

# The changing face of Terrorism

By Dave Crozier

*Spc. Valerie A. Garcia posed as the model for this graphic by Dave Crozier and Spc. Joseph Edmondson.*

“Although women represent a fraction of terrorists worldwide, it is naïve to assume they’re not recruited to violent extremists groups. Women are responsible for one-third of the suicide attacks perpetrated by the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, and two-thirds of those by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party. Women have founded and led terrorist groups, hijacked planes, served on all-female tank units, blown up buildings and assassinated national leaders. What is new is that women are participating in attacks on behalf of organizations that promote Islamic causes.”

Jessica Stern, lecturer at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, in an opinion piece printed in the *Washington Post* on Dec. 18, 2003.

The next rotation of Operation Iraqi Freedom Soldiers will be transitioning into theater just in time for the elections. This will be a time when some experts say that hostilities will increase and Soldiers might see a change in terrorists’ tactics.

“The individual Soldier is the most capable, sophisticated collector of intelligence in today’s Army. To fully harness this capability, we must ensure “Every Soldier is a Sensor” (ES2). One impetus for the Army’s emphasis on the Warrior Ethos is the recognition that “rear areas” no longer exist. Just as Soldiers must be prepared to fight as infantry, they must also serve as intelligence collectors. In Iraq and Afghanistan, Soldiers are immersed in a dynamic operating environment.” This statement was taken from a discussion paper on key issues that the Army sees as relevant to the current force. As “Sensors” Soldiers also need to be sensitive to the changing face of terrorism.

Ellen Goodman, a columnist with the Boston Globe begs the question, “Tender terrorists?” Leela Jacinto, a journalist

writing for *ABCNEWS.com*, coined them “Jihad’s Girl Power.” Practically every news organization in the free world referred to the Chechen female terrorists as “Black Widows.” All of the reports, while documenting the violence, seem to minimize the impact and severity of female involvement in terrorist activities, or at least try to establish a gentler defense for it. Rita Katz, director of the Search for International Terrorist Entities (SITE) Institute, an organization that seeks out and reports on terrorist organizations throughout the world, said she believes these “Female Jihadis,” or holy warriors, are more radical than their male counterparts and are a growing component of the terrorist world.

“We have seen interviews with women whose sons were killed, and they said they wished their other children would be killed also; that there is nothing more for them to wish for than being a mother of a martyr,” Katz said. “There was one women whose son, fighting with Al Qaeda, was injured and she wished that he was dead instead. It is things like that which makes women seem even more radical and willing to go far, very far.”

And now Al Qaeda is actively recruiting women into its ranks, something that was not part of the norm for the terror organization, Katz explained.



File photo

*Wafa Idris, right, became the first female Palestinian bomber in 2002 when she blew herself up in the center of Jerusalem.*

“There is no doubt that we are seeing more women involved in the [terrorist] war; not that it is a brand new phenomenon either. We know that terrorist organizations, especially the Palestinian organization have used women in the past, but this is a new phenomenon where we see this relationship with Al Qaeda,” Katz said. “Part of that reason is that when Al Qaeda was associated with the Taliban they could not have allowed this because of the Taliban opinion about women – seeing women as nothing more than another product and not something that has any brain they can use for anything.”

Al Qaeda’s new recruiting tool – a webzine entitled Al Khansaa – is named after revered female Arab poet who converted to Islam during the time of the prophet Muhammad and wrote eulogies for her brother and also encouraged her four sons to take part in the jihad to spread Islam. Her sons died in battle.

An editorial passage in the new webzine, which surfaced in August of 2004, reads, “We will stand covered in our veils and abayas, with our weapons in our hands and our children in our arms. The blood of our husbands, and the limbs of our children are our offering to God.” The magazine also talks of female military training camps where future Mudjahidats, the feminine for Mujahadeen, can learn how to use weapons.

Katz explained that she believes Al Qaeda, by recruiting women, is showing that it understands women are very important from the sense that they can infiltrate the enemy better than the men, especially when they (coalition forces) are not looking for women.

“When you think about the women and how they are

dressed, they are wearing this special outfit, the big dress, the long dress; it is easy to hide things on their bodies,” she said. “It is so easy for women to get it done. For one, you are looking for men and when you see a woman walking with children, or a pregnant, woman no one is going to suspect that she might actually be loaded with explosives.”

