if the authorities reasonably suspect these persons of intent to engage in terrorist activities outside the UK or that they previously arrived in the territory of the United Kingdom for the subsequent travel outside its borders for terrorist purposes.

The judicial prohibition on entry may be extended upon the submission of the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Great Britain. An attempt to unauthorized entry into the country in violation of the current legislation entails imprisonment for up to 5 years.

The Minister of Internal Affairs with the purpose of preventing terrorism has the right to issue orders for the expulsion of persons related to the commission, preparation or incitement to terrorist activities.

The law also provides for the possibility of withdrawing passports of British nationals under the age of 18 when attempting to travel to regions of increased terrorist activity (the Afghan-Pakistani zone, Syria, Iraq).

The Law of the French Republic of 2014 "On Combating Terrorism" prohibits persons suspected of terrorist activities and planning to participate in armed conflicts abroad, to leave the territory of the state.

In the United States, no less strict practice of migration control and filtration is applied on the entry-exit channels.

The US Law on National Security and Registration of Entry, Exit, 2004 identifies a category of "high risk" people, which includes citizens of countries with increased terrorist activity (Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Sudan). These persons, when crossing the US border, are subject to mandatory photographing, fingerprinting and registration.<sup>102</sup>

As we see, foreign practice of legal regulation allows for various legal restrictions on the rights of citizens and foreigners in order to prevent terrorist activities on the territory of states and beyond. It should be noted that these restrictions are established both in judicial and administrative order.

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<sup>101</sup> Institutes of constitutional law / Ed. L.V. Andrichenko, A.E. Postnikova. Moscow: ISISP under the Government of the Russian Federation, 2013.

<sup>102</sup> Institutes of constitutional law / Ed. L.V. Andrichenko, A.E. Postnikova. Moscow: ISISP under the Government of the Russian Federation, 2013.

Possibilities of reception by the Russian legislator of foreign experience require substantial reservations.

On December 4, 2015, the Constitutional Assembly of the Republic of Dagestan submitted to the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation a draft law No. 945490-6 "On Amendments to the Federal Law" On Citizenship of the Russian Federation "(regarding the introduction of the procedure for the deprivation of citizenship of certain categories of citizens of the Russian Federation).

The bill provides for the deprivation of citizenship in connection with the participation of citizens in combat operations on the part of the logistics and the implementation of terrorist activities in the composition of illegal armed formations on the territory of a foreign state for purposes contrary to the interests of the Russian Federation.

It seems that this initiative does not comply with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, since by virtue of Part 3 of Article 6 no one can be deprived of his citizenship. In the Russian Federation, the deprivation of a person's citizenship is not allowed, even as a sanction for the crime committed. As evidenced by the practice of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation (Decision No. 12-P of 16 May 1996 on the case of verifying the constitutionality of clause "d" of Article 18 of the Law of the Russian Federation "On Citizenship of the Russian Federation" in connection with the complaint of AB Smirnov) Termination of citizenship of the Russian Federation is possible only on the voluntary will of the citizen in conditions of free choice.

The Russian Federation, in the context of universally recognized international standards, adheres to the principle of the prevention of statelessness: it is not permitted to withdraw from the citizenship of the Russian Federation in the absence of guarantees for acquiring another citizenship. This approach is consistent with the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

At the same time, provisions on mandatory fingerprinting, obtaining biological material, and seizure of passports when trying to leave the citizens of the Russian Federation in regions of increased terrorist activity can be fixed in federal laws No. 128-FZ of July 25, 1998 "On state fingerprinting registration in the Russian Federation", Dated August 15, 1996, No. 114-FZ "On the procedure for leaving the Russian Federation and entry into the Russian Federation".

