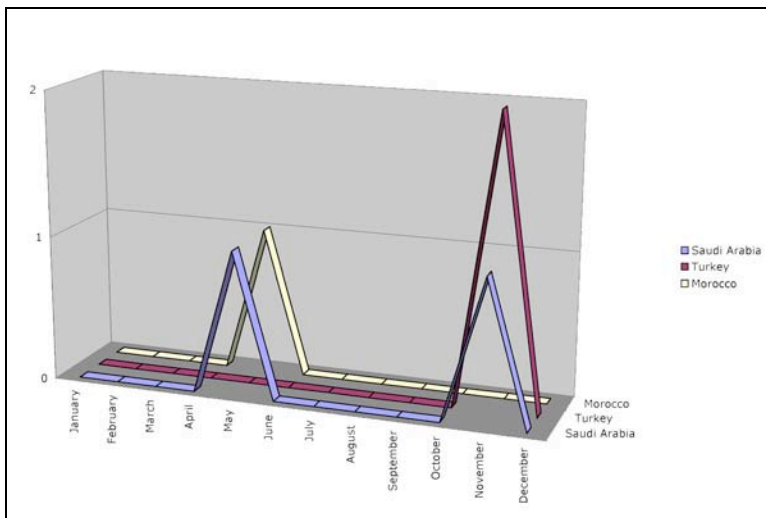




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al-Qaeda Operational Tempo – Madrid Follow-on Attack Assessment – v1.0 Sun, 14 March 2004 00:00:00 EST / 05:00:00 GMT

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NOTE:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An apparent credible claim of responsibility by al-Qaeda for the 11 March Madrid train bombings was made on 13 March. Taking this into consideration and the marked increase in al-Qaeda's operational tempo post 9-11, there is a significant risk of large-scale follow-on attacks occurring in Spain and/or other targeted countries in the coming days and weeks.

INCREASED OPS TEMPO/MADRID FOLLOW-ON ATTACKS

On 13 March 2004, a videotape was obtained by Spanish authorities which appears to contain a credible claim of responsibility for the 11 March Madrid train bombings. The speaker on the tapes identifies himself as Abu Dujan al-Afghani and says that he is the military spokesman for al-Qaeda in Europe. Al-Afghani says, "We declare our responsibility for what happened in Madrid exactly 2 1/2 years after the attacks on New York and Washington, it is a response to your collaboration with the criminals Bush and his allies. ... This is a response to the crimes that you caused in the world, and specifically in Iraq and Afghanistan, and there will be more if God wills it."

As a result of al-Qaeda's increased operational tempo, there is a significant risk of large-scale follow-on attacks occurring in Spain and/or other targeted countries in the coming days and weeks. Follow-on attacks would be consistent with activity trends seen after every major strike by al-Qaeda in 2003. Follow-on strikes may be conducted directly by al-Qaeda or affiliated groups.

Prior to 9-11 al-Qaeda successfully executed major operations at a rate of about one every 1-2 years and conducted little or no low-level attacks of significance. In the post-9-11 period, the rate of attack has more than doubled. With two major attacks in 2002 and

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five major attacks in 2003. In addition, the group has initiated a second-tier of low-level operations such as the shooting in Failaka, Kuwait against US Marines and the crashing of a fuel truck into a synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia. Al-Qaeda affiliates have also stepped up their operational activity to a level never before seen. We can no longer expect 12-month periods to pass between attacks.

In 2002, there were only 53 days between the attack on the French-flagged oil tanker, The Limburg, and the SAM attack and vehicular bombings that occurred in Mombasa, Kenya. During May 2003, there were only three days between the vehicular bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and the suicide bombings in Casablanca, Morocco. In November of 2003 there were only seven days between the Riyadh attack and the attack against the synagogues in Istanbul, Turkey. It took only another five days then for the group to launch a second round of strikes against targets in Istanbul, specifically the HSBC Bank HQ and the British Consulate.

Al-Qaeda has not only dramatically shortened the period of time between major operations to as little as three days, it has also demonstrated its ability to hit targets repeatedly in the same country during the same year and in as short a period as five days. Both Turkey and Saudi Arabia suffered two major attacks in 2003. In the case of Saudi Arabia, even extensive raids, arrests, seizures and the deaths of al-Qaeda operatives did not prevent the group from successfully executing an attack.

Speaking about its operational tempo in a book released on 3 September 2003, entitled "The Attack of 11 Rabi 1: The Operation of East Riyadh and Our War with America and Its Allies", al-Qaeda wrote, "It is necessary to realize that the al-Qaeda organization in its war with Americans relies on strategically expanding the domain of the battle and the exhaustion of the enemy, which imposes its interests over the world, with successive and varied attacks. The rate of attacks before 9-11 was one operation every two years but after the blessed Manhattan attack the rate increased to more than two operations per year and the battlefield expanded, priceless advantages. So the enemy that needed only to protect its own land now needs to protect its vast interests in every land. Every time the rate of attack changes their exhaustion grows."

