

JIHAD, THE WAY TO JANNAH? Analyzing ISIS-KP's first English
Propaganda Book

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Islamic Theology of Counter Terrorism
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Abstract

This article reviews and analyzes the first English propaganda book published by the Khorasan Province of the Islamic State (ISIS-KP). The article focuses on the main messages conveyed in the book, the accompanying texts, and its language to understand the ISIS-KPs goals embodied in it. The article connects the analysis to the publishing period of the book, several months after the withdrawal of foreign forces and the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, to gain an innovative perspective on ISIS-KP propaganda in English. Since the ISIS-KP organization began its propaganda in English only in March 2022 apparently, this is the first research that focuses on it.

Keywords: Afghanistan, ISIS, Terror, Propaganda, Jihad.

Introduction

After a two-decade stay in Afghanistan, on August 31, 2021, the United States and NATO withdrew their last forces from Afghanistan.¹ The party that seized power in the country was the Taliban, which had to deal with an economic, political, and security crisis.² One of the terror organizations that threatened Afghanistan's security was ISIS-KP, the Khorasan province of the Islamic State (ISIS). According to the UN security report, it enjoyed the greatest freedom it has had since its establishment in 2015.³ As part of the organization's efforts to expand and establish itself in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia, it held a growing propaganda and recruitment system, which in March 2022 first published a propaganda book in English.⁴

The name of the book is "Jihad-The Way to Jannah", which was published by ISIS-KP's media network "Al-Azaim", probably only on social media such as "Telegram". Alongside the book, ISIS-KP started publishing a monthly propaganda magazine in English named the "voice of Khurasan" in March 2022.⁵ The growth of ISIS-KP activity, manpower, and propaganda in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the first months after the 2021 withdrawal led to serious questions about the organization's future ability to carry out terror operations in the region and outside of it.⁶

1 Amanda Macias, "U.S. ends 20-year war in Afghanistan with final evacuation flights out of Kabul", *CNBC*, August 31, 2021. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/30/afghanistan-update-last-us-troops-leave-kabul-ending-evacuation.html>

2 "Afghanistan: Taliban Takeover Worsens Rights Crisis", *Human Right Watch*, January 13, 2022. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/01/13/afghanistan-taliban-takeover-worsens-rights-crisis>

3 "Fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat", *United Nations Security Council*, Vol.14. (January 28, 2022), p.7.

4 Lucas Webber, "Islamic State in Afghanistan Publishes First Official English Language Book, Criticizes Taliban Relations with China, Russia, and America", *Militant Wire*, February 24, 2022. <https://www.militantwire.com/p/islamic-state-in-afghanistan-publishes?s=r>

5 Arvind Ojha, "IS Khorasan releases first issue of magazine, mentions terrorist sent to India in 2017", *India Today*, February 2, 2022. <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/is-khorasan-releases-first-issue-of-magazine-mentions-terrorist-sent-to-india-in-2017-1907926-2022-02-02>

6 "Islamic State in Afghanistan could be able to attack U.S. in 6 months-Pentagon official", *Reuters*, October 27, 2021 <https://www.reuters.com/world/islamic-state-afghanistan-could-be-able-attack-us-six-months-pentagon-official-2021-10-26/>

This article aims to examine ISIS-KP's new sector, propaganda in English, in the days of the new Taliban rule. As a case study, the article analyses the content and structure of the book "Jihad-The Way to Jannah" to understand ISIS-KP's target audience, propaganda strategies, and ideology in this new field. Finally, the article offers practical conclusions in the field of counterterrorism that emerge from the book analysis.

ISIS-KP: From 2020 Loss to the World Front Headlines

Numerous intelligence indications warned of the deadly attack on Kabul International Airport, but unfortunately failed to prevent it, as on August 26, 2021, an ISIS-KP suicide bomber took advantage of the chaos in the airport, killing over 170 people: Afghans, Americans, and more. The timing of the attack was perfect for ISIS-KP, which enjoyed global media focus from Afghanistan, as the United States and NATO withdrew their last people from the Taliban-controlled state.⁷

The ISIS-KP was established in 2015 by Pakistani Taliban (TTP) operatives and Afghan al-Qaeda members who swore allegiance to the then-ISIS leader, al-Baghdadi. However, as of April 2022, the organization was composed of operators from different nationalities: Afghans, Pakistanis, Uzbeks, Tajiks, etc.

