



## BRIEFINGS

### GAZA: An Al-Qaeda Presence in Question!



In an unusual show of Islamic Jihadi activities in Gaza, a militant faction calling itself “The *Ummah Army*” invited journalists to observe training exercises of the group being conducted. The group’s spokesman *Abu Fahas* indicated that they follow the Salafi doctrine and the ideology espoused by *Al-Qaeda*. The group’s existence came to the limelight for the first time this January when one of its members threatened to murder president Bush during his visit to the region. *Abu Fahas* also added that while they do not receive direct instructions from *Al-Qaeda*, they nevertheless consider their members as brothers and that *Hamas* in Gaza has allowed them free movement. Writing in *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* today however, the president of *Al-Arabiya* network, *Abdel Rahman Al-Rashed* questioned the credibility of the movement and called the event a staged operation executed by a desperate group in need of attention. [9/3/2008]

**Sources:** [http://www.alhayat.com/arab\\_news/levant\\_news/09-2008/Item-20080901-1f5cc9ce-coa8-10ed-01bf-ee335f4of444/story.html](http://www.alhayat.com/arab_news/levant_news/09-2008/Item-20080901-1f5cc9ce-coa8-10ed-01bf-ee335f4of444/story.html)  
<http://www.asharqalawsat.com/leader.asp?section=3&article=485412&issueno=10872>

### LIBYA: Qaddafi’s Libertarian Ideology



Mu’ammarr Qaddafi has never shied from original pronouncements. In his celebration of his thirty-ninth year for his ascendance to power, Qaddafi made good on his promise outlined few months earlier and unveiled his plan to privatize the economy, distribute the oil revenue directly to the people starting in 2009 and abolish his own government, which he considered corrupt. He also proclaimed that the “private sector shall be entrusted with the health, wealth and liberty of its citizens.” He added that “Libyans will have to decide individually how to spend the distributed money generated from oil, on improving their children’s education, consume imported goods or managing their health cost.” It was an agenda that U.S. libertarians would have loved.

Qaddafi also touched on the relationship of Libya with other countries. He indicated that Italy will have priority in developing the oil and gas fields in Libya which is planning to increase its oil output from the present daily production of 1.6 million barrels to 3 million barrels by 2012. That revelation comes at the heels of the signed agreement between the two countries stipulating that Italy shall compensate Libya with 5 billion dollars for the Italian crimes allegedly perpetrated during Italy’s colonial rule of Libya between 1911 and 1943. Addressing

the Libyan-U.S. relations, Qaddafi considered them friendly but lacking warmth. He however praised the French relationship which he said was outstanding. He equally commended the United Arab Emirates and Qatar for their role in facilitating the reaching of a comprehensive compensatory settlement agreement with Washington on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

**Source:** [http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=ArticleA\\_C&cid=1220266439411&pagename=Zone-Arabic-News/NWALayout](http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=ArticleA_C&cid=1220266439411&pagename=Zone-Arabic-News/NWALayout)

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