

JIHAD IN SYRIA: THE RISE OF JABHAT NUSRA

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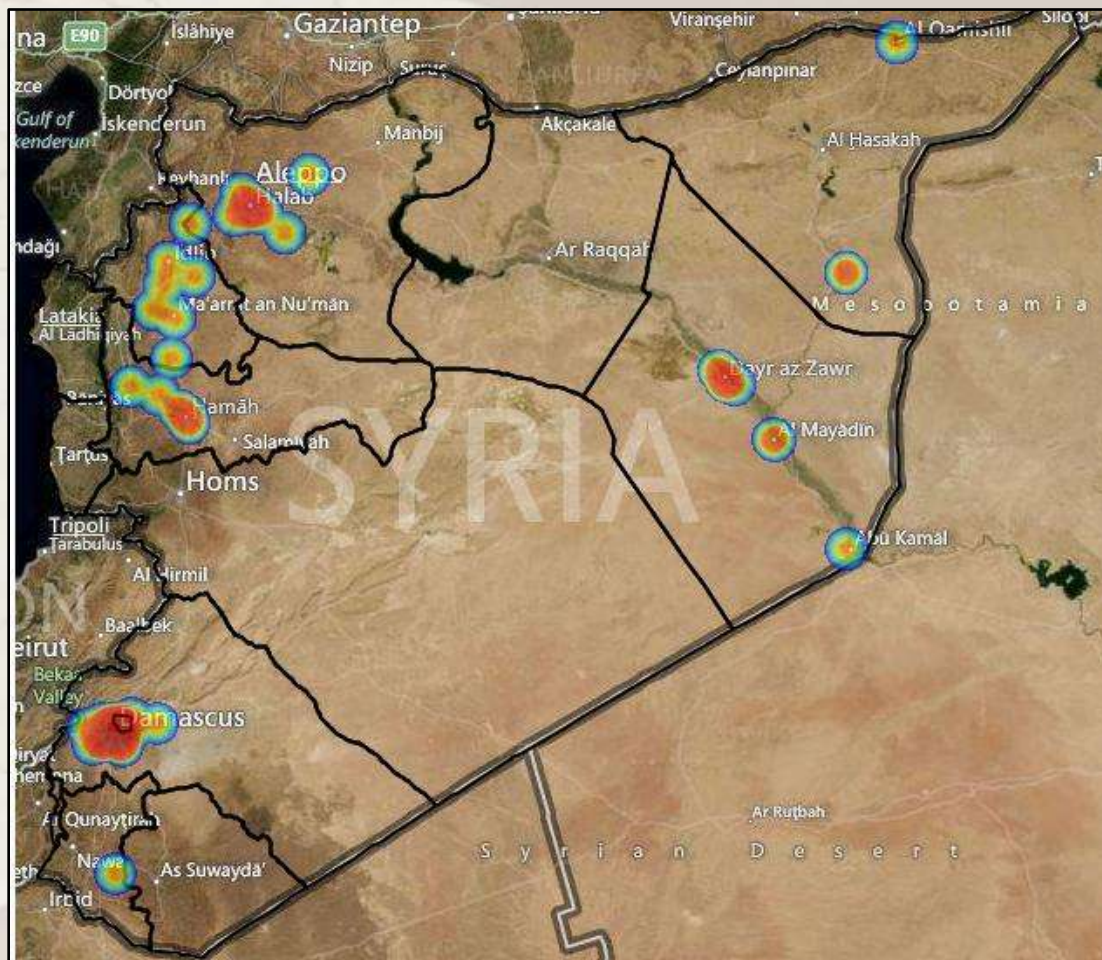
THE SPECTRUM OF RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY: JABHAT NUSRA, A SYRIAN SALAFIST ORGANIZATION

	SECULAR	ISLAMIST	SALAFIST
SY	 Free Syrian Army	 Suqour al-Sham	 Jabhat Nusra
FC		 Umma Brigade	 Ahrar al-Sham  Fatah al-Islam  al-Qaeda in Iraq  Abdullah Azzam

In cataloguing the various armed groups operating in Syria presently, it is important to distinguish them based upon their religious ideology. In particular, it is important to identify groups that ascribe to a Salafist ideology.

This chart lists a sample of prominent Syrian rebel units as well as foreign elements in Syria and where they fall along the spectrum of religious ideology. Jabhat Nusra is a Syrian Salafist organization that is increasing both its lethal capability and its popular base in Syria.

JABHAT NUSRA ATTACK TRENDS BY LOCATION: JANUARY 2012 - OCTOBER 2012



Significant Jabhat Nusra Attacks

January 6, Damascus – Suicide attack in al- Midan area.

February 10, Aleppo – Double suicide car bombing
At Syrian Security Forces building.