Attention is drawn to the possibility of borrowing the norms on the administrative expulsion of foreign citizens and stateless persons who participated in planning, training, inciting and complicity in terrorist activities.<sup>103</sup>

As promising areas for improving the set of measures to respond promptly to security threats associated with the penetration of members of the terrorist organization into the territory of the Russian Federation and the involvement of Russian citizens in terrorist activities abroad, it is possible to single out:

- Improvement of international and interstate cooperation in the field of combating terrorism (the formation of a unified database of CIS citizens involved in the activities of the terrorist organization and its integration with the Unified System of Accounting for Third Country Citizens and Stateless Persons Entering the Territories of the CIS Member States; conclusion of international treaties of the Russian Federation with interested states on the criminal prosecution of foreign citizens carrying out terrorist activities and without citizenship not residing permanently in the Russian Federation, and bringing these individuals to criminal liability in the territory of the Russian Federation);
- Strengthening the technical equipment of checkpoints and filtration work on migration and tourist flows (introduction of mandatory fingerprinting of all categories of foreign citizens and stateless persons arriving in the territory of the Russian Federation, organization of a permanent remote access to databases of persons arriving in the Russian Federation from regions with increased terrorist activity, within a single information massif);
- strengthening of control on the channels of religious migration and tourism, religious pilgrimage from Russia to foreign countries in which the terrorist organization emissaries and recruiters are active; on the channels for training Russian citizens in foreign religious centers used by members of terrorist structures to engage Russian citizens in terrorist activities (streamlining and monitoring the theological exchange system (primarily with KSA, Qatar, Yemen, Kuwait and Pakistan) and Islamic charity; import and distribution of religious literature, conduct of its religious studies, the introduction of a unified procedure for internships and further training in foreign schools GOVERNMENTAL institutions clergy certification and etc.;

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<sup>103</sup> Administrative punishment in the form of deportation from the territory of the Russian Federation extends to foreign citizens and stateless persons who committed an offense in accordance with the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation. This punishment is appointed by the court as an additional one.

- Improvement of the administrative legislation of the Russian Federation (the imposition of administrative punishment in the form of administrative deportation of foreign citizens and stateless persons outside the Russian Federation for violating the requirements of official warnings about the inadmissibility of actions that create conditions for the commission of crimes, the inquiry and preliminary investigation of which is attributed by the legislation of the Russian Federation to the jurisdiction of bodies Federal Security Service, as well as warnings of prosecutors about the stimosti violation of the law if there is information about upcoming wrongful acts c signs of terrorist activity; the inclusion of official warnings of the federal security service and prosecutors warnings about the inadmissibility of violation of the law made in respect of Russian citizens in the list of reasons for the temporary restriction of exit from the Russian Federation);
- Improvement of the criminal legislation of the Russian Federation with regard to bringing to responsibility for the offenses set forth in Articles 205.1, 205.3 and Part 2 of Art. 208 of the Criminal Code.

It seems that the above measures could improve the organization of a systematic counteraction to law enforcement agencies and special services penetration into the territory of the Russian Federation by members of the terrorist organization and the involvement of Russian citizens in terrorist activities abroad.

The improvement of legal measures proposed in the monograph presupposes obligatory counteraction to extremist and terrorist content, the recruitment activity of the ISIS in the Internet.

Taking into account that the most effective results in the localization of security threats from IHO supporters on the Internet are achieved by removing their accounts, groups and communities, the main proposals aimed at improving work in this area can be considered:

a) Improving the mechanisms for blocking the Internet resources of extremist and terrorist organizations (in particular, regulating the timing of the consideration by the leadership of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation of notices from federal state authorities, state authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation, local governments, organizations or citizens about detection on the Internet Information, which calls for mass riots and the implementation of extremist activities, e-document management between authorities when deciding on the removal of profiles and communities from social networks, allowing or replicating information materials of a terrorist and extremist nature and etc.).



b) legislative regulation of the deadlines for the execution of requests (appeals) from law enforcement agencies by Russian companies owning social networks.

In addition, when blocking illegal content on social networks, it seems advisable to block all communities created on behalf of a compromised user (account) and block access to social networks from its IP-addresses. Despite the fact that this measure is not exhaustive and can be leveled with the help of technical means, it will certainly create obstacles for the activity of a certain part of the supporters of the ISIS in the Internet.

In order to strengthen preventive work, it is advisable to develop programs for the adaptation of former members of the WTO, for which purpose it is necessary to consider the possibility of creating an institute of individual mentors. A similar tool can be used for preventive work with such categories of citizens vulnerable to terrorist propaganda as close relatives of militants (including dead militants): their children, underage brothers and etc.

An important aspect of the struggle with the ISIS is the increase in the scale and offensiveness of information and propaganda activities to counter international terrorism.

