



02 May 2011

SPECIAL REPORT

The Death of Usama Bin Laden: Initial Global Media Reaction

Purpose: The following analysis, produced as part of USSTRATCOM's Foreign Media Analysis program, highlights items observed in daily monitoring of 150 newspapers from 51 countries around the world. SOSi analysts draw upon their experience and knowledge of the region and news outlets to provide context to issues relevant to US security objectives.



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USSTRATCOM Special Report



Global Reaction to Demise of Bin Laden: Overview By AOR

- **EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW:** Global coverage overall positive in scope but cautions that Al Qaida threat remains significant
- **AFRICOM:** A region heavily impacted by terrorism welcomes news of Bin Laden's death
- **CENTCOM:** Usama's death is good news but not the end of international terrorism; Iran questions US plans for region
- **EUCOM:** Operation deemed successful; future US-Pakistani relations at risk; concerns for Middle East peace process
- **NORTHCOM:** Praise for Obama; Canadians need to remain vigilant; Mexico wants a similar victory against cartel capo
- **PACOM:** Restrained optimism over US operation; India claims location of UBL proved Pakistani collaboration with Al Qaida
- **SOUTHCOM:** Important blow against terrorism; ALBA countries criticize CIA; US slammed for "openly celebrating" demise

Media Analysis Slides

- **ISRAEL:** Ideological Differences Between Palestinian Authority And Hamas Over Bin Laden's Death
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- **IRAN:** With Bin Laden Dead, Who Will Become America's Next Top Enemy?
- **AFGHANISTAN:** Karzai Urges NATO To Go After Terrorists In Pakistan As Bin Laden Killed In US Raid
- **CENTRAL ASIA:** Regional Media Swiftly Reacts To Obama's Announcement About Bin Laden's Death
- **UGANDA:** Somali Prime Minister Says Al Qaida Learning New Terror Techniques From Pirates

Breaking Developments Observed in Monitored Newspapers*

- **AUSTRALIA:** PM Gillard says Al Qaida remains a threat ("Our war against terrorism must continue") – *The Australian*
- **AUSTRALIA:** Bin Laden's death was unwittingly live-tweeted – *The Australian*
- **BANGLADESH:** Pakistan faces pressure after Usama killed – *Daily Star*
- **INDIA:** Efforts to eliminate terror havens must not abate: India (statement of External Affairs Minister Krishna) – *Indian Express*
- **INDIA:** Terrorists find sanctuary in Pakistan: India – *Times of India*
- **JAPAN:** "This is a major turning point in the US war on terror" says Tokyo University of Foreign Studies Professor Iizuka – *Asahi*
- **MALAYSIA:** Usama death: Police to boost security (Home Minister Hishammuddin: I hope Usama's death will lead to peace)
- **PHILIPPINES:** Bin Laden is dead; NAIA on alert status (President Aquino lauds US effort) – *Philippine Star*
- **SINGAPORE:** Usama's death a 'significant milestone': Ministry of Foreign Affairs – *Straits Times*

NOTE: Hyperlinks lead to analysis or related issue overview slide. Red stories indicate negative bias or potential media threat, green stories represent positive bias or media opportunity. Subjective assessment based on existing circumstances. See last **Notes and Methodology** Slide for further information and list of outlets.



Breaking Developments Observed in Monitored Newspapers (continued)

- SOUTH KOREA: South Korea on alert for implications from Bin Laden's death: senior FM official – all outlets
- CANADA: *Toronto Star* predicts “Now come the questions” in terms of explaining the death of Bin Laden
- CANADA: Canadian leadership tells press death of Bin Laden “provides sober satisfaction”; 24 Canadians died on 9-11
- CANADA: Canadian Foreign Ministry warns Canadians to avoid public gatherings in Afghanistan and Pakistan; possible violence
- MEXICO: US triumph against Bin Laden augurs reelection of President Barack Obama
- MEXICO: *El Universal* columnist declares death of Bin Laden “a victory for US national security”
- GERMANY: Usama Bin Laden killed: “An unmistakable message”
- ISRAEL: Hamas PM Ismail Haniyeh: Usama Bin Laden fought for Islam
- ISRAEL: Palestinian Authority: Killing of Usama Bin Laden could help advance peace
- POLAND: Bin Laden is dead, but it is not over. Who will be his successor?
- RUSSIA: “Thank God Usama Bin Laden has been liquidated” – *Izvestiya*
- TURKEY: First statement from Al Qaida: We will take revenge for death of Islam's Sheikh
- FRANCE: “Impossible without Pakistan's help” – *Le Monde*
- BOSNIA: Al Qaida: We will revenge Bin Laden; we will attack Europe!
- PAKISTAN: Pakistan Foreign Ministry; Bin Laden operation conducted by US forces; Pakistani Taliban: “Pakistani army, Pakistani rulers, President Zardari and the army will be our first targets. America will be our second target”
- AFGHANISTAN: Karzai tells Taliban to take lesson from Bin Laden's killing; Residents say Bin Laden fighters shot down US helicopter
- PAN-ARAB: US found Bin Laden's hideout by tracking his close courier; US forces were under orders to kill Bin Laden
- LEBANON: Bush: Usama Bin Laden killing a momentous achievement for US; Obama says Bin Laden killed in shootout
- UAE/Saudi Arabia: Egypt's Al-Zawahri likely to succeed Bin Laden; Al Qaida lost its relevancy years ago – *Gulf News*
- IRAN: Foreign Ministry spokesperson: “With Bin Laden dead, US no longer has a reason to stay in the region”
- ALGERIA: Algeria “fears” a war between Al Qaida and the West near its borders; Washington wants to prolong the war to lure Al Qaida to the region
- ALGERIA: French interior minister says Al Qaida received Libyan weapons – *El Khabar*
- RSA: Bin Laden killed in “luxurious compound,” global reaction is positive, militants shocked by death
- RSA: Pretoria called on nations to stop “demon of terror” in aftermath of Bin Laden's death – *The Times*
- KENYA: “Kibaki: Usama's death 'justice' for Kenya terror victims” – *Daily Nation*
- NIGERIA: “Americans celebrate Bin Laden's death” *This Day*
- ALGERIA: Malian president calls on tribes in northern country to fight Al Qaida – *El Khabar* (4/30)
- SOUTHCOM: AOR press headlines “night of jubilation” in US; notes CIA warnings of “almost certain” retaliation
- ARGENTINA: Foreign Ministry issues statement welcoming operation against UBL “without mentioning Obama”
- BOLIVIA: Wire coverage of Bin Laden death emphasizes “not an attack on Islam”; hundreds celebrate outside White House
- COLOMBIA: Santos congratulates Obama via telephone; talks about “triumph over terrorism and the FTA”
- CUBA: *Rebelde* reprints Fidel columns linking CIA and US to UBL and 2001 World Trade Center attacks; *Prensa Latina* questions timing of operation
- PERU: *La Republica* highlights US trust in intelligence in operation against UBL, remembers tragedy of 9/11
- PERU: Garcia's comment that UBL's death was “first miracle” of John Paul II may revive fears of “crusader” and “anti-Muslim” rhetoric
- VENEZUELA: VP Jaua criticizes US government and people for “openly celebrating” UBL's death



