

ISLAMIC STATE SENIOR LEADERSHIP: WHO'S WHO

COMPILED BY CHARLES LISTER



‘Caliph Ibrahim’ – Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

Real name: Ibrahim Awwad Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai

An Iraqi national from the Al-Bu Badri tribe and an alleged descendant of the Prophet Mohammed. Received a PhD in Islamic studies in Baghdad before founding Jamaat Jaish Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jamaa in 2003 to fight US forces. Joined MSM in 2006 and took charge of ISI sharia committees by 2007. Image source: Official IS media content.

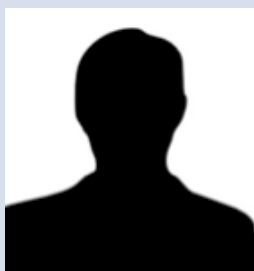


Deputy, Iraq – Abu Muslim al-Turkmani

Real name: Fadl Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali

A former Lieutenant Colonel in the Iraqi Army and a former officer in the Iraqi Special Forces. From Tel Afar, Ninawa.

Image source: Hisham al-Hashimi and Telegraph interactive team, “[Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’, from finance minister to suicide bomb deployer.](#)” *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.



Deputy, Syria – Abu Ali al-Anbari

Real name: Unknown

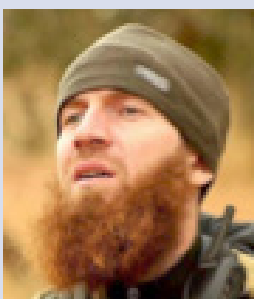
A former Major General in the Iraqi Military from Anbar.



War Minister – Abu Suleiman

Real name: Nasser al-Din Allah Abu Suleiman

Image source: [Hanein jihadist forum](#), 2 July 2014.



Chief of Syria military operations – Umar al-Shishani

Real name: Tarkhan Tayumurazovich Batirashvili

An ethnic Chechen Georgian national. Former Sergeant in Georgian military intelligence unit. Led Jaish al-Muhajireen wal Ansar in Syria before joining ISIS.

Image source: Official IS media content.

**Senior military commander – Abu Wahib**

Real name: Shaker Wahib al-Fahdawi

Arrested in 2006 by US forces and sentenced to death. Escaped prison in Tikrit in September 2012.

Image source: Official IS media content.

**Chief Spokesman – Abu Mohammed al-Adnani**

Real name: Taha Sobhi Falaha

A Syrian national from Idlib who pledged allegiance to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2002-2003. Has been a military instructor, Emir of Haditha and imprisoned by American forces in mid-2000s.

Image Source: Official IS media content.

**Minister of General Management – Abu Abd al-Kadir**

Real name: Shawkat Hazm al-Farhat

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Minister of Prisoners – Abu Mohammed**

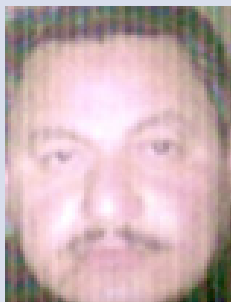
Real name: Bashar Ismail al-Hamdani

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Minister of General Security – Abu Louay / Abu Ali**

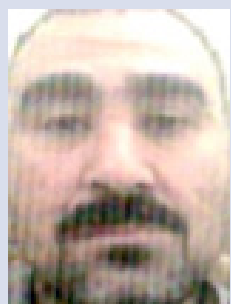
Real name: Abd al-Wahid Khadir Ahmad

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Minister of Finance – Abu Salah**

Real name: Muafaq Mustafa Mohammed al-Karmoush

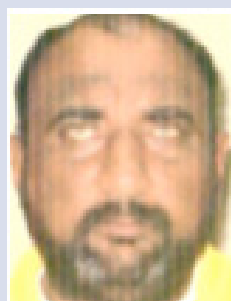
Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Minister of General Coordination – Abu Hajjar al-Assafi**

Real name: Mohammed Hamid al-Dulaimi

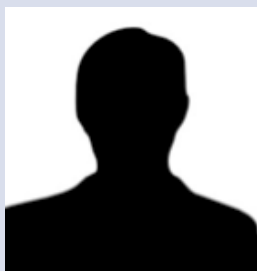
Responsible for coordinating communications and the distribution of resources within the Islamic State.