At the same time, along with massive nationwide measures in the field of information counteraction to terrorism, it is advisable to carry out targeted influence on the categories of the population most susceptible to the influence of the ideology of terrorism, including targeted information and propaganda actions concerning specific communities and groups in social networks and etc.

It should be noted that instead of countering the terrorist ideology of the ISIS, based on the prevention and suppression of destructive information and propaganda influence, the authorities and authorities have been engaged for a long time mainly passive anti-terrorist propaganda and struggle against extremist and terrorist sites in the "ru" and "rf".

The urgent needs of information counteraction to terrorism should be adequate to threats in the information sphere and take into account public demands.

Counteraction to the propaganda of the ISIS in Russia should not be the nature of theological disputes and the opening of contradictions between the terror of the "Caliphate" and the norms of the Holy Quran.

It is not necessary to expose the inhuman and sadistic nature of the ISIS fighters, since violence is positioned by the ideologists of the ISIS as a demand for faith and

an inevitable means of ensuring order in the state. For terrorists and their target audience, violence acquires a religiously justified and legal character.

In the course of preventive work, the competent state authorities should focus on the economic essence of the Khilafat project, the mercantile and criminal ties of the leaders of the ISIS, and their willingness to sacrifice the lives of tens of thousands of supporters.

The system of nationwide events in the sphere of information counteraction to terrorism should be universal and complemented by concerted efforts of all interested structures.

A promising area for improving national work to counteract the activities of the ISIS may be a more active use of civil society institutions. As a positive example of the use of the public in the fight against extremist content on the Internet, the British project "See it, Report it" (If you can see, tell!), Designed to counter the spread of radical Islamist literature in the global network. The project is aimed at informing users about how they should act in case of detection of materials of extremist or terrorist nature on various Internet resources, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and etc.<sup>104</sup>

In the Russian Federation, reports from citizens about the availability of illegal information on the websites on the Internet are received by Roskomnadzor. However, the Internet page of Roskomnadzor for receiving citizens' appeals (<http://eais.rkn.gov.ru/feedback/>) is not known to the majority of Internet users.

Thus, in order to resolve the issue of counteracting the activities of the ISIS, it is proposed to use an integrated approach, including the implementation of regulatory, prohibitive and preventive measures. The most effective measures in this area are the improvement of the regulatory legal framework, as well as the intensification of outreach and outreach to the youth environment.

It seems that the consistent implementation of the listed counter-terrorism measures will create the necessary conditions for stifling and paralyzing the terrorist activities of the organizational structures and supporters of the ISIS in the territory of the Russian Federation.

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<sup>104</sup> See it, Report it [Electronic resource] Access mode: [www.seeitreportit.org](http://www.seeitreportit.org) Date of circulation 01/25/2016.

## CONCLUSION

The attack of government troops in Syria and Iraq on the position of "jihadists", the operation of Russian military security services, as well as the activities of the international coalition, contributed to serious success in the fight against the ISIS and led to a rapid reduction of the territory it controlled. At present, it can be stated that the terrorist organization is gradually losing the war in Syria and Iraq. At the same time, if the military rout of the ISIS becomes a reality this will not mean the final victory over this organization: its militants will switch to sabotage and partisan methods of warfare and the accumulated experience, the availability of financial, military and human resources, their mobility detachments - in their entirety will allow "jihadists" to continue fighting for a long time, and not only in the Middle East.

The military victory over the ISIS will also not automatically mean an ideological victory. "Jihadism" and the ideology that inspires it will not disappear on their own together with the "Islamic state". In order to deprive the ISIS of the future, it is necessary to add to the military successes a victory over its ideology, to oppose it with something more attractive and valuable, to deprive the terrorist structures of social support from the radical Muslims.

Minimizing the threats coming from the ISIS can only be as Russia consistently offers - by combining the efforts of the international community under the auspices of the UN on a universally recognized international legal basis. The main vector of counteraction to international terrorism in the person of the "Islamic state" is the combination of the practice of forcibly suppressing illegal armed formations controlled by the ISIS with the policy of deradicalizing the population and preventing terrorist manifestations.

The existing disunity of the actions of the world community is skillfully used by the leaders of the ISIS allowing them to preserve the possibility of ideological support, financial and resource support of their activities maneuvering by mercenary terrorists on the scale of individual states and the Middle East. The absence of a united front in the fight against the ISIS, the hidden support of individual states by terrorist groups and attempts to use them in their own geopolitical interests make it very difficult to fight international terrorism.