Jessica Stern, lecturer at Harvard



File photo

**On Feb. 27, 2002, 21-year-old Dareen Abu Aisheh detonaed explosives strapped to her waist at a Maccabim checkpoint. Her actions only slightly injured the two policemen at the checkpoint.**



**Two magazines that help to spread the word for the terrorists are the newly created Webzine, Al-Khansaa, left, and Al-Battar. Al-Khansaa is the new vehicle being used to recruit women into the Jihad, while Al-Battar is Al-Qaeda’s biweekly online training manual that is used to educate terrorist cells on activities that range from properly using weapons and planning attacks, to building improvised explosive devices and setting land mines.**

chaperones,” Stern said. “Sheik Yusuf Qaradawi, dean of Islamic studies at the University of Qatar and leading Islamic scholar, removed even these strictures, declaring, that ‘women’s participation in martyrdom operations is one of the most praised acts of worship.’”

Stern added the Sheik went on to say that women could go out for jihad even without the permission of her husband and may, if necessary, travel without male chaperones and veils.

Soldiers going into Iraq or Afghanistan for the first time, or even if they have been there before, should be cognizant of this, Katz explains.

University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government and author of the book, *Terror in the Name of God*, agrees.

“The dress code for devout Muslim women and norms regarding body searches could make it easier for women to hide weapons. Women still arouse less fear and suspicion when it comes to physical violence and as a result they often receive less attention,” she explained. Stern also said that the traditional opposition for the use of female martyrs has seen erosion in recent years.

“In responding to the first female suicide-bombing attack in Israel in January 2002, Sheik Ahmed Yassin, spiritual leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas, seemed to soften on this when he said that women could participate in such attacks if there were no men available, provided they were accompanied by male



File photo

**On Oct. 2003, 29-year-old Hanadi Tayseer Jaradat killed 19 people in an attack on a Haifa restaurant and became the fifth woman to carry out such an attack since the current intifada began. Jaradat, a trainee lawyer, was only days away from qualifying as a lawyer.**

“The Soldiers need to understand that the women are a part of this, and they have an important part to contribute,” she said. “It has always been stated in [the terrorist organizations’] publications saying that women have to educate the new generation for jihad and martyrdom, and that women have an important role, this is just taking it to the next step.”

Soldiers going to Iraq or Afghanistan also need to be aware of the facts that the terrorist network is quite extensive; the terrorists are very educated and that attacks can come from anywhere.

“In Iraq today, you can’t really tell where [an attack] is going to come from. [The terrorists] are basically everywhere. It may even be little kids. This is what we are seeing. Their videos and propaganda are all over the Internet showing how they are attacking American targets everywhere,” Katz said. “Their explosives abilities are just unbelievable, and they are also up-to-date on the technology we are using. That is very scary.”

Katz said that many messages appear on the internet relating to American Soldiers, and what they are using to fight the war with.

“They really know what we are doing. We know less about what they are doing, and that is why it is so scary, and they are so successful,” she said. “In the situation we have there today, it is very difficult to tell who is a good guy or a bad guy. That’s the

part that makes it so difficult because you really don’t know where it is coming from.”

One thing that Katz said every Soldier in or deploying to Iraq should be aware of is that there will be more attacks on coalition and Iraqi forces during the upcoming election.

“We are going to see more and more attacks because it goes to the reason for most of their attacks; to cause instability in Iraq. They really don’t want the American Soldiers to leave. That’s their bottom line,” Katz said. “They understand that if we stay there, they attack us financially, and it is also the best way for them to attack us, both economically and physically.”

While Soldiers in the field prepare for the increased threats of violence surrounding the pending Iraqi elections, they can take heed of Goodman’s remarks in her September 23 Boston Globe column, *The sexes aren’t so different* – “Today in the Middle East there is a new comic book with the first Super Heroine. And there is an online magazine recruiting Islamic women to the jihad. It’s said that Osama bin Laden is wooing women to suicidal missions. In places where women are by no means liberated, they are offered the equal opportunity to blow themselves and others to smithereens. ‘I am woman, hear me roar.’ It’s not always a pretty tune.”

# Headlining the news on terrorism

## Government bulletin details how Al-Qaeda sizes up potential targets

**Associated Press** Dec. 31

A new government intelligence bulletin describes in the greatest detail yet Al-Qaeda’s techniques for assessing potential targets, extolling the lethal power of flying, shattered building glass and advising that kerosene and tires are effective for a deadly arson attack.

“The focus is on maximizing the destructive and killing power of an attack,” the bulletin says.

It provides a fresh glimpse of terrorist reports found in computers and disks seized in Pakistan in July. The reports described the casing by terrorists of several buildings in the United States and prompted U.S. authorities to raise the terror threat level in early 2004 for high-profile financial facilities in New York, Washington and Newark, N.J.