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

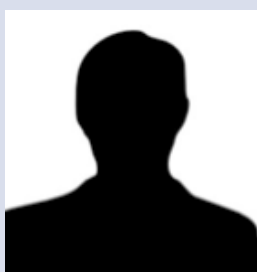
**Minister of Foreign Fighters & Suicide Bombers – Abu Kassem**

Real name: Abdullah Ahmad al-Mashadani

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Minister for Social Services – Abu Saji**

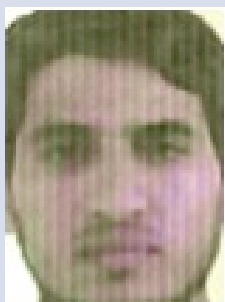
Real name: Aouf Abd al-Rahman al-Arfi

**Minister for Weapons – Abu Sima**

Real name: Faris Riyadh al-Nuaimi

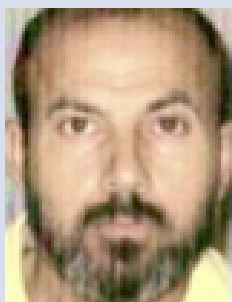
**Minister for Explosives – Abu Kifah**

Real name: Khairy Abd al-Hamoud al-Taïy

**Governor of Baghdad – Abu Maysara**

Real name: Ahmed Abd al-Kader al-Jazza

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Governor of Anbar – Abu Abd al-Salem / Abu Mohammed al-Sweidawi**

Real name: Adnan Latif Hamid al-Sweidawi

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014

**Governor of Salah ad Din – Abu Nabil**

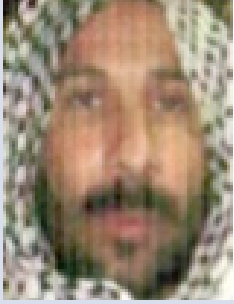
Real name: Wissam Abdu Zaid al-Zubaidi

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Governor of Kirkuk – Abu Fatima**

Real name: Naima Abd al-Naif al-Jouburi

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014.

**Governor of South & Central Euphrates – Abu Fatima**

Real name: Ahmed Mohsen Khalal al-Juhayshi

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014

**Governor of “Border Provinces” – Abu Jurnas**

Real name: Rathwan Talib Hussein Ismail al-Hamdani

Image source: “Revealed: the Islamic State ‘cabinet’”, *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014

**Governor of Ninawa – Unknown**

Real name: Unknown

**Governor of Raqqa – Abu Luqman**

Real name: Ali Moussa al-Hawikh

A Syrian national released from prison during President Assad’s amnesties in the summer of 2011.

**Governor of Aleppo – Abu Atheer al-Absi**

Real name: Unknown

Younger brother of Firas al-Absi (also known as Sheikh Abu Mohammed al-Absi), who was assassinated by Kataib al-Farouq in Syria in August 2012. Some reports claim Abu Atheer may have been redeployed elsewhere, possibly to Homs.

**Governor of Deir ez Zour – Haji Abd al-Nasser**

Real name: Unknown

**Governor of Damascus – Unknown**

Real name: Unknown

**Governor of Homs – Abu Shuayb al-Masri**

Real name: Unknown

**Governor of Al-Barakah (Hasakah) – Abu Usama al-Iraqi**

Real name: Unknown

**Senior facilitator & financier – Abu Umar**

Real name: Tariq Bin al-Tahar Bin al-Falih al-Awni al-Harzi

A Tunisian senior facilitator responsible for recruitment of foreign fighters and collection of finance, based in Syria.

**Chief of Media Operations**

Real name: Ahmad Abousamra

A Syrian-American national credited with managing ISIS' media operations, allegedly from Aleppo.

Image source: FBI, [Most Wanted Terrorists](#).

**Senior military official – Abu Ahmed al-Alwani**

Real name: Walid Jassim al-Alwani

A former Iraqi Army officer.