GLOBAL REACTION: Executive Overview



OVERVIEW : Despite the 1 May late-breaking news, the death of Al Qaida leader Usama Bin Laden (UBL) dominated headlines across monitored global outlets on 2 May. Overall, foreign coverage of the US operation in Pakistan was positive, with reports heralding the death of Bin Laden as a “significant blow” to international terrorism, a “victory for US national security,” and “welcome news” for countries attempting to combat extremism. However, several concerns appeared threaded within reporting regardless of region. While the global media heralded the death of Bin Laden as an unequivocal strike against extremist organizations, a number of outlets across COCOMs reminded readership that his death did not signify an end to Al Qaida and that the threat of reprisals was very real. Moreover, some EUCOM and PACOM sources expressed concern that US-Pakistani relations could suffer further tensions, arguing the location of Bin Laden’s safe house suggested at least some within Pakistan’s security apparatus were supporting extremists, including Al Qaida. Within the CENTCOM AOR, Iranian sources used the demise of Bin Laden to fuel anti-US sentiment and demands for the US Military to leave the region now that its “top enemy” was dead. Questions over the legitimacy of the operation could also become an issue, as emerging commentary within the both the CENTCOM and NORTHCOM AORs debated whether the US had violated Pakistani sovereignty by mounting a unilateral attack on foreign soil. Additional negative commentary appeared out of SOUTHCOM countries involved in the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA) and included allegations of CIA-led 9/11 conspiracies and criticism of Americans for “openly” celebrating death in the streets. Moreover, Peruvian President Alan Garcia earned extensive coverage with his comment framing Bin Laden’s death as the “first miracle” of the newly-beatified pontiff Saint John Paul II, a connection with potential to re-inflate sensitivities among the Muslim community to “crusader” and “anti-Islam” rhetoric.



[No caption]
Source: *Le Monde* (France), 2 May 2011



Regional Media Reaction: AFRICOM



OVERVIEW: Initial reaction to Usama Bin Laden's death in monitored outlets included official statements, particularly in countries heavily impacted by terrorist movements or previous attacks, that welcomed his demise or announced the "good news" while noting governments needed to cooperate to confront possible retaliatory attacks and the ongoing terrorist threat. Alongside factual reports were a few comments suggesting the death would be a shock to Al Qaida. Ethiopia's *Walta Info* emphasized American public reaction and the "unilateral" nature of the operation. Early reactions were noticeably absent from outlets in Morocco and Senegal, while numerous papers did not publish or update their sites due to the May Day holiday.

Algeria

The websites of *El Moudjahid* and *El Watan* carried straightforward articles on President Barack Obama's announcement that Navy Seal special forces killed Bin Laden. *El Watan* noted that while world leaders welcomed Bin Laden's death, Al Qaida members called it a "catastrophe."

Kenya

In *Daily Nation*, Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki welcomed Bin Laden's death, calling it an "act of justice" for those killed by Al Qaida's 1998 attack on the US Embassy in Nairobi. Additionally, Prime Minister Raila Odinga "welcome[d]" the news of Bin Laden's death.

Nigeria

The Guardian published a head shot [later determined to be fake] of the dead Bin Laden. In the article, he was described as the leader "generally said to be the mastermind of the attacks ... on September 11." The outlet reported that a western diplomat who spoke in anonymity would like to see increased security for fear of retaliation because "Al Qaida elements are in Nigeria. ... there is need for high cooperation on this."

Somalia

Shabelle reported that TFG President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed "welcomed" the demise of Al Qaida's top leader. He said Bin Laden was responsible for the spread of "wrong ideology" and loss of life in Somalia.

South Africa

The monitored South African outlets provided straightforward wire reports regarding Bin Laden's death, operational information and his burial at sea. However in its 2 May article, *The Times* published a quote from Clayson Monyela, spokesman for the country's Department of International Relations and Cooperation, who warned other nations to "cooperate in stemming the demon of terrorism, in all its manifestations, out of global politics."

Sudan

Al Nilin reported on its website that Daa Rashwan, expert on Islamist movements with the Ahrum Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, told *Al Jazeera* satellite channel that Al Qaida "may be exposed to a violent shock" over the killing of its leader and the peacefulness of Arab revolutions.

Uganda

In Uganda's state-owned outlet *New Vision*, Foreign Affairs Minister Sam Kutesa said Bin Laden's death was "good news to us (Uganda) and it's really a momentous event."



Regional Media Reaction: CENTCOM



OVERVIEW : The breaking news about Usama Bin Laden's (UBL) death dominated headlines in all monitored CENTCOM media. While the majority of outlets tacitly welcomed the news, many editorialists stressed that the killing of UBL did not mean an end to Al Qaida. Many Emirati outlets emphasized “the important success” scored by American forces with their Pakistani allies in killing Bin Laden; however, outlets also highlighted that the ideologies Bin Laden represented were far from being uprooted from extremist societies. Pan-Arab press charged that Bin Laden's death would most likely have a psychological impact on Al Qaida members rather than cause operational damage to the organization. AFPak press warned of retaliation from pro-militant organizations, as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan already issued threats against Pakistani rulers, President Zardari, and the Army. Saudi and Egyptian media suggested that Ayman Al Zawahri would likely succeed Bin Laden to further radicalize the terrorist organization. Meanwhile, media reaction in Iran contained a high degree of speculation about ongoing US motives.