April 24, Damascus – Bombing of the Iranian Cultural
Center in al-Marjah Square.

April 27, Damascus - suicide attack in the al-Midan area.

May 5, Damascus - two IEDs planted under trucks at
the Syrian military headquarters.

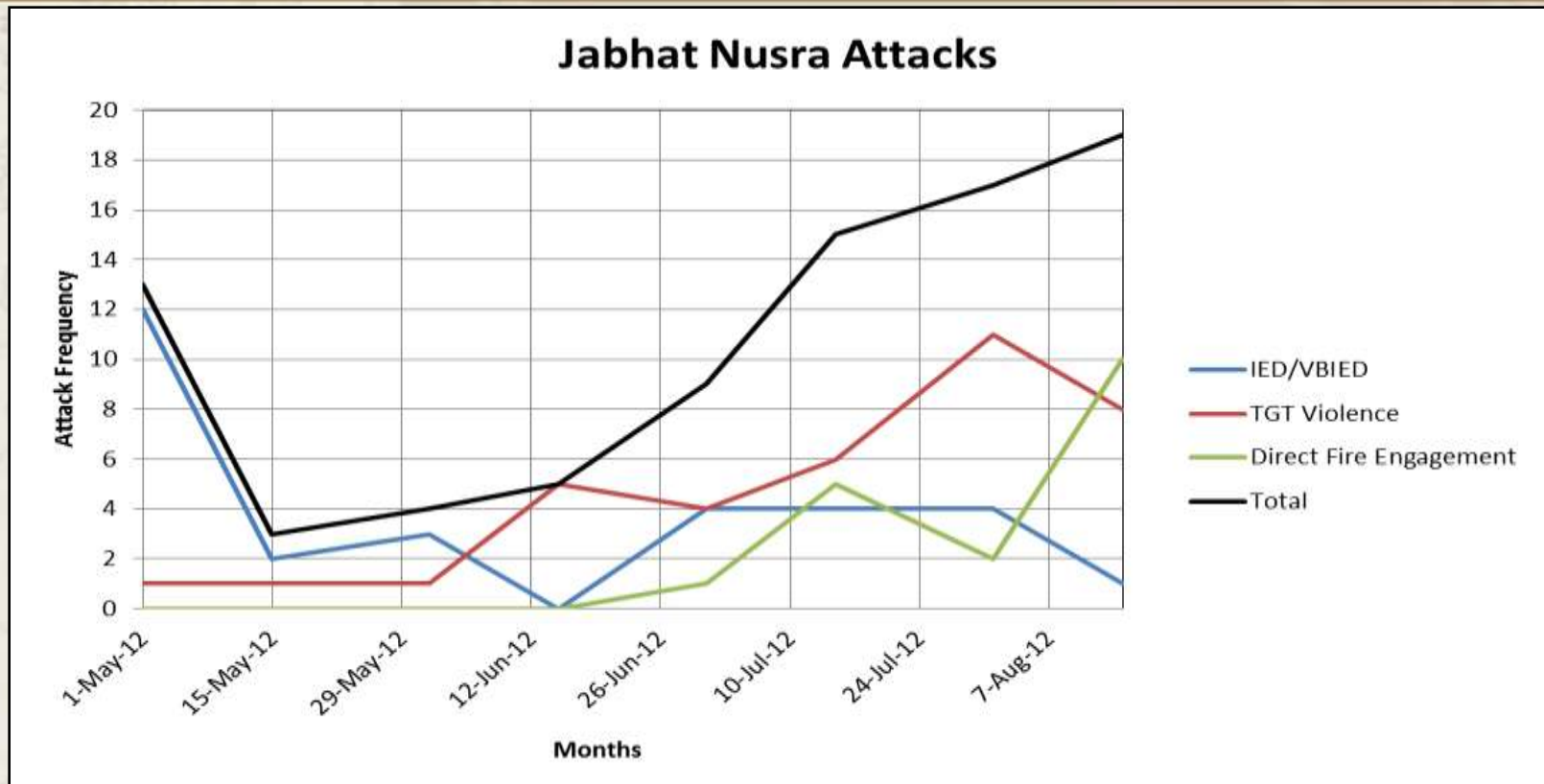
May 29, Deir ez-Zor - the capture and killing of 13 men
who they accused of being Syrian security officials.

June 27, Damascus - Raid and bombing of Ikhbariya HQ,
a pro-government Syrian TV channel.

