

## Wilayat al-Hawl:

### 'Remaining' and Incubating the Next Islamic State Generation

by [Aaron Y. Zelin \(/experts/aaron-y-zelin\)](/experts/aaron-y-zelin)

Oct 18, 2019

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Aaron Y. Zelin \(/experts/aaron-y-zelin\)](/experts/aaron-y-zelin)

Aaron Y. Zelin is the Gloria and Ken Levy Senior Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy where his research focuses on Sunni Arab jihadi groups in North Africa and Syria as well as the trend of foreign fighting and online jihadism.



In-Depth Reports

---

### Many inhabitants of the al-Hol camp still profess loyalty to the jihadist group and have sought to impose a fundamentalist lifestyle on their fellow residents.

**E**ven before the United States precipitously withdrew its troops from northern Syria in October 2019, observers fretted over the situation at al-Hol refugee camp. The camp is populated predominantly by women and children and has drawn attention for its unsanitary conditions, inadequate medical care, lack of education for children, and overcrowding. Added to this is a strong, although hard-to-quantify, strain of jihadism. Many inhabitants still profess loyalty to the Islamic State and have sought to impose a fundamentalist lifestyle on their fellow residents. In one especially grim incident, a woman is said to have killed her own granddaughter for removing her veil.

In this urgently important study, jihadism expert Aaron Zelin details the unsettling situation at al-Hol, focusing on the period from the Islamic State's relinquishment of territory in March 2019 until the recent U.S. pullout and ensuing Turkish incursion. As much as anything, the contents demonstrate a continued failure by international actors to manage the transition from fighting a jihadist group to rolling back its broader successes. Washington and its partners must take note.

#### THE AUTHOR

Aaron Y. Zelin is the Richard Borow Fellow at The Washington Institute and author of the forthcoming book *Your Sons Are at Your Service: Tunisia's Missionaries of Jihad* (Columbia University Press). ❖

## RECOMMENDED

---



BRIEF ANALYSIS

### [Coordinated Iran Sanctions Require Coordinated Enforcement](#)

Apr 19, 2024



Matthew Levitt

[\(/policy-analysis/coordinated-iran-sanctions-require-coordinated-enforcement\)](#)



ARTICLES & TESTIMONY

### [China's Military Objectives and Operational Experience in the Middle East](#)

Apr 19, 2024



Grant Rumley

[\(/policy-analysis/chinas-military-objectives-and-operational-experience-middle-east\)](#)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

### [The Middle East's Perilous Moment: Policy Implications and Escalation Risks](#)

Apr 18, 2024



Dana Stroul,  
Zohar Palti,  
Farzin Nadimi

[\(/policy-analysis/middle-east-s-perilous-moment-policy-implications-and-escalation-risks\)](#)

## TOPICS

[Military & Security \(/policy-analysis/military-security\)](#)

[Terrorism \(/policy-analysis/terrorism\)](#)

[U.S. Policy \(/policy-analysis/us-policy\)](#)

## REGIONS & COUNTRIES

[Syria \(/policy-analysis/syria\)](#)