AFPAK

In Pakistan, Bin Laden's demise was hailed as a major setback for terrorists across the globe; however, some military analysts on Geo TV noted Usama's death would not dissolve the terrorist organization since daily operations were handed to lieutenants in Al Qaida. Analysts further stated that Bin Laden's death would prove beneficial in domestic politics for the Obama Administration. Pakistani and Afghan media analysts warned of retaliation from pro-militant organizations, as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan already issued a threat of making Pakistani rulers, President Zardari, and the Army their primary targets. Moreover, the implications of Usama's death on the Afghan war and Pakistan's role have become hot topics and more questions and analyses are bound to emerge. In Afghanistan, the independent monitored outlets predicated that the fact that Bin Laden was able to hide in a farmhouse just outside Islamabad would give the Afghan government a unique opportunity to accuse Pakistan of giving sanctuary to terrorists. Press highlighted that President Karzai urged the Taliban to take a lesson from Bin Laden's fate and lay down arms.

Iran

Among Iran's online outlets, which first reported the death of Usama Bin Laden, there was no sign of anger at US actions that led to the killing of the Al Qaida leader. If anything, the news appeared, tacitly, to be welcomed even among pro-regime outlets. Initial Iranian media reporting contained a high degree of speculation about ongoing US motives. Bin Laden was dismissed as a villain but questions were asked about Washington's next move as Tehran urged the US Military to leave the region. The only major official reaction so far came from the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson who argued the demise of Bin Laden removed any need for a continuing US Military presence in the region. The lack of a clear-cut reaction reflected the fact that, while the Shia Iranian regime never had any sympathy for the radical Sunni agenda of Al Qaida, Tehran nonetheless places all regional events in the prism of its broader rivalry with the US.

Egypt

Many newswire reports in Egypt depicted the details of the operation, as well as the spontaneous celebrations of American citizens in New York and other major US cities. Likewise, newswire reports examined the official US and international reactions but no commentaries were observed. Both independent and state-run press cited Western media reports suggesting, “Al Qaida second man, Egyptian national Ayman Al Zawahiri, will likely succeed Bin Laden.” Reports noted Bin Laden's body was buried at sea and no pictures of his death had been released yet. Independent *Al Masry Al Youm* emphasized in a front-page headline that “ Hamas' Ismile Hanyia mourned Bin Laden's death and condemned his killing at the hands of US forces.” The website *Al Ahram's Youth Gate* quoted Muslim Brother Ahmad Abu Barkah as saying that despite the ideological differences between Al Qaida and the Muslim Brotherhood, the group condemned Bin Laden's killing at the hands of the Americans, adding “he [Bin Laden] should have received a fair trial and be punished in accordance with international laws.”



Regional Media Reaction: CENTCOM



Iraqi Forums

While reporting on Iraqi Forums has thus far been limited, one article on *Baghdad Forever* celebrated the killing of the “murderer of Muslims and Iraqis,” Usama Bin Laden. The poster dubbed the killing of Bin Laden as a “victory for all humanity,” congratulating “the mothers of all those who lost their lives in barbaric terrorist attacks.” One positive response expressed hope that Iraqis would live in peace following the death of Bin Laden. On *Al Mawsil*, a cross-poster positively reported on the killing of Bin Laden, considering his death and the execution of the former President, Saddam Hussein, as “the two most important and controversial events in this century,” calling the two men “murderers, impious and transgressors.”

Jordan/Kuwait

Jordanian and Kuwaiti outlets have yet to publish substantial editorial reaction due to the timing of the announcement versus print deadlines.

Pan-Arab

Pan-Arab press included abundant detailed reporting on the US military operation. Press highlighted that Bin Laden’s death would not end Al Qaida terrorist activities but might boost rejection of Al Qaida ideology. Outlets also speculated that Bin Laden’s death would most likely have a psychological impact on Al Qaida members rather than operational damage to the organization.

Central Asia

Initial media reaction in Central Asia was largely straightforward. None of the government leaders or key officials made statements, while in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan a few public figures issued isolated comments. Among all five states, media in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan provided the least coverage, whereas Kyrgyz and Tajik press broadly reported the event. For the time being, no negative comments toward the US or positive remarks about Usama Bin Laden’s death have been observed. Regional terrorist groups such as the Islamic Jihad Union and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, known to issue statements on important issues, had yet to react, though Al Qaida reportedly maintains close ties with Central Asian terrorist organizations operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arab News dedicated a special page for the all the reports on the subject of Bin Laden. The outlet noted that “on the streets of Saudi Arabia, Bin Laden’s native land that stripped him of his citizenship after 11 September, there was a mood of disbelief and sorrow among many,” adding Hamas condemned Bin Laden’s killing. On the other hand, the article emphasized that “for many Arabs, inspired by the popular upheavals of the past few months, the news of Bin Laden’s death had less significance than it once might have had.” The article mentioned that some analysts believed the risk of retaliation increased as Bin Laden had become a martyr.

United Arab Emirates

Emirati media swiftly reacted to the news, though editorialists stressed UBL’s death did not mean the end of Al Qaida terrorism. A *Gulf News* lead editorial considered Bin Laden’s demise “an important success for all nations who have been fighting terrorism.” The editorial also stated, “killing Bin Laden is still only one step in the fight against terror.” On one hand, regional observers noted that the ideologies that Bin Laden represented were far from being uprooted from extremist societies. On the other hand, the killing of UBL provoked anti-Al Qaida sentiment among Emirati media, as most editorials emphasized that “Bin Laden destroyed Islam’s true [peaceful] message and offered his followers nothing other than hatred and anger.”



Regional Media Reaction: EUCOM



OVERVIEW: While initial reaction in the EUCOM AOR to the killing of Usama Bin Laden was somewhat muted by the Labor Day holiday (1 May), press in most major countries in the region began to respond to the events of the weekend. Media and official reaction throughout Europe was overwhelmingly positive, praising US President Barack Obama and citing the international benefits of Bin Laden's elimination. Several themes of concern, however, emerged in the media. First, a number of news outlets noted Bin Laden's death in no way signaled the end of Al Qaida and highlighted the fear of Al Qaida reprisals in Europe or on European targets elsewhere, or by the Taliban against European troops serving in Afghanistan. Second, several sources expressed concern that US-Pakistani relations could be further jeopardized by such a high-profile event, arguing Bin Laden's whereabouts suggested that at least some in Pakistan's security apparatus were supporting extremists, including Al Qaida. Finally, Israeli media contrasted the negative reaction by Hamas with the positive reaction by Fatah and asked how the difference might affect a possible Palestinian unity government and the prospects for Middle East peace talks.