In the first years of the organization's establishment, the ISIS Central Headquarters in Iraq and Levant was very involved in its construction and provided it with guidance, advice, and cash flow. Up until 2017, the organization had carried out numerous attacks, particularly in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which had been sharply reduced by 2020, following the American counterterrorism policy, alongside collaborations with the Afghan security forces and the Taliban. Most of ISIS-KP's attacks were directed against state institutions: infrastructure, senior security and government officials, and police forces. Other targets were religious minorities such as Shiites and Sufis in Afghanistan.⁸

About a month before the withdrawal, ISIS-KP was estimated at 500 to 1,500 activists in Afghanistan, with the potential of rising to 10,000 activists in the medium term.⁹ However, by March 2022 the number was already estimated at 2200-4000.¹⁰ One of the reasonable reasons for the massive recruitment that

7 Eric Schmitt and Helene Cooper, "Lone ISIS Bomber Carried Out Attack at Kabul Airport, Pentagon Says", *The New York Times*, 8 February 2022.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/04/us/politics/kabul-airport-attack-report.html?auth=google%7Ctap>

8 Amira Jadoon, Abdul Sayed, and Andrew Mines, "The Islamic State Threat in Taliban Afghanistan: Tracing the Resurgence of Islamic State Khorasan", *CTC Sentinel*, Vol.15, No.1. (West point University, January 2022) p.37-33. <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-islamic-state-threat-in-taliban-afghanistan-tracing-the-resurgence-of-islamic-state-khorasan/>

9 Letter dated 15 July 2021 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council, *United Nations Security Council*, July 21, 2021, p.15-14.

10 "Fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat", *United Nations Security Council*, January 28, 2022, p.7. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2022_63_E.pdf

ISIS-KP went through in this short period was the propaganda of the organization, which crossed the borders of Afghanistan. Along with propaganda videos, the Islamic State's main "Al-Naba" Weekly newspaper¹¹, propaganda books in the languages of the region (mainly in Urdu, Dari, and Pesto), and the radio station in Nangarhar that broadcasts to eastern Afghanistan¹², ISIS-KP reached a new advanced stage in its propaganda as it published "voice of Khurasan" magazines and the book "Jihad-The Way to Jannah" in English.

Analysis of the Book: Content and Structure in the Propaganda

Opening and Structure

The title of the book presents *Jihad*- warfare against infidels¹³, as the way to heaven. "Jannah", the term for heaven in Islam in general and the Quran in particular, is intended to present the religious dimension which exists in the book. While the author could use the word "heaven", he chose the religious term, as he would often do throughout the book, when he will want to introduce a religious duty. In addition to this, the Islamic term of jannah can present a slightly different meaning from that of the English word meaning because jannah in the Quran is the next world (*ākhirah*) for the believers of God, an eternal world of spiritual and physical pleasures, in which the faithful and the righteous are rewarded.¹⁴ In other words, reaching jannah may be construed as superior to reaching heaven.

ISIS-KP, as a part of the Islamic State, holds the Salafi trend ideology that sees only the Quran and certain hadith books as holy and does not allow any innovative interpretation of the writings, compared to different trends in Islam.¹⁵ The Salafi trend tends to refer to the commandments and statements in these writings by way of abstraction, or in other words as precise operating instructions, which should not be deviated from. The Salafia also sees the three generations of believers following the Prophet Mohammad's time, as a model of living (Sahabah, Tabi'un, and Taba al-Tabi'in).¹⁶

11 Carol Winkler, Kareem El-Damanhoury, Zainab Saleh, John Hendry and Nagham El-Karhili, "Intersections of ISIS media leader loss and media campaign strategy: A visual framing analysis", *Media, War & Conflict*, Vol.14, No.4, (Atlanta: Georgia State University, 2019) p.402.