## General: Insurgents growing more effective

**Associated Press** Dec. 16

Iraqi insurgents are growing more effective, and it will take time to get U.S. troops the \$4 billion in armor they need for protection, defense officials said. “This is not Wal-Mart,” one general said.

## Pentagon: All vehicles armored by June

**Chicago Tribune** Dec. 16

Pentagon officials, confronting a growing furor that has thrown the military on the defensive, have begun firing back at

those questioning whether it has supplied enough armored vehicles in Iraq.

As part of the offensive, an Army general said Wednesday the military will spend more than \$4 billion to ensure that all U.S. military vehicles in the war zone carry protective armor by June.

## Al-Zarqawi claims Baghdad attack

**Al-Jazeera** Dec. 13

Fighters loyal to Al-Qaeda-linked Abu Musab al-Zarqawi have claimed responsibility for a bomb attack in Baghdad early on Monday in which at least seven people were killed and up to 19 wounded. A police officer said the blast occurred when a car that had been waiting in line to enter the Green Zone in central Baghdad exploded as it drove up to a checkpoint.

## Terrorists using new technology: Keelty

**Australian Associated Press** Dec. 7

Criminals and terrorists are using rapidly advancing technology to wreak havoc far beyond their own countries’ borders, Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty says.

## Musharraf says ‘we have broken back of Al-Qaeda’ in Pakistan

**Agence France Presse** Dec. 6

The Pakistani authorities have “broken the back” of Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda network in Pakistan after virtually removing its operatives from the cities and the mountains, President Pervez Musharraf declared while visiting Britain.

# Checking your terrorism 'six'

## Suicide Terrorism

Suicide Terrorism is defined as the readiness to sacrifice one's life in the process of destroying or attempting to destroy a target to advance a political or personal goal. The main goal is to inflict devastating physical damage and have a negative psychological impact on an entire population.

## Trends

Increased use of females since mid 1990s.  
Ages: primarily late teens to late 20s, attractive, young, well-educated - just as dedicated as male counterparts and also attract less attention.  
Viewed as less threatening, have used disguises including that of being a nurse or being pregnant. Dress to blend in or not attract attention.

## Methods of delivery

Individual - wearing or carrying explosives.  
Confined public areas, at checkpoints.  
Vehicle borne IED - cars, trucks, boats, planes, etc.

## Terrorist mindset

Martyrdom mentality - grooming of younger generation. Revered as martyrs by peers, notion of ticket to everlasting happiness in afterlife.  
Revenge - retaliation for death/injury of friends or family. Attacks against occupying forces or those not aligned with their beliefs.  
Feeling of despair - belief that they have no future. They feel their life or death is out of their control.

## Al Qaeda

No incidents involving female suicide bombers to date. Females are increasingly being used in support roles. Recent arrests and raids on Al Qaeda have found female clothing believed to be disguises.

## Al Qaeda

Mid March 03 - In an Arabic-language newspaper article Umm Osama claimed Al Qaeda was setting up training camps for women to become martyrs. Osama's job was to oversee the training of female mujahedeen affiliated with Al Qaeda and the Taliban using the Arabic word for holy warriors.  
Increased interest following Palestinian and Chechen female suicide bombers.

## Al Qaeda

Organization is open to all Muslim women wanting to serve the (Islamic) nation.  
Women will not only be trained for martyr operations but will also receive training:  
\* In weapons such as the Kalashnikov, grenades and assault rifles.  
\* Provide logistical and intelligence support to the mujahedeen.

## Defending against

Trust your instincts. Look for out of the ordinary - young pregnant woman who lacks a glow, carries no purse, enters and walks directly to center of a crowded area, establishment.

## Defending against suicide bombers

Ensure standoff distances of at least 100 feet (300 preferred) between vehicles and facilities, and control traffic by using bollards or reinforced planters.  
Schedule in advance all deliveries and inspect trucks prior to entering a secured area. If possible deliveries should be scheduled during non-business hours or when facility/establishment is not heavily occupied.

## Defending against

Maintain a high visibility security presence with uniform officers patrolling all areas. Inspect allowable hand-carried articles, require coats be opened or removed when entering secure areas, buildings.

## Defending against suicide bombers

Private and semi-private facilities should issue employee/tenant ID badges and require visitors to sign in/out.  
Install adequate security lighting and maintain landscaping in a manner that will provide unobstructed lines of sight.  
Remove outside trash receptacles in close proximity of facilities.  
Be observant for potential surveillance of your facility (most attacks are planned).  
Report unattended packages, bags, and briefcases.