Belarus/ Bosnia

Limited coverage in both Belarus and Bosnia due to Labor Day holiday.

France

French media hailed the killing of Bin Laden, as did French officials who agreed that "justice had been done." Coverage reflected this sense of relief, as well as a heightened sense of vigilance regarding the threat of reprisals. These reprisals, described in *Le Monde*, could come from branches such as Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb or Al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula or even individuals, with European targets being a high likelihood.

Georgia

Resonance Daily reported favorably on the operation to "eliminate" Bin Laden and provided a brief excerpt of President Obama's speech in which he praised the bravery of those who carried out the mission and condemned Bin Laden as a mass murderer.

Germany

German media coverage of Bin Laden's death was very positive. The tabloid *Bild* said that there was "great relief and satisfaction in Germany." The most common quote mentioned in articles from US President Barack Obama's speech was, "Justice has been done." Still, outlets did note that Bin Laden's death could increase the chances of revenge attacks by Al Qaida, which may pick up some resonance in light of Friday's arrest of three alleged Al Qaida members in Germany. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* Foreign Affairs Editor Stefan Kornelius noted that Bin Laden's death "symbolically closed a violent chapter in world history. But this story is not over yet."

Israel

Israeli media coverage hailed the death of Bin Laden as an important achievement for democracies and for the free world. The widely-read *Yehidloth Aharonoth* quoted President Shimon Peres who attributed the "victory" directly to President Obama's leadership. *Haaretz* quoted Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh condemning the US attack as he hailed the Al Qaida leader's "fight for Islam" and for "Arab-Muslims." In contrast, Palestinian Authority spokesman Ghassan Khatib praised the elimination of Bin Laden as an important milestone to achieving peace.



Regional Media Reaction: EUCOM



Poland

Conservative *Rzeczpospolita (Rz)* and liberal *Gazeta Wyborcza (GW)* both noted the death of Bin Laden with satisfaction, with *Rz* citing Prime Minister Donald Tusk as saying “justice had triumphed.” Several commentators thought Bin Laden’s death “symbolically significant,” but refrained from calling it a breakthrough in the war on terrorism. According to security expert Krzysztof Liedel in *GW*, “We cannot forget that Al Qaida’s structure is not hierarchical. The organization consists of many local groups that share objectives and ideology. Bin Laden’s death will not impact their operations.” Elsewhere in *GW*, Middle East expert Bartłomiej Gryza warned that Al Qaida’s retaliation was “only a matter of time,” while *Rz* cited President Bronislaw Komorowski as saying that there were “no signals” that terrorists would target Poland.

Russia

Kommersant and *Izvestiya* applauded both US and Pakistani special forces—despite conflicting reports about Pakistan’s involvement in the operation—and suggested Bin Laden’s death was beneficial to the whole world, as well as a big plus for President Obama’s presidential campaign. Analysts argued that Bin Laden’s death was a positive development for Russian leaders too, especially in regards to the volatile North Caucasus. *Izvestiya* quoted President of Ingushetia Yunus-Bek Yevkurov as saying, “Thank God Usama Bin Laden has been liquidated. This is really a success. ... We must congratulate those who carried out this special operation ... [and] we must do everything possible so that, in the future, fewer evildoers will be able to hide under the pretense of religion to do their dirty business.” The pro-Kremlin newspaper also noted that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev called for increased international cooperation in the global fight against terrorism.

Serbia

Newspaper of record *Politika* suggested the US “finally exhaled” following Bin Laden’s “successful liquidation.” The paper warned, however, that Bin Laden’s death did not mark the end of the battle with Al Qaida. *Politika* emphasized, that despite Pakistani claims of involvement, the US was solely responsible for the operation. Moreover, the paper argued, “The fact that the Al Qaida leader was found and liquidated in the heart of Pakistani territory, not in a cave bordering Afghanistan, again confirmed that the US’s major regional ally in the ‘war on terror’ is playing a double game: on one hand accepting over one billion dollars annually in military assistance to fight Islamic extremism, while, on the other, serving as the primary Taliban sponsor.”

Turkey

The Turkish press reported that Ankara welcomed the death of Bin Laden with Turkish President Abdullah Gul saying, “The death of the world’s biggest terrorist leader should be a lesson to everyone.” Detailed coverage stressed that both the Taliban and Al Qaida vowed to retaliate against the US. Newspapers, particularly conservative *Zaman* were somewhat critical of the maritime burial of Bin Laden’s body. *Hurriyet* also questioned the future of US-Pakistani relations in the light of the operation, which increased suspicion of Pakistan’s support for Islamic extremists. The paper’s reminder of the deadly Al Qaida attacks in Istanbul in 2003 was the clearest example of openly positive coverage of Bin Laden’s death in Turkey.



Regional Media Reaction: NORTHCOM



OVERVIEW: While the death of Usama Bin Laden was the top story within monitored NORTHCOM outlets, the bulk of reporting was neutral and gathered from wire sources. In Canada, *The Globe and Mail* reported comments from Canadian Prime Minister Stephen who, on the heels of the White House statement, announced “Bin Laden’s death provided ‘sober satisfaction’,” but that Canadians were to remain “vigilant” against threats from international terrorist groups. *The Globe and Mail* also suggested the situation was “a major moral boost for the US and its president,” sentiment countered by *The Toronto Star* which argued the decision to dispose of Bin Laden’s remains at sea could trigger anger among certain Muslim clerics. At the close of daily monitoring, isolated Canadian commentary began to debate whether the US operation and the death of Bin Laden were justifiable under military codes of war or if either one had been a violation of Pakistani sovereignty or of international law. In Mexico, outside of neutral commentary, an *El Universal* columnist declared the case “a victory for US national security” and suggested the situation challenged Mexican President Felipe Calderon to achieve a similar success against Mexico’s leading cartel capo.