12 Borhan Osman, "ISKP's Battle for Minds: What are its main messages and who do they attract?", *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, December 12, 2016 <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/war-and-peace/iskps-battle-for-minds-what-are-their-main-messages-and-who-do-they-attract/>; Travers Barclay Child, Kai Gehring, Sarah Langlotz, Austin L. Wright, "Global and Local ISIS Propaganda", March 16, 2021, p.9

13 Ella Landau-Tasseron, "Jihād", *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*.

14 Roberto Tottoli, "Afterlife", *Encyclopaedia of Islam-Third Edition*.

15 John Esposito, "The Oxford Dictionary of Islam". (Oxford University Press, 2004). p. 275.

16 Bernard Haykel, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action", in: Roel Meijer (eds.), *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 56-33.

Therefore, during the book, any claim or invocation of the writer, opens or is accompanied by an excerpt from the Quran or Hadith that form part of al-Kutub al-Sittah: Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan al-Sughra, Sunan Abu Dawood.¹⁷ Although this is a book written in English, the ISIS-KP writer brings the original texts, in Arabic, accompanied by an English translation. To analyze the book in a template, the book is artificially divided into three parts. The first refers to the Taliban, the second to jihad, and the third to financial jihad and the call for *da'wa* (calling people to follow the right way to God).¹⁸

Chapter One: The Taliban (p. 14-2)

The book opens with three blessings in Arabic and continues with the first quotation from Sahih Bukhari. Already at this point, the reader can deduce what is the structure of the book and the content which will be revealed to him later. The Hadith (No. 2443) appeals to Muslims to help their oppressed and cruel brothers.¹⁹

Immediately after the translation, the author addresses readers directly in the plural form:” *We see you are oppressed so we want to help you*” (page 2). From this statement, it can be understood that the book is intended for people who are in distress, suffering, or search of meaning, and are looking for solutions to overcome them. This opening of the book increases the reader’s sense of closeness and hence the desire to review it, because it appears, about its name and its opening, as a solution to problems that can bring the reader to jannah. At the bottom of page 3, the author accuses heretical groups, who distort Islam and misuse it. On the next page (4), the placement becomes more specific and is directed at the Taliban.

In the following pages, the book deals mainly with the discussion of the illegitimacy of the Taliban, which includes physical, ideological, and religious accusations, accompanied by examples that are divided into six main aspects:

1. Use of religion in general and jihad in a bad way, for personal interests, to please the interests of Pakistan, China, and Russia, and help the Taliban join the UN. This accusation, which is repeated later in the book, points the finger of blame at the Taliban who need international support to cope with its economic crisis. In terms of the perception of the Islamic State, Islam is the solution to everything, so any service of non-Muslim countries to their perspective is wrong.

¹⁷ Eli Alshech, “דוקטרינת אליוולאא ואל-בראא בתפיסה הסלפית-הג'אהדית”:

”מרחב גמישות בתוך עולם של נוקשות (From: Hebrew), *JIMES*, Vol.7 No.1 (Ariel: Ariel University Press, 2021), p.37-36

¹⁸ Julian Millie, “Da' wa, modern practices”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam-Third Edition*.

¹⁹ “Jihad- The Way to Jannah”, *Al-Azaim Media*, March 2022. (Telegram) p.3

2. *Badā'*: the making of forbidden new changes to Islam. A principle underlying the Salafi conception alongside monotheism.²⁰
3. Taliban commanders and soldiers mix truth and falsehood.
4. The Taliban is accused of having links with Sufis - the mystical current in Islam, which makes extensive use of music and other forbidden elements according to the Salafi conception and other currents in Sunni and Shiite Islam.
5. Establishing friendly relations with the United States, and military cooperation against Islamic State (ISIS-KP in particular) personnel in the provinces of Khorasan, Nangahar, and Jouzjan.
6. The Taliban is supported by Pakistan, which harms the people of Afghanistan, especially in the north part. The Taliban is also accused of killing hundreds of Muslims, with an emphasis on women and children in the war against Islam. Then the accusations about the places where the Taliban attacked are specific: Mosques and schools. The ISIS-KP propaganda focuses on the Salafi population in Afghanistan, which on the one hand holds the same religious current, and on the other hand, has suffered hostile treatment and attacks from the Taliban following the US withdrawal.²¹

Along with the content in English and the sacred quotations in Arabic, the author uses several basic Islamic terms in his words in English transcription, which is sometimes accompanied by an explanation in English. For example, "DEEN" and the explanation that it is a religion, AKHERA = the end of days, SHAHADADA= Martyrdom. The author did not use the transcription rules and tried to write the concepts in the most understandable way for English readers.²²

Example from page 4:

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكُنُوا لِلْحَقِّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ. البقرة/ ٤٢

And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it]. Al-Baqara/ 42.