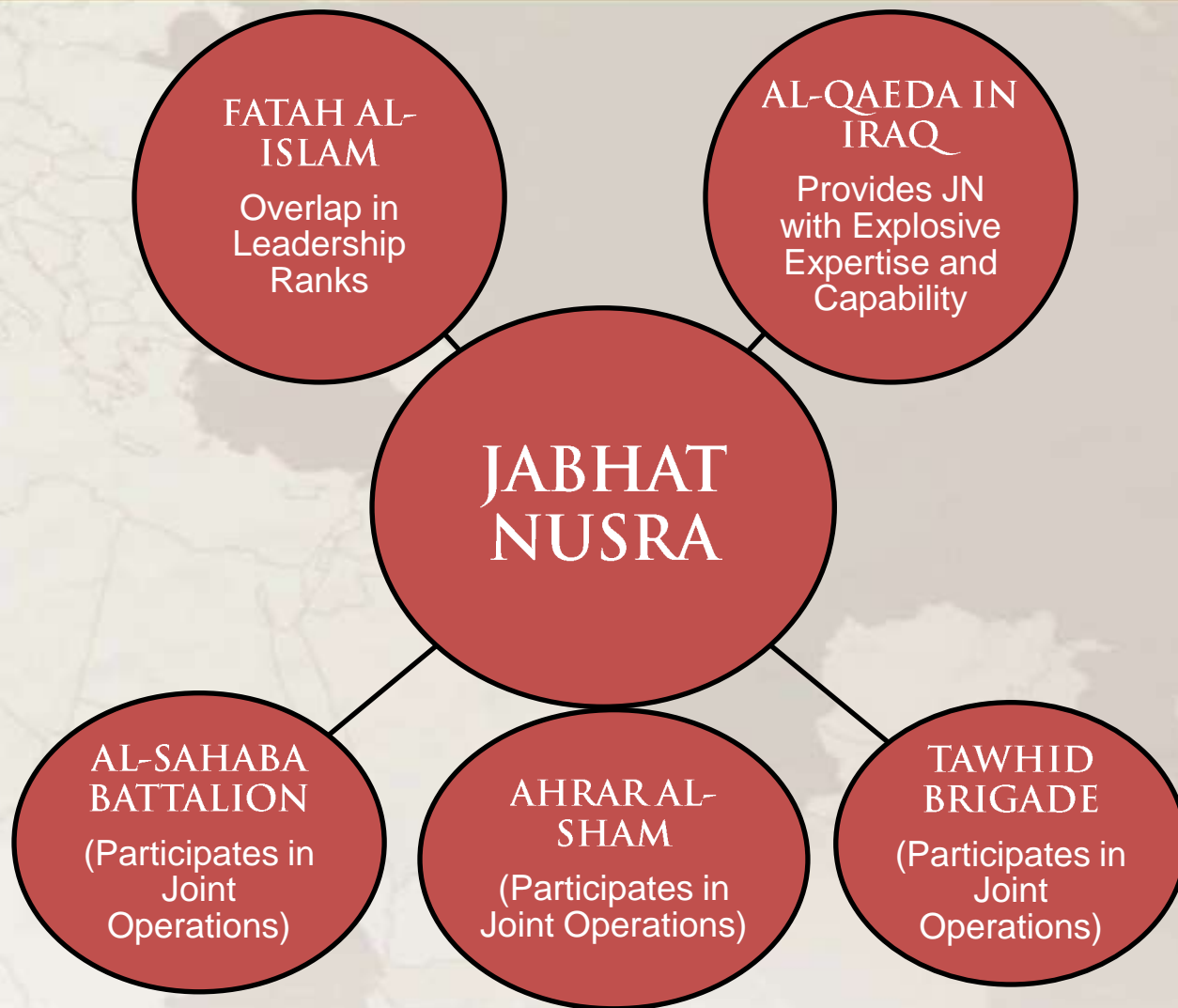
October 3, Aleppo – Car bomb against government
security forces center.

October 8, Damascus – Suicide car bomb targeting
Air Force Intelligence center.

JABHAT NUSRA ATTACK TRENDS BY TYPE: MAY 2012 – SEPTEMBER 2012



In May 2012, IED/VBIED attacks accounted for nearly all attacks attributed to Jabhat Nusra, though attacks trended sharply down mid-month and remained low until the beginning of June 2012. In June 2012, total attacks sharply increased, and this upward trend continued through September 2012. While an increase in targeted violence accounts for the initial rise in June, comparable increases in IED/VBIED and direct fire engagements followed, and by early July 2012 Jabhat Nusra attacks were evenly split among the three attack types. By mid-July, attacks again rose sharply, corresponding with a decrease in direct fire engagement. This trend reversed in August 2012, with direct fire engagements trending upwards and targeted violence and IED/VBIED trending down.





Despite Jabhat Nusra's radical ideology, the organization has gained a level of popular support. In June in the town of Binnish, northern Idlib province, Jabhat Nusra was extolled during a mass demonstration. Syrian opposition flags, Ahrar al-Sham brigade flags, and Jabhat Nusra flags were flown together during the demonstration.