Canada

Monitored Canadian outlets offered mostly neutral commentary as press attempted to predict what impact the Bin Laden’s death would have on international security and the future of the Al Qaida terrorist organization. *The Globe and Mail* reported Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper gave a press conference shortly after the White House announcement to tell the public that “Bin Laden’s death provided ‘sober satisfaction’.” Harper reminded Canada that 24 Canadians were killed on 9/11, and that this episode “secures a measure of justice” for the victims. Harper praised the Canadian soldiers “attempting to cut terror at its root” in Afghanistan and reminded his domestic audience to be “vigilant” as terrorist threats against Canadians remained. *The Globe and Mail* also suggested the situation was “a major moral boost for the US and its president,” but *The Toronto Star* argued the US government’s somewhat controversial decision to dispose of Bin Laden’s remains at sea could trigger anger among certain Muslim clerics. *The Toronto Star* also focused an eye on Canadian domestic security, noting comments from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) that it would “continue to work with our domestic and international partners” to keep Canadians safe from terrorist threats. At the close of daily monitoring, isolated opinion commentary began to debate whether the US operation, and the death of Bin Laden, was justifiable under military codes of war or if either one had been a violation of Pakistani sovereignty or of international law.

Mexico

Despite the late-breaking nature of the story, Usama Bin Laden was the top story in major Mexican newspapers. Coverage heavily quoted US President Barack Obama’s address and cited information from other anonymous US officials. Of note, former US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Drug Enforcement and *El Universal* columnist Ana Maria Salazar wrote a column declaring, “This death, and the leadership demonstrated by the president in his extraordinary speech announcing the death of Usama, surely will win Obama reelection in the US.” She went on to declare “a victory for US national security” and suggested that the successful killing of Bin Laden challenged Mexican President Felipe Calderon to achieve a similar success against Mexico’s “enemy number one,” Joaquin ‘El Chapo’ Guzman. In left-leaning *La Jornada*, its a front page article, “Bin Laden, killed by US troops in Pakistan: Obama,” was accompanied by an image alleging to be Bin Laden after his death. The photo, [widely disseminated by the international media then dismissed as an internet falsification], ran with the caption, “Image of the cadaver of Usama Bin Laden distributed by Pakistani TV channel *Express TV*.”



Regional Media Reaction: PACOM



OVERVIEW: PACOM AOR media greeted the news of the death of Usama Bin Laden (UBL) with a pragmatic measure of restrained optimism, acknowledging the significance of Bin Laden's death while cautioning that terrorist strategies have evolved such that extremist ideology will likely survive the death of any single leading voice.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh's broadsheets were initially slow to provide a significant "first draft" response, however the depth of reporting quickly caught up with events. A widely picked-up statement issued by the Foreign Ministry offered a somewhat pro-forma denunciation of terrorism in line with the government's long-held position, as well reaffirmation of Bangladesh's support for regional and global anti-terror efforts, noting that the death of Bin Laden was "a major development in the global war on terror."

China

While Chinese state media noted the American public's jubilation over Usama Bin Laden's death, it also printed condemnation by groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Hamas, which characterized the killing as an "assassination." Both Chinese and Taiwanese press predicted that Bin Laden's death would trigger another round of terrorist attacks around the world. Beijing failed to issue a response to the incident, though official reaction is typically restrained in the early stages of similar media phenomena.

India

Tinged with a tone of vindication and self-satisfaction, Indian outlets focused on the implications Bin Laden's location in Abbottabad had on the culpability of the Pakistani state. All outlets highlighted the fact that UBL was found "deep inside Pakistan," in a town that housed several elite military institutions. The immediate [and overwhelming] conclusion was that India was correct in its longstanding position that the Pakistani military-intelligence apparatus (ISI) played a double game: sheltering UBL while simultaneously claiming to be an ally of the West. The *Times of India* even went so far to claim the Bin Laden compound was, in actuality, an ISI safe-house. India's Ministry of Home Affairs commented the location of Bin Laden "underlines our concern that terrorists belonging to different organizations find sanctuary in Pakistan." Similarly, another spokesman stated, "this is the final confirmation of the hard fact that Pakistan remains the epicenter of global terror, where terrorism and terrorists both are allowed to be encouraged and given shelter." Hoping the newfound international attention would compel Pakistan to act against perpetrators of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called upon Pakistan to "work comprehensively to end the activities of all such groups who threatened civilized behavior." However several articles, including an article in *The Hindu*, cited India's ex-ambassador to Pakistan who stated, "obviously he [Bin Laden] was the guest of Pakistan's military," but neither his death, nor the international embarrassment to the Pakistani military-intelligence establishment, will help India in obtaining custody of those on its own Most-Wanted list.

Indonesia

The reaction of Indonesia's leading terrorist figure, Abu Bakar Bashir, received significant attention, as Bashir declared from prison in Jakarta, "there will be vengeance" over Usama's death. Bashir also asserted UBL "is a great martyr and mujahidin," a statement that was quoted by both *Kompas* and *Republika*. In addition, Bashir also accused US President Barack Obama of lying, criticizing Obama's statement that the US is not, and will never be at war with Islam. In other prominently featured reactions, Deputy Chairman of the Indonesian Senate (MPR), Lukman Hakim, wished Usama's dead body was shown, "in order to eliminate any doubt about his death." Meanwhile, Indonesian senator TB Hasanuddin (from the national defense commission), warned of the possibility of "retaliatory attacks" in Indonesia.



Regional Media Reaction: PACOM



Japan

Usama Bin Laden's death was the top story in the 2 May evening and the 3 May morning editions of newspapers throughout Japan; many also issued special editions as soon as the news hit. Among Japan's top-circulation dailies, *Asahi Shimbun's* noted President Obama's comment that "justice has been done," while *Yomiuri Shimbun* chose to highlight that the body had been buried at sea after DNA testing. An *Asahi* editorial called for a "farewell to the age of terror," and urged the US to "pay respect to the Islamic world and thereby earn the respect of its populace" and to "reconsider a diplomacy whose top priority is the war on terror." *Yomiuri*, by contrast, published an editorial that emphasized, "as the President [Obama] himself has acknowledged, the fight against terror will continue," and that the desire for revenge among Bin Laden's followers could raise the terrorist threat.

