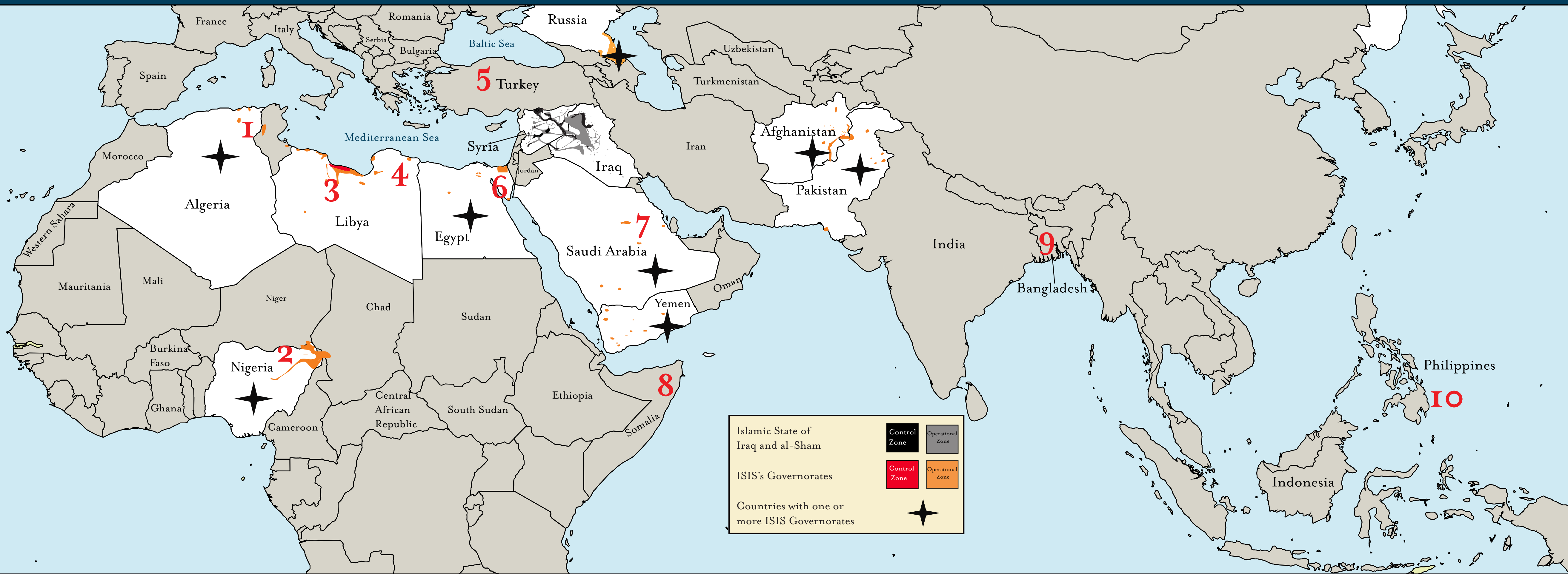


# ISIS's Regional Campaign: April 2016



- 1) ISIS's Wilayat Jaza'ir (**Algeria**) claimed IED attacks against Algerian security forces on April 16 and April 25 in **Constantine** and **Jijel** in northeastern Algeria. ISIS will likely continue to launch attacks in Algeria ahead of Ramadan, possibly receiving support from ISIS's affiliate in Libya.
- 2) ISIS's Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiyyah, also known as Boko Haram, claimed an ambush on Nigerian forces in **Borno state, Nigeria** on April 24. The ambush was the group's first claimed attack since November 2015. Chadian forces interdicted a weapons shipment from ISIS in Libya on April 7 apparently intended for Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiyyah. This indicates that ISIS in Libya has the ability and intent to transfer resources to other ISIS-linked groups.
- 3) Libyan National Army (LNA) and local militias mobilized toward ISIS's stronghold of **Sirte** from three axes on April 26. ISIS may retreat from Sirte toward southern desert sanctuaries, or may fight a protracted battle with spectacular attacks across northern **Libya** in order to maintain control of its only urban center outside of Iraq and Syria.
- 4) ISIS withdrew from the eastern Libyan city of **Derna** following clashes with local militias and government forces on April 20. The group likely retains attack capability in eastern **Libya**, which it demonstrated with VBIED attacks in Benghazi and Derna on April 15 and 17
- 5) Turkish forces arrested ISIS suspects apparently planning attacks in **Gaziantep** on April 13 and **Konya** on April 21, indicating the group may intend to attack Western and Turkish government officials. Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and German Chancellor Angela Merkel visited Gaziantep on April 23, while Davutoglu was reportedly the intended target of the Konya attack.
- 6) ISIS's Wilayat **Sinai** launched attacks across North Sinai in early April as the U.S. and other members of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) reduced their presence in the area. Wilayat Sinai also claimed its first attack at the Kerem Shalom border crossing with Israel and Gaza on April 27, amidst increasing rhetoric against Israel.
- 7) ISIS's Wilayat Najd in central **Saudi Arabia** claimed an IED attack on a police station and assassination of a security official in **Riyadh** on April 2 and April 5, respectively. Wilayat Najd will likely continue attacks against Saudi security targets in the Riyadh area during Ramadan to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the Saudi government.
- 8) ISIS claimed its first attack in **Somalia**, an unsuccessful IED attack on an African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) vehicle in **Mogadishu** on April 25. ISIS maintains a small group of supporters in Somalia who defected from the more dominant al Qaeda affiliate al-Shabaab in October 2015. .
- 9) ISIS claimed the assassination of a university professor in **Rajshahi, Bangladesh** on April 23. ISIS likely intends to declare an affiliate in Bangladesh, where it has designated a local leader.
- 10) ISIS released its first official attack claim in the **Philippines** on April 9, saying that its fighters killed 100 Philippine forces. The claim likely referenced routine clashes between local pro-ISIS militants and security forces, indicating increased communication. This suggests that ISIS is preparing to declare a Southeast Asian affiliate in the near term, likely during Ramadan 2016.

ISIS continued to pursue its regional campaign objectives of establishing affiliates and increasing disorder throughout historically Muslim lands. ISIS is preparing for a global surge of activities before and during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, which will take place between June 6 and July 5, 2016. ISIS will likely aim to launch new offensives in North Africa and declare new affiliates in Southeast Asia and Bangladesh in order to maintain overall momentum in those regions. This strategy will also seek to establish resilience elsewhere in the region as it faces challenges in Iraq and Syria. ISIS may soon face a strong challenge from Western-backed Libyan armed groups, which are already preparing an offensive on Sirte, the group's only urban center outside of Iraq and Syria. ISIS may fight to preserve control over Sirte, which gives the group organizational resiliency, or may retreat to southern desert sanctuaries to develop a new safe haven. Either course of action will likely encourage ISIS to deepen its relationships with jihadist groups across North Africa. ISIS also continues to claim attacks against security forces in North Sinai, prompting the U.S. and other members of the Multinational Force & Observer mission to reduce their presence in the area.

This map draws upon sourcing and analysis provided by our partners at the Critical Threats Project at the American Enterprise Institute.

Content and Graphic by Claire Coyne