Wallah this fatal sickness has spreaded over all the leaders of Taliban and so their soldiers, more than the pasts. They made the deen a bridge to get the life facilities and posts.

²⁰ Bernard Haykel, p.39.

²¹ Ibid, p.12-5; Borhan Osman, "Bourgeois Jihad: WHY YOUNG, MIDDLE-CLASS AFGHANS JOIN THE ISLAMIC STATE", *Peaceworks*, (US Institute of Peace, January 2020), p.10-

6. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/06/bourgeois-jihad-why-young-middle-class-afghans-join-islamic-state> ; Franz J. Marty, "Is the Taliban's Campaign Against the Islamic State Working?", *The Diplomat*, February 10, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2022/02/is-the-talibans-campaign-against-the-islamic-state-working/>

²² Ibid, p.5,3.

In this section from page 4, one can be seeing an example of the writer's structure with the help of which he conveys his messages to readers. He first quotes verse 42 from Sura 28 of the Quran (Surat al-Bakra) in which there is a commandment not to mix truth with lies. Afterward, he wrote the translation of the Sura in English and finally links the Quranic meaning to the fact that these sicknesses of the "lie" permeated the Taliban, which uses religion to serve their interests.

According to the content written on pages 14-2, it can be understood that the first main claim in the ISIS-KP's book is addressed mainly to Afghanistan residents who fought the Taliban or had other interactions with it. The various insults and accusations against the organization that seized power in Kabul in August 2021 are designed to portray it as an enemy to the readers of the book, which by joining ISIS-KP will be able to beat it. The term "Taliban" is mentioned 18 times throughout the book, 16 of them up to page 14. Thus pages 14-2 can be classified as the first part of the book which is accompanied by a direct claim against the Taliban.

The examples of Taliban killings, along with the accompanying religious justifications allow the book to touch a wide range of populations more or less religious. It should be noted, however, that throughout this section there is no explicit call for *jihad* against the Taliban. It is not inconceivable that there is a deliberate hand here of the author, who tried to build among the readers first a connection to his arguments, and only then, gradually to connect them to *jihad*.

Several different editing defects were found in the book and especially in the first chapter. Absence of punctuation - for example on page 10 there are only two periods at the end of the sentences; The quotation from Sura 22 on page 19 is not highlighted, while the rest of the quotations in the book are highlighted; Capital letters in appearing in the middle of sentences – for example on page 18 the words "Me" and "We" appear together 6 times in the middle of sentences with a capital letter, without any need; Lack of uniformity in the blessings before saying the name of the Prophet - sometimes an abbreviation of the letters SAW, sometimes the logo of the blessing in Arabic "صلى الله عليه وسلم" and sometimes both. These defects indicate that the book has not undergone a "second look" and that it was probably written by someone whose English is not his mother tongue.

Chapter Two: Jihad (p.34-12)

The second part of the book is characterized by a direct call for jihad. As noted, the term "Taliban" does not occupy a central volume from now until the end of the book, but it is not inconceivable that the call to jihad and hence the war on infidels, is directed mainly at it. The writer calls the ISIS-KP fighters "Mujahedeen" (Mujahedeen: jihad fighters in Arabic), the same nickname that the Afghan militias used to call themselves in the war against the Soviet Union.²³ In this section, too, the author lays out before the readers a variety of arguments regarding the departure to the Holy War, which are based on the sources.