**Sharia official – Abu Hummam al-Athari**

Real name: Turki al-Binali

A Bahraini national with Islamic training experience under Jordanian Abu Mohammed al-Maqdisi. Wrote first biography of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Image source: Official IS media content.

**Coordinator of Prisoners & Women's Affairs – Abu Suja**

Real name: Abd al-Rahman al-Afari

Image source: "Revealed: the Islamic State 'cabinet'", *The Telegraph*, 9 July 2014

**Senior commander – Abu Abdullah al-Kosofi**

Real name: Lavdrim Muhaxheri

A Kosovar Albanian ISIS commander, operational in both Syria and Iraq.

Image source: Official IS media content.

**Senior commander – Abu Khattab al-Kurdi**

Real name: Unknown

An Iraqi Kurd thought to have led the offensive on Kobane, Syria in September and October 2014.

Image source: Official IS media content.

**Senior commander – Abu Jandal al-Masri**

Real name: Unknown

A senior Egyptian commander who led the siege and capture of Minnagh Airbase in Aleppo in August 2013.

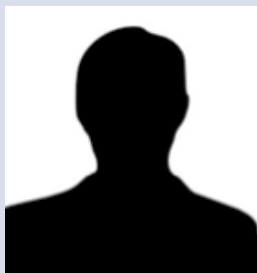
Image source: Official IS media content.

**Senior commander – Abu Huzaifa al-Yemeni**

Real name: Unknown

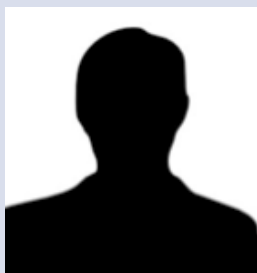
A prominent Yemeni commander with operational history in both Anbar, Iraq and Raqqa, Syria.

Image source: Official IS media content.

**Explosives expert – Abu Omar al-Qirdash**

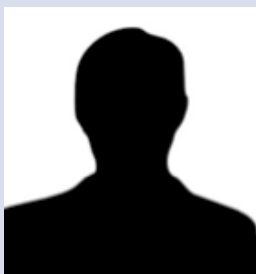
Real name: Unknown

An ethnic Turkmen and former Iraqi Army officer with militant command experience in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon.

**Senior official – Abu Omar “the boxer”**

Real name: Unknown

An Iraqi national who escaped prison in Tikrit in September 2012 and has since led operations in Idlib & Aleppo.

**Senior official – Abu Nasser al-Amni**

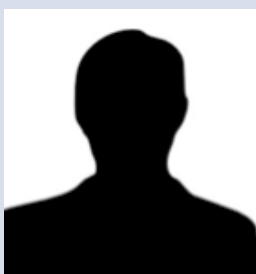
Real name: Mahmoud al-Khadir

A senior official in Raqqa. Extremely secretive, known for not uncovering his face & wearing gloves to cover skin tone.

**Senior official – Abu Musab al-Hallous**

Real name: Khalaf al-Thiyabi Hallous

A Syrian national credited with managing ISIS' takeover of Raqqa in 2013.

**Prominent member**

Real name: Salim Bengahem

A French national previously imprisoned in France for murder in 2001. Allegedly responsible for executions in Syria.

End note:

This appendix has been compiled using information gleaned from open sources and the author's personal research, which was concluded on October 20, 2014. The Islamic State is ordinarily very transparent regarding the death of members, including senior commanders, and it is therefore assumed these named individuals are still alive. However, since the initiation of international strikes in Iraq and Syria, the death of such individuals cannot be discounted. Moreover, the replacement of individuals is also distinctly possible.

Additional sources:

“Profile: The Rise of the Islamic State (IS)”, TahrirSy, July 12 2014 <<http://tahrirsouri.com/2014/07/12/profile-the-rise-of-the-islamic-state-is/>>.

“State Dept. Designations of Foreign Terrorist Fighters,” United States Department of State, September 24 2014 <<http://translations.state.gov/st/english/text-trans/2014/09/20140925308905.html#axzz3GmEGq8fh>>.

“Treasury Designates Twelve Foreign Terrorist Fighter Facilitators,” United States Department of the Treasury, September 24 2014 <<http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2651.aspx>>.