Malaysia

Although media reaction was generally muted, Malaysian Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein spoke for Kuala Lumpur, stating that he hoped the death of the Al Qaeda leader will bring universal peace and harmony. Opposition media outlet *Malaysia Kini* observed that security efforts were enhanced in anticipation of possible reprisals.

North Korea

No significant reaction in state media.

Philippines

Reporting recalled the country's strong emotional and historical ties with the US and the prominent role the country played in the early days as the "second front" on the US's global war on terror following 9/11. Wire-sourced coverage from major outlets to the blogosphere echoed the international frenzy in the initial stages, but domestic reaction quickly followed. President Aquino, lawmakers and the military hailed Bin Laden's death as a major victory against terrorism and a heavy blow to the domestic terrorist group Abu Sayyaf, which lost its major source of funding. However, the domestic media also evinced caution, with the *Manila Times* editorializing it was "too early to declare a victory" and cited the threats of retaliation and of UBL being characterized as a "martyr", while journalist Maria Ressa noted it was a "great moral victory" but that "injustice against Moslems" not Usama, continue to "fuel" terror plots.

Singapore

The *Straits Times* featured a substantial volume of wire-sourced coverage which related the details of Usama Bin Laden's death without offering a significant window into local or official government reaction. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs produced a brief statement declaring Usama's death to be "a significant milestone for the world's efforts in combating international terrorism."

South Korea

The South Korean government welcomed the "victory" achieved and expressed a commitment to efforts to support the US' anti-terrorist mission, declaring that Bin Laden's death will "serve as an important momentum to end terrorism and contribute to international peace and security." The government confirmed for domestic audiences that the death of Bin Laden will not affect the activity of South Korea's Provincial Reconstruction Team in Charikar, Afghanistan because the team's mission has little to do with combating international terrorism, but instead focuses on health, police and career training and reconstruction. However, Seoul sounded a cautious note, clarifying that Bin Laden's death does not signal an end to terrorism and that retaliation attacks remain possible.



Regional Media Reaction: SOUTHCOM



OVERVIEW: The death of Usama Bin Laden generated intense coverage across the SOUTHCOM AOR, with headlines featuring steadily emerging details on the operation itself, the CIA's warning of "near certain" retaliation, and statements from several regional leaders. The news was largely and enthusiastically welcomed by regional leadership as "an important blow" against international terrorism, although several officials and commentators qualified their expressions of congratulation by warning that "Islamic extremist groups are not just going to surrender their arms" now. Peruvian President Alan Garcia earned extensive coverage with his comment framing Bin Laden's death as the "first miracle" of the newly-beatified pontiff Saint John Paul II, a connection with the dangerous potential to re-inflate sensitivities among the Muslim community to "crusader" and "anti-Islam" rhetoric. Unsurprisingly, the only openly negative commentary appeared in countries under the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA). The Cuban state-run media swiftly published past editorials from Fidel Castro linking the CIA to Bin Laden and suggesting a US role in the 11 September 2001 attacks, while Venezuelan Vice President Elias Jaua and Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño condemned the US government and population for "openly celebrating" Bin Laden's death. There was no observed reactions from governments in Bolivia, Cuba, or Nicaragua to date, although all three can be expected to follow a similar course condemning "terrorism" but also repudiating the "celebration of death" in the US. As suggested by the Cuban press, the timing of the event and the manner of disposing of the body may also revive conspiracy theories about the 2001 attacks.

Argentina

Referencing their country's ongoing diplomatic rift with the US, opposition [headlines](#) noted that the Argentine Foreign Ministry's carefully worded statement condemned the "criminal actions" of Usama Bin Laden "without mentioning" US President Barack Obama. Analysis from [Clarín](#) added that Argentina "could only be happy" with the news, citing its own past terrorist attacks.

Bolivia

Limited wire coverage of Usama Bin Laden's death emphasized the incident was "not an attack on Islam" and highlighted that hundreds [celebrated](#) outside White House. No official reaction from the Morales administration was observed in the monitored press.

Brazil

While [Foreign Minister Antonio Patriota](#) said Bin Laden's death had an "interesting and positive dimension at a time when the Arab world is protesting," skeptical analysis from [Folha](#) [downplayed the significance](#) and even warned that his death "[may inspire a new generation of terrorists.](#)"

Chile

State-owned La Nacion featured statements from [Foreign Minister Alfredo Romero](#) hailing the operation as "an important blow against terrorism" but cautioning that "terrorism will continue." [Justice Minister Felipe Bulnes](#) similarly welcomed the news, saying that "it produces a sensation of a wrong being righted."



Regional Media Reaction: SOUTHCOM



Colombia

Grappling with their own insurgency and sympathetic to lengthy manhunts in search of terrorist leaders, Colombian outlets featured specific mentions on the “high risk operation” and are likely to draw future parallels between Usama Bin Laden’s death and similar Colombian advances against FARC leadership. Still basking in his own counterterrorism successes, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos declared Bin Laden’s death “shows, once again, that terrorists, sooner or later, all fall.”

Cuba

The state-run media wasted little time in finding an anti-US angle. [Juventud Rebelde](#) reprinted excerpts from several of Fidel Castro’s past editorials highlighting links between Usama Bin Laden and the CIA and alleging the US had a role in the 11 September 2001 attacks. Likewise, an online column from [Prensa Latina](#) questioned the “curious” timing of the operation so near to the 10-year anniversary of the attacks and suggested it was part of US President Barack Obama’s “electoral strategy.”

Ecuador

Ecuadorian coverage was marked by statements from [Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño](#) insisting “we do not celebrate the death of anyone” and insisting that the US response to the 11 September 2001 attacks “was totally disproportionate.” An [El Comercio](#) blog quickly criticized the statement, lamenting it was obvious Patiño “definitively has not even the smallest interest in improving relations with the US.”

Nicaragua

Nicaraguan reporting of Usama Bin Laden’s death was limited to wire coverage from AP and other international news services. The press highlighted articles announcing increased security at US airports and alerts at US Embassies, along with US President Barack Obama’s statement claiming the US and the world were safer with Bin Laden dead. The press did not mention any official reactions from the Ortega administration, who previously condemned attacks on the family of Libyan leader Muammar Al Gaddafi.