Unfortunately, the issues of multilateral counterterrorism cooperation in the fight against the ISIS remain largely frozen because of the unconstructive position of the United States associated with the desire to change the political regime in Syria and

the disengagement of the so-called "moderate opposition" and terrorist insurgents. The key reason for the phenomenal success of the ISIS and its military "successes" was precisely the absence of a consolidated force capable of providing it with an effective strategic confrontation.

The participation of the Russian Aerospace Forces in the antiterrorist operation in Syria played a key role in the military defeats of the ISIS and helped to unite the efforts of the world community in the fight against terrorism. As a result of Russia's actions, the ISIS militants were forced to abandon any serious offensive actions, and the Syrian army launched an offensive in the territories captured by the militants. During the fighting, the Russian military security services inflicted serious damage on the infrastructure of the ISIS destroying their ammunition depots, fuel, weapons repair, significantly weakened the logistics of the militants, as well as their ability to promptly move reinforcements. As a result of Russian-Syrian military operations, the number of terrorist groups operating in Syria fell by more than a third. In addition, the damage inflicted by the ISIS significantly limited the possibility of exporting terrorism outside the Middle East.

The experience of participation in the settlement of the Syrian crisis shows that the Russian side is able to determine the global antiterrorist agenda and play a significant role in the formation of an international strategy to counter terrorism.

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## **The main leaders and ideologists of the ISIS**

**Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi al-Husseini al-Qurashi (Ibrahim Avvad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri)** is the head (caliph) of the ISIS. According to most sources, Ibrahim Avvad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri was born in 1971 in a religious family in the Iraqi city of Samarra. His relatives were preachers and specialists in the field of the Arabic language, rhetoric and logic.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi holds a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from the University of Adhamiya, located in the suburbs of Baghdad.

Before 2004, he lived in a mosque in Tobchi - in a poor neighborhood on the western outskirts of Baghdad. At the time of the US invasion of Iraq, al-Baghdadi, as many scholars believe, was the imam of one of the mosques. Later, he joined the rebel movement. In 2004, al-Baghdadi was held as a suspect in the Bukka American filtration camp. Subsequently, he headed al-Qaeda in Iraq, the Islamic State of Iraq, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

Since June 29, 2014, al-Baghdadi is the "caliph" of the so-called "Islamic state".

**Abu Muhammad al-Adnani (Taha Subhi Falaha)** is the "spokesman" of the ISIS, one of the main ideologists of the ISIS, who had considerable authority in a religious extremist milieu. Due to its popularity among the supporters of the ISIS surpassed al-Baghdadi.

He was born in the Syrian city of Binnish (Idlib province). Since 2005, he began to participate in the activities of Islamist groups in Iraq and then joined the "Islamic State of Iraq". For suspicions of terrorist activities he was arrested by Americans.

Since 2012, he was responsible for working with the media. With his participation a lot of audio recordings of the ISIS were published with summaries of the events taking place in the organization and calls for the commission of terrorist acts.

He is the organizer of a terrorist act against a Russian passenger aircraft on October 31, 2015, which killed 224 people.

Al-Adnani for more than 2 years was on the American "list for liquidation." In addition to this, for him was announced a reward of \$ 5 million.

Al-Adnani was neutralized on August 30, 2016 by Russian military security services near the city of El-Bab. The US authorities claim that al-Adnani was liquidated as a result of the air strikes of the coalition forces.

**Abi al-Hasan al-Muhajer** - from 2016 to present - the "press secretary" of the ISIS (replaced in this post neutralized in August 2016 by Abu Muhammad al-Adnani).

Very little is known about his biography. It is believed that Abi al-Hasan al-Muhajer is a foreign militant, until 2016 was one of the "warlords" of terrorists.

Widely known for his appeal "You remember what I tell you!" And calls for armed struggle against "secular Turkey" and Iran. Abi al-Hasan al-Muhajer called the militants of the ISIS, fighting in Mosul, not to retreat and fight to the end.

**Abu Mohammad al-Shimali** (Tirad al-Jarba) is the head of the border guard service of the ISIS. He was at the forefront of the formation of the terrorist structure - since 2005 he was connected with "Al Qaeda in Iraq."