1. The readers are close to joining Mujahedeen, and at least can help them with da'wa (spreading the religion). For the sake of simplicity, the author explains to the readers that joining the ranks of ISIS-KP is not as difficult as they may think, and if they are still undecided, even spreading the organization's ideology is enough.
2. The writer notes that he wrote this letter from the bottom of his heart - he tries to get close to the readers, and give his personal side in the story, to prove to them that he wrote the things book to help them, truly and sincerely.
3. Comparison to the case from the Quran - The writer tries to compare the "Muhajirun", who were the first group of supporters of Muhammad, and emigrated with him from Mecca to al-Madinah, to the readers of the book, who must emigrate, leave their family and lives to join ISIS-KP. This comparison between the cases can constitute a religious justification for the readers.
4. Jihad as a Divine Reference - According to the sources, Allah promised all who go to jihad booty and honor.
5. Jihad for Muslim Salvation - Saving religious society, mosques, Islamic schools, and Muslim society. The readers may be family members therefore the jihad is mentioned as the protector of the community institutions of the readers, which will inspire in them a desire to join the organization. The author repeats this motif once more when he includes the Sufi and Tablighi infidel who according to him, kills the women and children of the Mujahedeen, and build mosques that threaten Islam and Muslim society.
6. Jihad is the greatest commandment in Islam. Heaven is guaranteed for those who walk in its way.

²³ Adam Zeidan, "mujahideen: Afghani rebels", *Britannica*, August 26, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mujahideen-Afghani-rebels>

7. He who practices jihad is equivalent to one who fasts and prays all day. This reasoning gives hope to readers, who in the media and have not adhered to Islam so far, jihad could be 'enough' for them to be considered good Muslims.

In Part A the term jihad is mentioned only three times, while in the second chapter it is mentioned 27 times. Beyond highlighting the importance of jihad, it is mentioned as a solution to human problems, and for those who want success in both worlds (in this life and after death). This point connects to the opening of the book in which the writer turned to the oppressed and those who need help. The author tries, in addition to the passages from the Quran and the hadith parts he brings, to captivate the readers with a sequence of rhetorical questions, so that they will follow the path of jihad (p. 25):

“Today a Mujahed is not calm in his home and even not calm in the hospital, so how do you can leave these lonely Muslims alone?! Do not you scare Allah?! Do not you have sense?! Is your blood redder than the blood of Sahaba and Tabe'ain? Is your blood redder than our pasts”

The main purpose of this paragraph is to introduce readers to the proportions and realism of a situation. The Mujahedeen, the fighters of Islam are lonely and unsafe anywhere. The first two generations of Muslims: The Sahabah, and Tabi'un, who according to the Muslim conception are saints, went to war for the sake of religion. Therefore, the reader, not approaching their status according to the author, is obligated to go into jihad and save his brother.

Chapter Three: Finance Jihad and the Call for Da'wa (p.54-34)

This part of the book begins in the middle of page 34 when the poor economic situation of the mujahideen is described. After one paragraph about the situation, the writer compares it to the “Battle of Tabuk”, which according to Muslims took place in October 629 between the Muslims and the Byzants.²⁴ The writer explains that during that battle, some of the people, probably Muhammed's followers donated their property in the name of God. On the next page (35), Hadith No. 1678 from “Sunan Abu Dawood” details the donation. This contribution is called by the writer "financial jihad". As seen in chapter B, a comparison to the earlier generations of Islam adds a tier to the importance of the religious obligation.

24 Sayyid Ali Asghar Razwy, “The Expedition of Tabuk”, *Al-Islam.org*. <https://www.al-islam.org/restatement-history-islam-and-muslims-sayyid-ali-asghar-razwy/expedition-tabuk>



From the example of Tabuk, the writer reiterates the duty of the people to do jihad and uses religious sources to justify it, and the hardship of the people who refuses it: “*Leaving Jihad without any excuses causes falling in trial (Fitna).*” (p.39)

On page 40, the author links the jihad to the importance of recruitment and turns to readers for help. on the one hand, he gives the example of the “Battle of Badr”, where God according to the Quran inflicted victory on Muhammad and his believers even though they were few compared to a great enemy²⁵, and explains that even today, ISIS-KP will succeed in its war even in a numerical minority.

On the other hand, the writer still urges the need for more fighters, and also addresses the youth among his readers, as he tells stories from the time of the Prophet, about young people who joined the jihad, and some of them even died as a martyr.²⁶

The writer devotes the pages between 42 and 49 to stories of heroism from the " battle of Uhud", in which one of the Sahaba is the main protagonist (Wahab). Despite the death of Wahab in the battle of jihad, he was blessed by the Prophet and God. The writer tries to mention here that death is not the end of a Muslim's life. Moreover, death by jihad is greater than life.