Peru

The US operation considerable coverage in Peru despite the media’s intense focus on upcoming presidential elections. In addition, Peruvian President Alan Garcia attracted international attention by linking Bin Laden’s death to the beatification of pontiff John Paul II, suggesting that “ridding the earth of that demoniacal incarnation of crime, evil and hate” was the new saint’s “first miracle.” Outlets in Peru also [highlighted](#) US ability to gather intelligence and trust in its accuracy.

Venezuela

While the opposition press headlined the US operation against Usama Bin Laden as a success, [Vice President Elias Jaua](#) issued an official statement condemning the jubilant reaction in the US, saying “At least, before, imperial governments maintained composure. Now the death of any individual ... is openly celebrated by the heads of the governments dropping the bombs.”



Terrorism



ISRAEL: IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY AND HAMAS OVER BIN LADEN'S DEATH



US Commandos hunting Usama Bin Laden.
SOURCE: *Haaretz*, 5/2/2011

BLUF: Following the pronounced death of Usama Bin Laden, Israeli media captured ideological differences between the PA and Hamas over the role of terrorism. *Yehidloth Aharonoth* quoted officials expressing fear that terrorist organizations would use Bin Laden's death to attack Israel.

OBSERVED: Shortly after President Obama pronounced Bin Laden dead, *Haaretz* quoted Hamas Prime Minister (PM) Ismail Haniyeh condemning the US attack as he hailed the Al Qaida leader's "fight for Islam" and for "Arab-Muslims" in an *Al Jazeera* interview. Meanwhile in Ramallah, Palestinian Authority (PA) spokesman Ghassan Khatib praised the elimination of Bin Laden as an important milestone to achieve peace. *Yehidloth Aharonoth* noted that Israeli President Shimon Peres complemented the US defense establishment for its successful operation and directly attributed the "victory" to Obama's leadership. A separate report in the same widely-read newspaper quoted Tel Aviv "defense officials" expressing fear that Bin Laden's death could result in a new wave of terrorist attacks while Israelis abroad could be targeted for reprisals.

ASSESSMENT:

[N] *Although Israeli media coverage of the confirmed death of Bin Laden was overwhelmingly positive, Yehidloth Aharonoth stood out as the only newspaper to capture the fear that Gaza and Sinai-based terrorist organizations could manipulate the unfolding of events as a pretext to attack the Jewish state. Still, anonymous defense establishment sources quoted also seemed to believe that a large-scale attack was at least two months to a year away, despite the IDF raising its alert-level along the Israel-Lebanon border.*

[N] *Also noteworthy, less than a week after the PA and Hamas announced their intention to sign a unity agreement, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz captured the clear ideological differences between the Palestinian rival factions when it comes to the role of terrorism. In particular, while Khatib renounced Bin Laden's violence outright, Haniyeh's statement seemed to indicate Hamas' unwillingness to modify its position vis-à-vis Israel and the international community.*



Terrorism/US Military Operations



GERMANY: BIN LADEN'S DEATH IS "GOOD NEWS"



Caption: "Bin Laden is dead: dancing for joy in front of the White House in Washington."
SOURCE: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), 5/2/2011

BLUF: As expected, media coverage of Usama Bin Laden's death was very positive. Germany's foreign minister called it "good news." The death may play a role in the debate over extending 9/11-era terrorism legislation, however, which has become a contentious topic in the coalition.

OBSERVED: Usama Bin Laden's death dominated monitored outlets' websites on 2 May. The tabloid *Bild* said that there was "great relief and satisfaction in Germany." The most common quote mentioned in articles from US President Barack Obama's speech was, "Justice has been done." Coverage was overwhelmingly positive. German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle said that Bin Laden's death was "good news for all peace loving and free thinking people in the world." Chancellor Angela Merkel reportedly expressed her and Germany's respect for this good news to the president. She said that the fight against international terrorism must continue, adding that German troops in Afghanistan were fighting so that the country would never again become a home for terrorists. Still, outlets did note that Bin Laden's death could increase the chances of revenge attacks by Al Qaida, a fear which could pick up some resonance in light of Friday's arrest of three alleged Al Qaida members in Germany.

In early commentary on the death, a *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ) analysis speculated that the US intended to kill Usama Bin Laden, instead of capturing him, to avoid a "long trial" that might have "provoked Al Qaida members to action and make the fight against terrorism more difficult." The left-leaning paper's foreign affairs editor wrote in an editorial entitled "The Death of the Devil" that will appear in tomorrow's paper, "So, his death symbolically closes a violent chapter in world history. But this story is not over yet."

ASSESSMENT:

[+] *The positive tone of coverage was to be expected as Bin Laden was widely reviled in German society. It will be interesting, though, to watch how his death plays into the ongoing debate about extending terrorism legislation passed in the wake of September 11th. Germany's new interior minister called for extending it without revision after authorities arrested three suspected Al Qaida terrorists on Friday. Some observers criticized this as a way of putting pressure on the Free Democratic Party, which had wanted a debate about revising aspects of the legislation.*



Terrorism



FRANCE: JUSTICE DONE BUT VIGILANCE EVER MORE NECESSARY

BLUF: *Le Monde* portrayed a general sense in France that justice was served regarding Usama Bin Laden's death. This was combined, however, with an enduring anxiety at the capabilities of groups such as AQIM and a new threat of reprisals against European and Western interests.

OBSERVED: Coverage of the death of Usama Bin Laden, killed in a US forces operation on 1 May 2011, flooded French media. The centrist outlet *Le Monde* cited several statements coming out of Paris. The Elysee rejoiced that "justice has been done ... for thousands of victims killed worldwide," but cautioned that "this is not the end of Al Qaida." On a similar note, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe called this a "victory for all democracies," but reiterated that France would be "more vigilant than ever." As evidence of the incessantly high threat of terrorism, FM Juppe pointed to a recent attack in Morocco that killed eight French nationals among others. Likewise, *Le Monde* included other articles that mentioned Al Qaida's affiliates and their continued potential to do harm, including Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Furthermore, the paper provided expert responses from the European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center (ESISC), which pointed out that "groups and individuals associated with Al Qaida were also personally linked to its leader under the principle of *bay'ah*," a traditional Islamic oath of allegiance. The research center added that there is a legitimate risk of reprisals, particularly in Europe, but more generally against Western countries and their interests in the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel and Central Asia.

