“Why Terrorist Groups Pledge Allegiance to Al-Qaida or ISIS”

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Terrorist organizations across the world have been responsible for more than 8,500 attacks in 2017, and have resulted in the deaths of 19,000 people and the wounding of nearly 20,000 others, according to the U.S. State Department’s 2018 Statistical Annex Report.¹ Although the overall number of terrorist attacks has decreased for the last years, the number of casualties resulting from these specific attacks remains high largely because terrorist groups continue to use a wide variety of weapons.

The salafi-jihadist groups and Maoist groups are two types of terrorist groups listed as the most active top-threat terrorist groups in the world. The top 10 terrorist groups by the number of terrorist incidents in 2017 listed seven jihadist groups, two Maoist groups,² and one separatist³ group.⁴ Most of salafi-jihadist groups are affiliated either ISIS or al-Qaida. The fact that ISIS have been defeated in Syria have resulted in the creation of new jihadist groups. They have pledged ISIS or al Qaida.

In 2018, more than 20 groups have declared loyalty to ISIS and al Qaida. While the groups in eastern Asia and northern Africa have preferred ISIS, the groups in conflict zones have leaned to al Qaida. The groups from both sides have confronted in Afghanistan, Somalia, and Syria. The presentation will list affiliated groups to ISIS and Al Qaida and analyze what leads terrorist groups to pledge allegiance to these umbrella organizations. Also, the presentation will speak about future trends.

³ Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) made 159 attacks in 2017. “Global Terrorism in 2017”
⁴ Ibid.