



SEPTEMBER 2022

AQAP ATTACKS ON THE RISE IN SOUTHERN YEMEN



Yemeni Provinces with Al Qaeda Activity

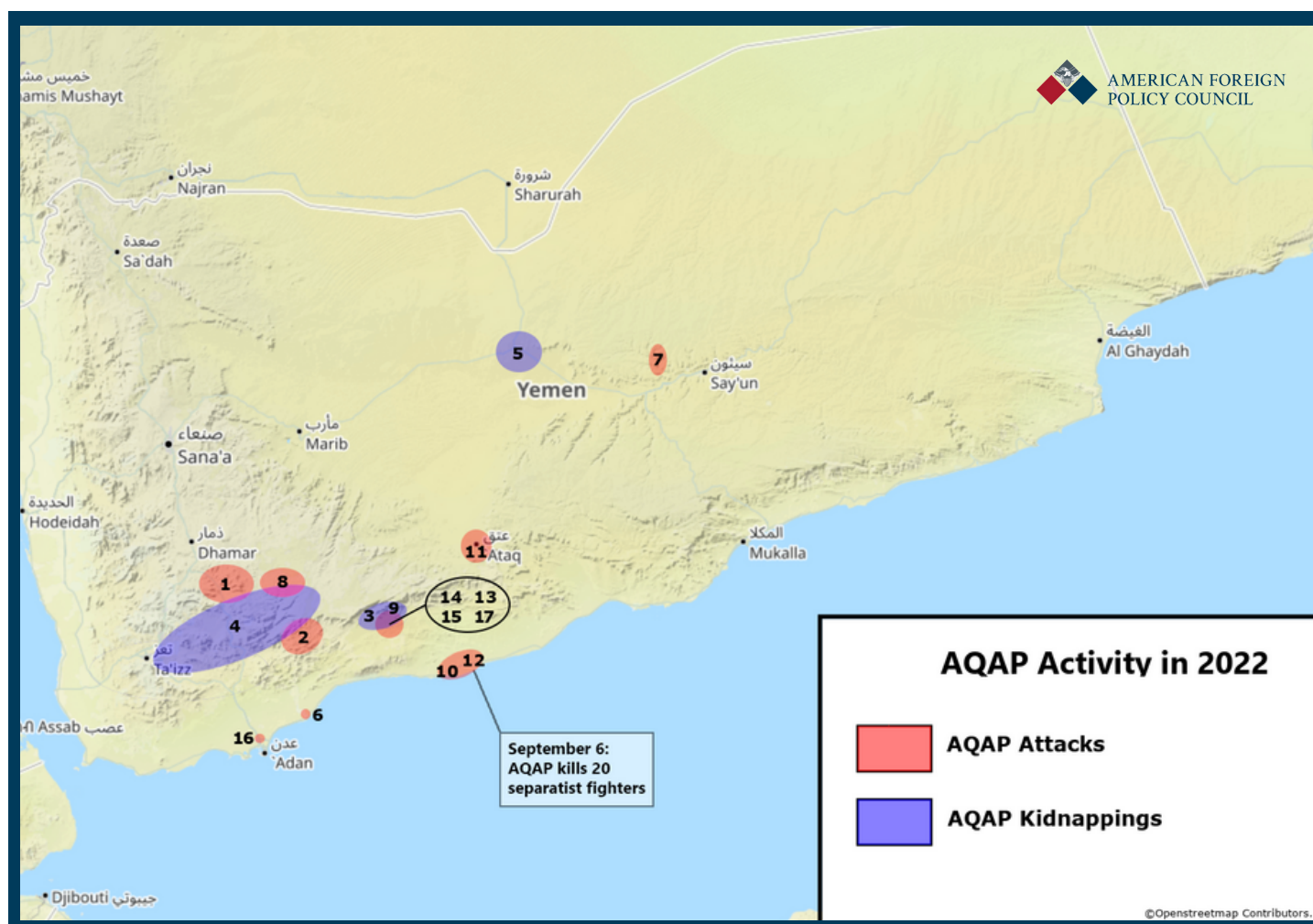


Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has been implicated in several attacks in southern Yemen in recent months.

