



## Terrorist Designations of the al-Nusra Front as an Alias for al-Qa'ida in Iraq

### Press Statement

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The Department of State has amended the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and Executive Order (E.O.) 13224 designations of al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) to include the following new aliases: al-Nusra Front, Jabhat al-Nusra, Jabhet al-Nusra, The Victory Front, and Al-Nusra Front for the People of the Levant. The Department of State previously designated AQI as an FTO under the Immigration and Nationality Act and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under E.O. 13224 on October 15, 2004. The consequences of adding al-Nusra Front as a new alias for AQI include a prohibition against knowingly providing, or attempting or conspiring to provide, material support or resources to, or engaging in transactions with, al-Nusra Front, and the freezing of all property and interests in property of the organization that are in the United States, or come within the United States or the control of U.S. persons.

Since November 2011, al-Nusra Front has claimed nearly 600 attacks – ranging from more than 40 suicide attacks to small arms and improvised explosive device operations – in major city centers including Damascus, Aleppo, Hamah, Dara, Homs, Idlib, and Dayr al-Zawr. During these attacks numerous innocent Syrians have been killed. Through these attacks, al-Nusra has sought to portray itself as part of the legitimate Syrian opposition while it is, in fact, an attempt by AQI to hijack the struggles of the Syrian people for its own malign purposes. AQI emir Abu Du'a is in control of both AQI and al-Nusra. Abu Du'a was designated by the State Department under E.O. 13224 on October 3, 2011, and by the United Nations under UN Security Council Resolution 1267 on October 5, 2011. Abu Du'a also issues strategic guidance to al-Nusra's emir, Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, and tasked him to begin operations in Syria.

The United States takes this action in the context of our overall support for the Syrian people. We have provided approximately \$50 million in non-lethal assistance to the unarmed civilian opposition and nearly \$200 million in humanitarian assistance to those affected by the violence in Syria. The violent, sectarian vision of al-Nusra is at odds with the aspirations of the Syrian people, including the overwhelming majority of the Syrian opposition, who seek a free, democratic, and inclusive Syria and have made clear their desire for a government that respects and advances national unity, dignity, human rights, and equal protection under the law – regardless of faith, ethnicity, or gender. Extremism and terrorist ideology have no place in a post-Asad Syria, and all responsible Syrians should speak out against al-Qa'ida and other extremist elements. By opting for the use of force against its own people, the Asad regime has created the circumstances that attract the violent extremists of al Qa'ida, who seek to exploit civil strife for their own purposes. The sooner the political transition to a post-Asad Syria begins, the better it will be for the Syrian people and the region.

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