In the middle of page 49, for the first time, the author tells a story about a female protagonist named Khansa, a poet from the time of the Prophet, who sent her four sons into battle against the Sasanian empire. She implored her sons to fight through songs she composed that they recited, on their way to their deaths as martyrdom. This story which came in the last pages of the book is perhaps meant to convince the readers that their wives too will understand their need to go out to jihad and join ISIS-KP. The last page of the book (54) is ended by summarizing the recurring motifs, bringing readers back to reality: Today the caliphate is fighting against Sufis and pagans in Afghanistan and Pakistan (referring here of course to the Taliban who are considered infidels by ISIS-KP) for the sake of God. The author lists the efforts that readers can make: 1. Joining the ranks of the organization and joining jihad. 2. Those that cannot fight, must raise, and donate money to the organization. 3. Supporting propaganda and social networks. Finally, the writer in a separate paragraph, asks all to pray for the Mujahedeen.

²⁵ Quran 3:13

²⁶ Ibid.p.43

Conclusion

The first English propaganda book published by ISIS-KP was published as part of the organization's activities to recruit new activists from both Afghanistan and its neighboring countries. The fact that the book was written in English allows ISIS-KP to reach a wider target audience, without country restrictions. The book appeals to the Muslim community, and this can be understood because it contains basic concepts in Islam such as "tawḥīd" and "da'wa" which Muslims who do not speak Arabic are likely to be familiar with.

The book incorporates excerpts texts from the Quran and the Hadith that referred to the first holy generations of Islam (according to the Salafis along with comparisons of the stories told to the present. ISIS-KP's purpose in comparison was to teach readers how they should behave today, considering the actions of their ancestors. The texts, most of which were quoted in Arabic (the source language), were accompanied by an English translation to allow non-Arabic-speaking Muslims to connect to their content and messages.

The author wanted to convey to readers three main messages alongwith the book. The first (p. 12-4) was about the war in the Taliban, which was presented as an organization of dangerous infidels to Islam, which seeks to connect to all the infidel countries around. The second (p. 34-12) is jihad in general, which is mandatory for every Muslim. The name of the book indicates to readers even before reading it, that the way to reach the anchorage garden is by jihad. And the third (p. 54-34) is the "Economic Jihad" and dissemination of ISIS-KP's ideology (the act of da'wa) - which is presented as an option for those who cannot go to fight jihad. In this way, ISIS-KP tried to gain support from people that afraid to fight and leave their homes but were still convinced by the organization's ideology.

The first part of the book is intended to harness readers to read it and is likely directed specifically at minorities in Afghanistan who have been directly harmed by the Taliban regime - such as the Salafi community, many of whom have been charged, arrested, and even executed on suspicion of ISIS-KP links. Alongside them, the book is presented as a solution for all those who feel "depressed"; therefore, it could have attracted mainly people from low socio-economic or economic status.

The specific examples of attacks carried out by the Taliban in Afghanistan are intended to show readers that the Taliban is the bad side killing woman, kids, and other Muslims, while ISIS-KP is the good one fighting it. In this way, the book justifies the organization's current main goal: jihad and gives the readers a real feeling that they need to protect their people.

Due to inconsistencies in several places in the book, along with spelling mistakes, it can be concluded that the book was written by a local activist (Afghan or Pakistan), whose mother tongue is not English, and in addition, has not been further edited. It is possible that the organization was in a hurry to publish the book, considering the special timing.

Counterterrorism Recommendations

Based on the fact that ISIS-KP expanded since the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in 2021 and is estimated to have the ability to carry out attacks in the west and outside “Khorasan” within a few months, requires counterterrorism actions.

First, the international community must urge the Taliban to stop harming minorities in Afghanistan, in this way the target audience of ISIS-KP’s propaganda will be reduced, and those will have less reason to join the ranks of the organization.

Second, the countries bordering Afghanistan: Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, China, and Iran should increase enforcement and surveillance against people on social networks such as Telegram where the organization's propaganda content is distributed. States should step up control especially in underprivileged populations, especially near the border with Afghanistan, who are more likely to convince ISIS-KP English propaganda and join the organization.

ITCT does not necessarily endorse any or all views expressed by the author in the article.