In September alone the organization has launched six attacks, five of which have been in the Abyan province where the United Arab Emirates-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) has recently announced a new counterterrorism operation. Additional attacks in Abyan are likely as counterterrorism operations ramp up and infighting between anti-Houthi forces continues.

Yemeni Provinces with Al Qaeda Activity in 2022

The trendline is significant. Although AQAP was once recognized as one of the organization's most dangerous affiliates and responsible for carrying out several large-scale international attacks (such as the 2015 Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris). Yet the group has been largely inactive in the past two years as a result of counter-terrorism operations by regional governments and leadership losses. The recent uptick in attacks in southern Yemen, however, indicates that – though it has become less active – the group still retains a high level of coordination and training, and could now be making a comeback.



2022 AQAP INCIDENTS

1: **January 11** – AQAP detonated two IEDs targeting a Houthi vehicle near Tayyab, Dhi Naim district, al Bayda province.

2: **February 11** – AQAP detonated an IED targeting Houthi fighters in Rasad district, Abyan province.

3: **February 12** – AQAP militants kidnapped five UN workers between al Khadirah and Madiyah, Abyan province.

4: **February 23** – Likely AQAP militants kidnapped a UN employee in Lahij province.*

5: **March 5** – Likely AQAP militants kidnapped two Doctors Without Borders employees near al 'Abr and al Khasha'a districts, Hadramawt province.*

6: **March 15** – AQAP attempted to assassinate a key Security Belt Forces leader with an improvised explosive device (IED) in Zinjibar city, Abyan province. The blast killed two soldiers.

7: **April 24** – AQAP militants clashed with Yemeni government forces near Sudaf, Hadramawt province.

8: **May 6** – AQAP attacked Security Belt Forces near Dhale city, Dhaleh governorate. The attack killed the Security Belt Forces' commander and deputy commander in al Dhaleh province.

9: **June 8** – AQAP kidnapped a Security Belt Forces logistics officer in Lawder district, Abyan province.

There have been
17 total incidents
since January of
2022



Qasim al Raymi
emir (leader) of AQAP

2022 AQAP INCIDENTS CONTINUED

10: **June 22** – AQAP militants ambushed Abyan Military Axis troops on patrol in Ahwar district, Abyan province. Killed three soldiers and later executed two others.

11: **June 22** – AQAP militants ambushed a Shabwah Defense Forces checkpoint near Ataq City, Shabwah province. Killed five soldiers.

12: **September 6** – AQAP militants ambushed a Security Belt Forces checkpoint in Ahwar district, Abyan province. Killed at least 20 soldiers.

13: **September 12** – AQAP militants detonated at least one improvised explosive device (IED) targeting an al Hizam Security Forces and Abyan Police convoy in Mudiyah district, Abyan governorate. The IED killed at least four al Hizam fighters who were part of an anti-AQAP campaign.

14: **September 18** – AQAP militants detonated an IED targeting the 8th Thunderbolt Brigade near Wadi Amran, Mudiyah district, Abyan governorate. The IED killed two members of the Thunderbolt Brigade.

15: **September 20** – AQAP mortared a 5th Infantry Brigade base near Mudiyah city, Mudiyah district, Abyan governorate.

16: **September 23** – Likely AQAP militants attacked an STC commander and military patrol in the Al-Fayoush area, Lahij governorate.*

17: **September 23** – Likely AQAP militants detonated an IED targeting a Security Belt Forces-affiliated military vehicle between Al-Ain and Lawder districts, Abyan governorate. Casualties unknown.*

* These attacks are not yet officially confirmed by the Yemeni government as of September 2022





AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL



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