

Addressing Entities of Particular Concern: Non-State Actors and Egregious Violations of Religious Freedom

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

Nov 19, 2024

Also published in U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom

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.



Articles & Testimony

A terrorism expert assesses how Washington and its partners can best counter—and in some cases engage—jihadist actors in Afghanistan and the Sahel amid growing limitations on U.S. influence in such locales.

As a consequence of challenges to the American-led world order in recent years, there are limitations on what Washington can actually do in the Sahel and Afghanistan from a policy perspective. Adversarial actors are in control of the space, whether the Taliban’s Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan or Russia taking charge of counterterrorism duties with countries in the Sahel. Therefore, due to the United States being more or less unable to deploy traditional countering violent extremism (CVE) programming or support to local civil society actors in the same way as other countries, the U.S. government needs to be nimble and show some level of patience. It is also important to distinguish the Taliban and JNIM’s interest in engagement versus the Islamic State’s. While both the Taliban and JNIM are extreme in their own right, they both want to develop some level of legitimacy within the international community or with governments in their own regions...

To read the full testimony, download the PDF on this page. ❖

RECOMMENDED



IN-DEPTH REPORTS

[Semiconductors, AI, and the Gulf:](#)

Policy Considerations for the United States

Nov 18, 2024

◆
Elizabeth Dent,
Grant Rumley

[\(/policy-analysis/semiconductors-ai-and-gulf-policy-considerations-united-states\)](#)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[Anti-Israel Attacks by Iraq-Based Group with Inferred Saudi Membership](#)

Nov 17, 2024

◆
Hamdi Malik,
Michael Knights,
Crispin Smith

[\(/policy-analysis/anti-israel-attacks-iraq-based-group-inferred-saudi-membership\)](#)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[Profile: Directorate of Education, Hashd al-Shaabi \(DEHS\)](#)

Nov 17, 2024

◆
Sary Mumayiz

[\(/policy-analysis/profile-directorate-education-hashd-al-shaabi-dehs\)](#)

TOPICS

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

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