

considerable importance to the insurgents, was based almost entirely on negative perceptions shared by the Sunni population and the insurgents, “opposition to the occupation, anger at its specific practices, and the feeling . . . of being under siege.”² The International Crisis Group report further observed that, within the vast heterogeneous insurgency, four groups stood out: AQI, Jamaat Ansar al-Sunnah, the Islamic Army in Iraq (IAI), and the Islamic Front for Iraqi Resistance: Salah-Al-Din Al-Ayyubi Brigades (Al-Jabhah al-Islamiyah al-Muqawamah al-Iraqiyah, or JAMI). Minor groups identified by the International Crisis Group included Jaish al-Rashidin, Victorious Sect, Jaish al-Mujahidin, the 1920 Revolution Brigades (the military arm of Islamic Resistance Movement in Iraq), and JeM.³

In addition, other assessments identified the primary groups as JeM, IAI, Iraqi National Islamic Resistance, the Mujahedin Army, and Jamaat Ansar al-Sunnah. The insurgency’s leadership consisted of a dozen or so individuals who met occasionally to discuss organization and tactics. As one assessment concluded,

while the jihadists get the most attention—because of their emphasis on mass-casualty attacks, and because they take credit for almost every major attack that occurs—the Iraqi ‘armed national resistance’ is probably responsible for most attacks on coalition forces and Iraqis associated with the government.⁴

Based on a different source methodology (relying heavily on press announcements), Ahmed S. Hashim identified several insurgent groups: nationalist tribal groups, nationalist religious groups, and salafist groups. They included Jamaat Ansar al-Sunnah, Victorious Sect, Muja-

² International Crisis Group, *In Their Own Words: Reading the Iraqi Insurgency*, Amman and Brussels, 2006, p. 25.

³ The International Crisis Group translated it as Victorious Group’s Army; we use *Victorious Sect* to refer to this group.

⁴ Michael Eisenstadt and Jeffrey White, *Assessing Iraq’s Sunni Arab Insurgency*, Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 50, December 2005.