Currently, he is the head of the committee for immigration and logistical support of the ISIS and is responsible for facilitating the migration of foreign militants. Al-Shimali coordinates smuggling, financial transfers and general logistics to Syria from the countries of the European Union, North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. It is known that he was in charge of the coordination center of the ISIS for recruits in Aazaz (Syria). Not less than a third of foreign fighters arrived on the territory controlled by the ISIS using the assistance of the committee headed by Abu-Muhammad Al-Shimali.

**Khalimov Gulmurod Salimovich** - "Minister of War" of the ISIS.

Halimov moved to the side of the ISIS in 2015. Before that, in the rank of colonel, he was the commander of the OMON of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan. Within the framework of the US-Tajik cooperation, anti-terrorist training courses organized by the US State Department and training in a private military company "Blackwater" were held.

In August 2016, the US authorities announced a reward of \$ 3 million for the capture of Halimova. Since September 2016 Khalimov is the military leader (the "Minister of War") of the ISIS.

**Abu Lukman** is the "governor" of the ISIS in Raqqa and an influential figure in the hierarchy of militants, he is a member of the Shura Council.

Abu-Lukman was born in 1973 in the village of As-Sahl in the Syrian province of Rakka. He studied jurisprudence at the University of Aleppo.

Before the civil war in Syria, Abu Lukman was arrested by the authorities and held in Sednaya prison (Damascus).

In early 2014, he was the chief investigator of the ISIS in the province of Raqqa, and in April 2014 Abu Lukman took the post of "emir" of the province of Raqqa. In this position, he was responsible for appointing other leaders of the ISIS, he distributed foreign fighters for "katibam." The name of Abu Lukman is connected with numerous massacre of the ISIS over prisoners and hostages.

At the end of 2014, for security reasons he changed his name to Ali Musa Al-Shawakh.

In June 2015, he became governor of Aleppo and served as head of security in Syria.

**Turks al-Binali** - "supreme mufti" of the ISIS, an active propagandist of a terrorist and religious extremist ideology.

Al-Binali was born in 1984 in Bahrain in a rich and noble family which has close political ties with the ruling dynasty.

Before joining ISIS, al-Binali was repeatedly arrested in various Arab countries for taking part in religious extremist activities.

In 2013, he joined the ISIS and began to publish theological works that justify terrorist activities. In the works of Binali, the justification of the rape of Yezidi women who have fallen into slavery is contained. According to some reports, al-Binali is the head of the research group and the department of fatwa of the ISIS.

**Faisal Ahmad Bin Ali Az-Zahrani** - in May 2015 was the highest official of the oil and gas department of the ISIS.

Az-Zahrat was born in 1986 in Saudi Arabia.

He joined the ISIS in June 2014. In July of the same year, he began to work in the "Ministry of Natural Resources", which controls oil and gas trade on the territories controlled by the militants.

In January 2015, az-Zahrani was in charge of at least 5 oil fields in the province of El Baraka.

**Ahmed Chataev** (Ahmad Shishani, David Mayer, Elmir Sene) is one of the leaders of the ISIS, who organized in 2016 a terrorist attack at the Istanbul airport. Responsible for recruiting and outreach activities in relation to the Russian-speaking population of the CIS countries.

Chataev was born in 1980 in the village of Vedenov of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

He took part in hostilities on the side of illegal armed formations, was wounded (lost his arm), detained, released under an amnesty and granted refugee status in Austria.

On August 13, 2006, the Foreign Minister of the so-called "Chechen Republic of Ichkeria" A. Zakayev appointed Chataev the first deputy representative of CRI in the Austrian Republic.

In February 2015, Chataev went to Syria, where he joined the Islamists, who are fighting against government forces in Syria. There he commanded a detachment consisting of people from the North Caucasus, most of which in 2015 was destroyed by aircraft of the international coalition forces during the fighting for the Kurdish city of Kobani in northern Syria.

In October 2015, the UN recognized Chataev as a terrorist by including him in the sanctions list of those involved in the activities of the ISIS and Al Qaeda, and the UN Security Council recommended that the countries in the organization freeze its assets and ban entry. The US Department of the Treasury also contributed Ahmet Chatayev to his sanction antiterrorist list for his connection with the ISIS.