

# Islamism in Libya

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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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

**T**he following excerpt is from the 2013 edition of the World Almanac of Islamism, a comprehensive anthology on the state of radical Islam in countries worldwide. Download the PDF to read the Libya chapter, or visit the AFPC website to [access the full series \(http://almanac.afpc.org/Libya\)](http://almanac.afpc.org/Libya).

The tragic death of U.S. ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other diplomatic personnel during the September 2012 attack in Benghazi was the most prominent episode of growing Islamist violence in Libya since Qadhafi's ouster. Small contingents of local jihadists and alleged al-Qaeda elements have come to the fore since the start of the country's "Arab Spring" ferment in 2011.

The citizen backlash against the attack, which led to the overrunning of a series of militia bases belonging to various jihadist groups, has provided hope for an end to the recent violence. Yet some of these groups will likely continue to challenge the newly elected Libyan government. In particular, Katibat Ansar al-Sharia, which has attempted to burnish its local credentials through social services since the consulate attacks, is poised to grow in popularity given the disconnect between locals and the national government... ❖

*American Foreign Policy Council*

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