

Al-Qaeda and Global Jihad: A State of Play Twenty Years after 9/11

Online Colloquium
21 October 2021
15:00 – 18:40

PANEL 1 – Prof. Dr Gilles DORRONSORO, Prof. Dr Antonio GIUSTOZZI

PANEL 2 – Prof. William BRANIFF, Dr Thomas HEGGHAMMER

Dear Madam, Sir,

We are pleased to invite you to an **online colloquium** organised on **Thursday 21 October 2021** by the **Centre for Security and Defence Studies** of the Royal Higher Institute for Defence.

Two decades ago, the world was shaken by the 9/11 attacks and introduced to a “new” threat: Al-Qaeda. Today, this same world remains puzzled by an enduring “global war on terrorism” with no clear end in sight, and witnesses the proliferation of jihadi actors.

Throughout these twenty years of fighting against the jihadi threat, Osama Bin Laden’s organisation has shown systematic resilience and warzones involving Islamist armed factions have multiplied. While the United States’ response to Al-Qaeda’s attacks initially took the shape of a double military campaign in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), associated counter-terrorism efforts have ever since been involved in battlefields stretching from the Sahel region all the way to South-East Asia. Across the past decade, the Islamic State (IS) – Al-Qaeda’s former Iraqi component – even took the global jihad to another level when it revived the “caliphate” in the Middle East, launched terrorist attacks on numerous Western capitals and spread an ever-harsher ideology.

The Afghan Taliban’s return to power in Kabul raises more questions than ever: what are the main patterns in the trajectory of Al-Qaeda since Abdallah Azzam in the 1980s? How can we assess the legacy of the increasingly criticised military campaign that took place after 9/11? How will the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan affect global security in the long term? How long can IS-like phenomena be contained across Iraq and Syria? What does all this predict for the foreseeable future?

In order to reflect on these tormenting issues, we will be pleased to welcome Prof. Dr Gilles DORRONSORO (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne), Prof. Dr Antonio GIUSTOZZI (King’s College and Royal United Services Institute), Prof. William BRANIFF (National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism) and Dr Thomas HEGGHAMMER (Norwegian Defence Research Establishment).

This online colloquium will take place in **English** on **Thursday 21 October 2021 from 15:00 to 18:30 hours**. We thank you in advance for registering via the following link: <https://www.defence-institute.be>. **Registration, subject to availability, is compulsory and must be received by Monday 18 October 2021 at the latest.** You will then receive the link to connect to the event.

(Signed)

Filip BORREMANS, MSc Eng
Air Force Colonel GS
Director-General
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

Programme:

14:00 – 15:00: Registration – connection to online colloquium
15:00 – 18:40: Colloquium, Q&A and closing remarks