

(b)(1)  
(b)(3)  
EO 12958 1.4(b)<25Yrs  
EO 12958 1.4(c)<25Yrs  
EO 12958 1.4(d)<25Yrs  
EO 12958 1.4(e)<25Yrs  
EO 12958 3.5(c)

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

SENIOR EXECUTIVE INTELLIGENCE BRIEF  
6 February 2001  
[redacted]

[redacted] **Sunni Terrorist Threat Growing** [redacted]

*The discovery of multiple terrorist plots [redacted] shows an energized international "jihad movement" is raising the threat to US interests, particularly in the Middle East and Europe. Usama Bin Ladin remains the most influential figure in the movement, which includes Egyptian and North African terrorist groups and mujahidin fighting in areas such as Chechnya, Kashmir, and Central Asia.*

- The newly detected plots represent the most significant spike in the network's terrorist activity since the time of the millennium. [redacted] linked to Bin Ladin in Jordan and Canada and the suspects in the bombing of the USS Cole first tried to attack a US warship in Aden.
- The investigation into the Cole bombing points to the involvement of Yemeni and Saudi jihadists with varying ties to Bin Ladin.

[redacted] have uncovered Sunni extremist cells planning near-term attacks. [redacted]

**Explaining the Surge** [redacted]

*The spike in the network's activity stems in part from changes in Bin Ladin's practices. To avoid implicating himself and his Taliban hosts, Bin Ladin over the past two years has allowed cells in his network, al-Qa'ida, to plan attacks more independently of the central leadership and has tried to gain support for his agenda outside the group.*

- The network also has benefited from a sharp increase in mujahidin recruitment since the resumption of the conflict in Chechnya in 1999, which exposed a new generation of militants to terrorist techniques and extremist ideology through training at al-Qa'ida-run camps in Afghanistan.
- Violence between Israelis and the Palestinians, moreover, is making Sunni extremists more willing to participate in attacks

APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
DATE: 25-April-2012

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~

against US or Israeli interests.

**Persistent Threat Despite Disruptions**

*The arrest of operatives and the seizure of explosives and other materials are setbacks for the cells but the threat from the network remains.*

— CIA is monitoring reports that other elements of the Sunni extremist network are planning attacks

~~TOP SECRET~~