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MAJOR ATTACKS BY AL-QAEDA

(Does not cover low-level al-Qaeda Ops or Affiliate Ops)*

- 7 August 1998 - Vehicular Bombings - US Embassies in Kenya & Tanzania
- 12 October 2000 - Vehicular Bombing - USS Cole - Aden, Yemen
- 11 September 2001 - Piloted Vehicular Assaults - WTC, Pentagon, US Capitol (failed) - US
- 6 October 2002 - Vehicular Bombing - The Limburg (French oil tanker) - Mukalla, Yemen
- 28 November 2002 - Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) Attack - Israeli Arkia Flight 582 - Mombasa, Kenya
- 28 November 2002 - Vehicular Bombing - Kikambala Paradise Hotel (Israeli-owned) - Mombasa, Kenya
- 13 May 2003 – Vehicular, Suicide Bombings – Jedawal, al-Hamra & Cordoval Compound – Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- 16 May 2003 – Suicide Bombings – Restaurant (Israeli ownership), Spain House (Spanish social club/restaurant), Israeli Alliance Circle Club, Farah Maghreb Hotel, Jewish Cemetery – Casablanca, Morocco
- 8 November 2003 - Vehicular Bombing - Muhaya Housing Compound - Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- 15 November 2003 - Vehicular Bombings - Neve Shalom & Beth Israel Synagogue - Istanbul, Turkey
- 20 November 2003 - Vehicular Bombings - HSBC Bank HQ & British Consulate - Istanbul, Turkey

* We have deliberately left out attacks occurring in Afghanistan and Iraq for the time being.

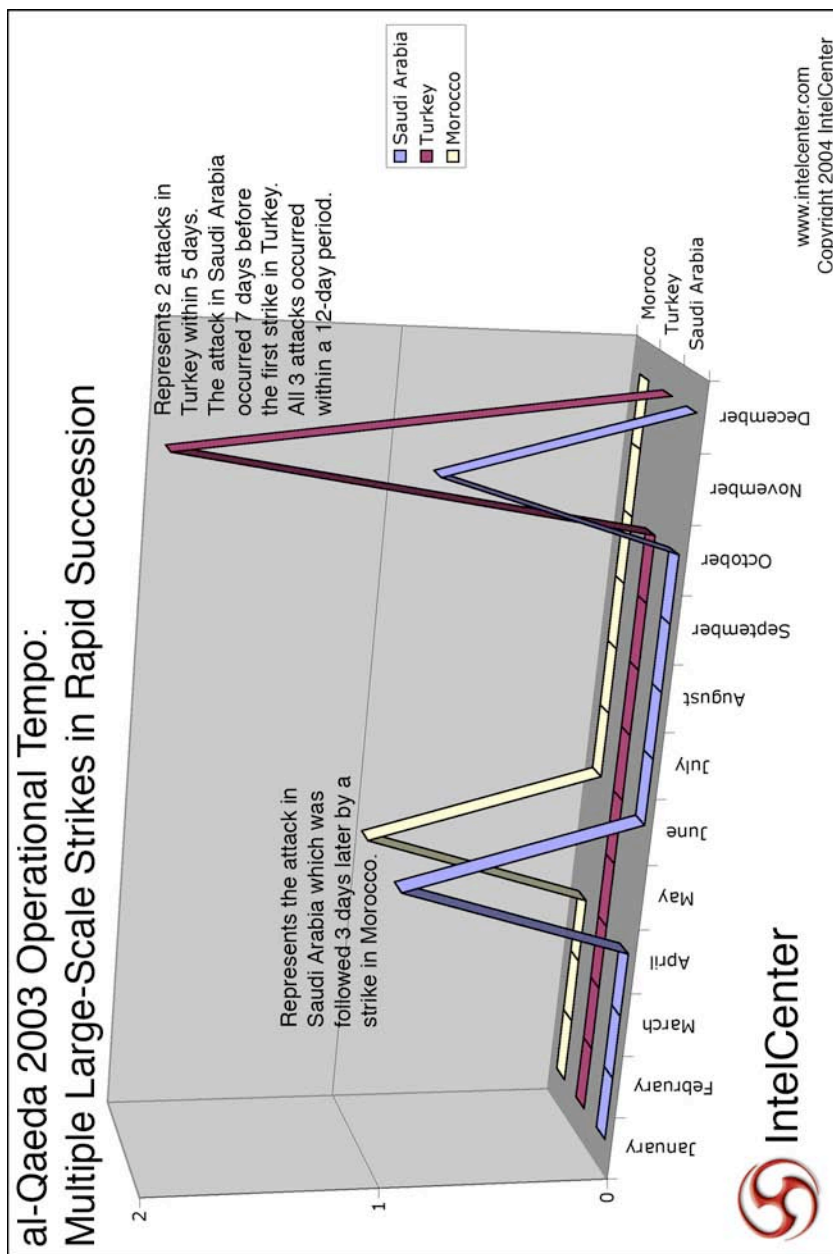
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