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Osama bin Laden Audio
Release Analysis – v1.1
Sunday, 4 January 2004
15:27:26 EST / 20:27:26 GMT

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NOTE:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the course of January 2002 to December 2003, Osama bin Laden released six audio tapes. All but two of these tapes preceded al-Qaeda attacks by 1-43 days. Every major al-Qaeda attack during these two years were preceded by the release of an Osama bin Laden audio tape with the exception of the attack on the French oil tanker Limburg off the coast of Yemen and the attack on the synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia. In the case of the Limburg attack, the tape was released the following day. It is not clear if this was the intended release date or if the tape's release was unintentionally delayed. While the attack on the synagogue was an al-Qaeda operation, a number of different factors point to it not being part of the group's core series of major operations. This is one possible reason as to why there was not an audio tape released prior to the attack.

The release of Osama bin Laden audio messages appears to be a significant indicator of near-term attacks. The seventh audio tape to be released since January 2002 was aired on al-Jazeera on 4 January 2004. The release of this audio tape combined with other current threat reporting indicates a significant risk of a major al-Qaeda attack occurring between 4 Jan. 2004 and 2 Feb. 2004.

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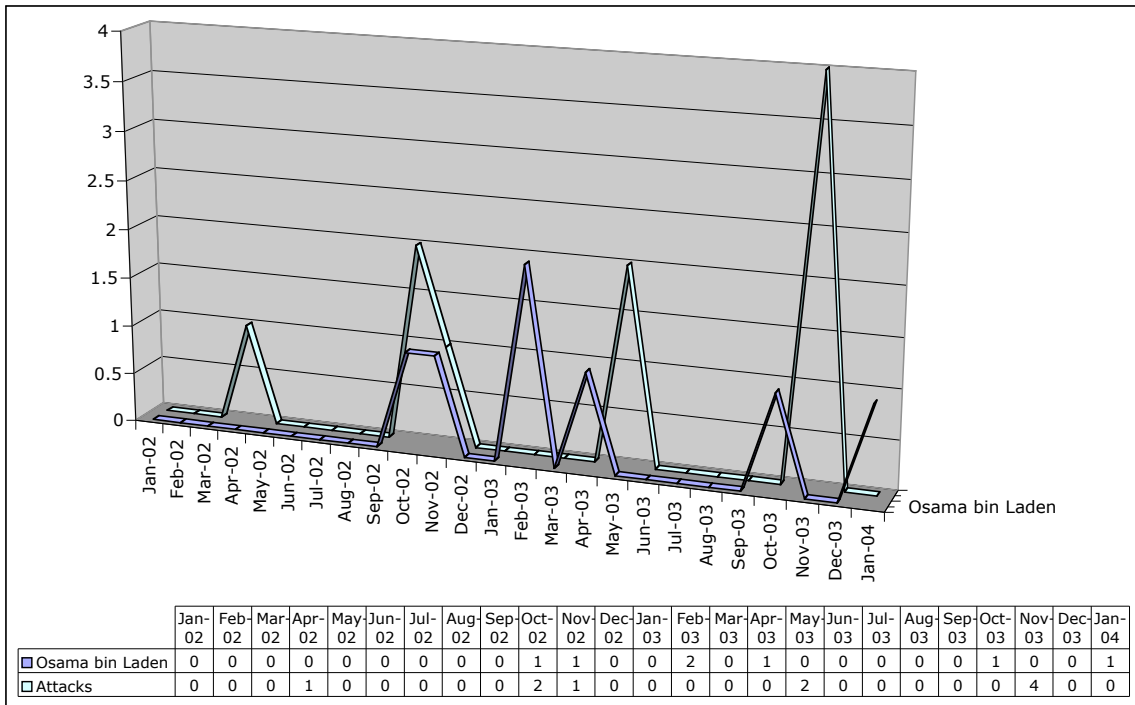
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CHART SHOWING OBL AUDIO RELEASES & ATTACKS



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OSAMA BIN LADEN AUDIO TAPES

For the purpose of this analysis, messages from Osama bin Laden that were issued as written communiqués, as parts of books, that appeared in videos or in any other form were not considered. The analysis only looks at audio messages that were delivered solely as such.

In cases where only a month is given for the release date, the first of the month was used for calculating the window from the time of release to the execution of an attack. In all likelihood the tapes were released later than the first. Consequently, the window may be much shorter than 43 days on the long side.

In addition, multiple attacks occurring within days of each other were grouped together. For example, if three attacks occurred within one week, that does not mean, according to our Executive Summary, that Osama bin Laden released three separate audio tapes but rather that an audio tape appeared before the wave began. The date of the last attack in the wave was used for calculating the window.

The release dates of the audio messages considered are listed below:

7 October 2002
12 November 2002
February 2003
11 February 2003
April 2003
18 October 2003
4 January 2004

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ATTACKS

The attacks factored into this analysis along with dates are listed below.

- 11 April 2002 – Crashing of Fuel Truck into Synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia
- 6 October 2002 – Bombing of Limburg Oil Tanker off Coast of Yemen
- 8 October 2002 – Shooting Targeting US Marines in Failaka, Kuwait
- 28 November 2002 – SAM strike & Vehicular Bombing in Mombasa, Kenya
- 12/13 May 2003 – Vehicular Bombing of Housing Compound in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- 16 May 2003 – Suicide Bombing in Casablanca, Morocco
- 8 November 2003 – Vehicular Bombing of al-Muhaya Housing Compound in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- 12 November 2003 – Vehicular Bombing of Italian HQ in Nasiriyah, Iraq
- 15 November 2003 – Vehicular Bombing of Synagogues in Istanbul, Turkey
- 20 November 2003 – Vehicular Bombing of HSBC Bank HQ & UK Consulate

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