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Jamiat ul-Ansar

(Also known as: Al-Faran, Al-Hadid, Al-Hadith, Harakat ul-Ansar, Harakat ul-Mujahideen; Harakat ul-Mujahidin)

This statement is based on publicly available information about Jamiat ul-Ansar (JuA), formerly known as Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HuM), a name that is still commonly used for the group. To the Australian Government's knowledge, this information is accurate and reliable and has been corroborated by classified information.

Basis for listing a terrorist organisation

Division 102 of the *Criminal Code* provides that for an organisation to be listed as a terrorist organisation, the Attorney-General must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the organisation:

- (a) is directly or indirectly engaged in, preparing, planning, assisting in or fostering the doing of a terrorist act (whether or not a terrorist act has occurred or will occur); or
- (b) advocates the doing of a terrorist act (whether or not a terrorist act has occurred or will occur).

Details of the organisation

Objectives

JuA seeks to unite all of Kashmir with Pakistan and establish a caliphate based on Islamic law. JuA has advocated the use of Pakistan's nuclear weapons against India, and opposes efforts to normalise relations between the two countries.

JuA has also pledged support for Afghan militants fighting Coalition forces in Afghanistan. This may have involved indirect assistance such as training militants or the travel of JuA-affiliated fighters to Afghanistan. Some elements within JuA have wanted to re-focus their activities to bring them more into line with global jihad inspired by al-Qa'ida against the United States (US) and Israel and their allies.

Leadership

The leader of JuA is Fazlur Rehman (sometimes Rahman) Khalil, (also known as Maulana Farzul Ahmed Khalil and Maulana Ahmed Khalil).

In 1991, Khalil and his followers split from Harakat ul-Jihad Islami (HuJI), a group that fought the Soviets in Afghanistan and later turned its attention to Indian-administered Kashmir, to form Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HuM). In 1993, HuM reunited with HuJI under the name Harakat ul-Ansar (HuA).

As a consequence of reports linking the group to al-Qa'ida, HuA was proscribed as a terrorist organisation by the US in 1997. The group re-adopted the name HuM to escape the ramifications of proscription.

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HuM was banned by both the US and Pakistan following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, and adopted the name Jamiat ul-Ansar (JuA). JuA was also subsequently banned by Pakistan in November 2003.

Membership

JuA has been reported to have a strength of no more than a few hundred, but exact membership numbers cannot be determined with accuracy. JuA's membership is mostly drawn from Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. However, JuA also has attracted recruits and provided training to Islamic militants from around the world, including Bangladesh, and South-East Asia, the United Kingdom (UK) and the US.

Terrorist activity of the organisation

Directly or indirectly engaged in terrorist acts

JuA has directly or indirectly engaged in a number of terrorist attacks. Incidents reliably attributed to JuA include:

- December 1999: An Indian airliner was hijacked en route from Nepal to India; one passenger was stabbed to death;
- 23 January 2002: US journalist Daniel Pearl was abducted and subsequently murdered on this date. Four people, including JuA member Ahmed Omar Sheikh, were convicted of Pearl's murder;
- 26 May 2004: JuA-trained members were among a number of militants drawn from several Pakistani extremist groups responsible for a twin car bomb attack near the US Consulate in Karachi;
- 9 June 2004: the same terrorist cell was involved in an attack against a convoy carrying Karachi's military commander, resulting in seven deaths;
- February 2007: a Hindu businessman was kidnapped in Pakistan's Sindh Province and subsequently beheaded ;
- February 2009: members of a terrorist cell with links to JuA and reportedly responsible for six attacks in Kabul, Afghanistan, were arrested; and
- 23 February 2010: two JuA members were among five militants killed by Indian security forces in Sopore, Kashmir; the militants blew up two houses in the battle with security forces.

Directly or indirectly preparing, planning and/or assisting in the doing of terrorist acts

JuA members and individuals trained by JuA, including individuals from Western countries, have been implicated in various disrupted terrorist attacks, including:

- 19 June 2005: several JuA trained individuals were arrested in Afghanistan as they were preparing to carry out acts of terrorism;

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- June 2005: two American citizens were arrested for suspected participation in an al-Qa'ida plot to attack the US. Both claimed to have attended a terrorist training camp run by JuA leader Khalil;
- December 2008: UK national Rangzieb Ahmed, who had confessed to membership in JuA, was convicted on terrorism charges; and
- 21 February 2013: three British nationals were convicted in London on terrorism charges for plotting to carry out terror attacks in the UK. Two of these individuals undertook terrorist training with JuA in Pakistan in 2009 and later trained with al-Qa'ida in Pakistan in 2011.

Reporting indicates JuA has encouraged, inspired and assisted like-minded individuals. Examples of this assistance include:

- JuA operated terrorist training camps in eastern Afghanistan prior to their destruction by Coalition air strikes in 2001;
- JuA camps in Pakistan have provided both religious instruction and military training and support to terrorist organisations and individuals from around the world;
- In 2004, individuals trained by JuA were arrested for their involvement in separate suicide car bomb attacks outside the US Consulate and the Sheraton Hotel in Karachi in May and June 2002, respectively;
- In 2004, individuals trained by JuA/HuM were arrested for a failed attempt to assassinate Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf with a remote-controlled car bomb in April 2002;
- Individuals trained at JuA/HuM facilities engaged in terrorist operations in Tajikistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s; and
- JuA/HuM reportedly helped facilitate training by members of the Pakistani diaspora in the UK in June 2003, some of whom may have intended to return home to conduct terrorism-related activities.

Directly or indirectly fostering/advocating the doing of terrorist acts

JuA has made statements advocating the conduct of terrorist attacks against Coalition forces in Afghanistan and at least one political figure in India.

- Following his release from Pakistani detention in 2006, JuA/HuM leader Khalil reportedly visited JuA/HuM-linked mosques and madrassas in Pakistan, advocating jihad against Coalition forces in Afghanistan.
- On 4 February 2009, a death threat reportedly attributed to JuA was posted on the website of India's leader of the opposition and prime ministerial candidate L.K. Advani.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above information, ASIO assesses JuA is directly and/or indirectly engaged in, preparing, planning, assisting in or fostering the doing of terrorist acts and/or advocates the doing of terrorist acts involving threats to human life and serious damage to property.

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In the course of pursuing its objectives, JuA is known to have engaged in acts that:

- cause, or could cause, serious damage to property or the death of persons, or endanger a person's life or create a serious risk to a person's safety;
- are intended to have those effects;
- are done with the intention of advancing JuA's political, religious or ideological causes; and
- are done with the intention of intimidating sections of the public globally.

This assessment is corroborated by information provided by reliable intelligence sources.

Other relevant information

Links to other terrorist groups or networks

JuA has cooperated with other militant groups operating in Afghanistan, Kashmir and Pakistan such as Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan.

JuA leader Khalil has strong ties to the Taliban and al-Qa'ida, and in 1998, he signed Usama bin Laden's fatwa calling for attacks on the US and its allies.

Proscription by the UN and other countries

JuA is listed in the United Nations Security Council 1267 (al-Qa'ida) Sanctions Committee's consolidated list and by the governments of Canada, the UK, the US and Pakistan.

Peace and mediation processes

JuA has not been a party to any peace discussions with the Indian Government.