Separately, according to *Le Monde*, French Defense Minister Gerard Longuet said Usama Bin Laden's death could play "positively" into the fate of two French journalists detained in Afghanistan, but did not give any additional details on the links between the two cases.

ASSESSMENT:

[N] *With the most recent video of four French hostages held by AQIM still fresh in the French mind, it is no surprise that Le Monde made so many references to this and other Al Qaida affiliates in the region throughout its coverage of Usama Bin Laden's death. To the French public, AQIM has done the most direct harm to French interests in the last few years, and their leaders have continued to make threatening demands. Although many figures in France have questioned the linkages between such an offshoot and Al Qaida's central leadership and ideology, Le Monde's reporting suggested it believed that these branches and their followers exalted Bin Laden's image and what he stood for. Accordingly, his death could be a double-edged sword, dealing a severe blow to Al Qaida's morale while possibly having a blowback effect of reprisals, which as deduced from Le Monde, are most threatening in North Africa and the Sahel.*



Terrorism



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: CUTTING OFF HEAD OF SNAKE BRINGS RELIEF AND JOY TO EMIRATI MEDIA



SOURCE: *Khaleej Times*, 5/2/2011

BLUF: Emirati media swiftly reacted to the killing of Al Qaida leader Usama Bin Laden (UBL), though editorialists stressed that the killing does not mean the end of Al Qaida terrorism.

OBSERVED: Entitled "Usama Dead - Fight Goes On," a *Gulf News* lead editorial considered the killing of UBL as "an important success for all nations who have been fighting terrorism." The editorial pointed out that "killing Bin Laden is still only one step in the fight against terror." The writer noted that "Bin Laden has had over 20 years to build a substantial international organization, which is all the more dangerous as it is a loose alliance of like-minded people in many countries, ready to help and cooperate whenever needed, but without one central control." Therefore, "Al Qaida is very hard to eliminate, [Thus] the fight now needs to continue as strongly as ever to root out these dangerous terrorists and expose them to their followers for the sham that they are."

On the contrary, a *Gulf News* article cited analysts as saying that "With the ongoing turmoil in Iraq and Yemen, Al Qaida has lost its relevancy in the Middle East." One Bahraini analyst anticipated that "No shockwave will sweep the Arab region following Bin Laden's death." The analyst explained "Bin Laden has already lost the support he initially had among some religious [people] after his followers carried terrorist attacks against civilians in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere." Moreover, the analyst suggested that Al Qaida's reaction to the killing would be very limited both in space and in scope." In this context, government daily *The National* noted that "the killing of Bin Laden will spark retribution from Al Qaida members, and terrorist activities will continue." The paper quoted the UAE Interior Ministry Undersecretary, GEN Seif al Shaafar, as saying that "more [terrorist] attacks are expected," while adding that "Terrorism will not end with the murder of Bin Laden or Al Zawahiri and Al Qaida has built wide networks that will continue to operate."

ASSESSMENT:

[+] Cutting off the head of the snake brought relief and joy to Emirati media, considering the grim viciousness of Al Qaida's ideologies, which mushroomed around the Arab world. However, most editorialists warned that killing Al Qaida's leader would likely affect the terrorist group's activity for only a short term. On one hand, the ideologies that Bin Laden represented are far from being uprooted from extremist societies. Therefore, Al Qaida continued to be capable of causing great destruction since it still have several sympathizer groups and allies across the region. On the other hand, the killing of UBL provokes anti-Al Qaida sentiment among Emirati media, as most editorials emphasized that "Bin Laden destroyed Islam's true [peaceful] message and offered his followers nothing other than hatred and anger." Moreover, lead editorials emphasized that "the important success scored by American forces with their Pakistani allies in killing Bin Laden should be welcomed by all nations who have been fighting terrorism."



Terrorism



PAN-ARAB: BIN LADEN'S DEATH MIGHT STRENGTHEN ANTI-AL QAIDA IDEOLOGY

BLUF: Pan-Arab press included abundant detailed reporting on the US military operation that killed Al Qaida leader Usama Bin Laden. His death will certainly not end Al Qaida terrorist activities, but amid the region's non-violence movement, his death might boost rejection of Al Qaida ideology.

OBSERVED: Pan-Arab press carried extensive newswire reporting on the killing of Usama Bin Laden in Pakistan. Several articles focused on the details of the US military operation describing it as a result of intensified efforts by the US intelligence community in searching for Bin Laden during the last several months. Another article said intelligence officials discovered the compound in August while monitoring an Al Qaida courier close to Bin Laden. Along the same lines, Al Quds Al Arabi cited an Interpol statement warning from the possibility of a terrorist threat, stressing that the killing of Al Qaida top leader will lead to "the biggest terrorist danger by Al Qaida or terrorists inspired by Al Qaida." *Al Hayat* featured an article entitled "Bin Laden...The end," underscoring President Barak Obama's announcement of his death. The report said President Obama considered the killing of Bin Laden as the greatest achievement attained by his country in the war against Al Qaida, while emphasizing that the US "is not and never will be in a war against Islam." A newswire report in *Asharq Al Awsat* explained that President Obama will likely see a short-term bounce in his approval ratings, but he may also come under more pressure from Americans to speed up a planned withdrawal of US forces from the unpopular war in Afghanistan. Another report quoted a Saudi official expressing his country's hope that the elimination of Bin Laden will be "a step towards supporting international efforts to combat terrorism and to dismantle its cells, as well as the elimination of deviant thought that stands behind it."

ASSESSMENT:

[N] *Pan-Arab press did not include editorials on the killing of Bin Laden, however, regional experts already heralded that Bin Laden's elimination will not lead to the end of his Al Qaida organization. Bin Laden's influence and communication with his operatives have been hampered by the US drones attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan. However, Al Qaida groups have sprung in places such as Yemen, Iraq and Algeria, where Bin Laden had no operational influence. Bin Laden's death will most likely have a psychological aftermath on Al Qaida members more than operational damage to the organization. Nonetheless, taking into consideration the current non-violent movement that swept the region, the elimination of Bin Laden could boost the rejection of Al Qaida or Al Qaida-inspired ideology in the Arab world.*

[N] *An interesting analysis was put forward by prominent Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who fought alongside Afghans and other Arabs including Bin Laden. He told Arab News daily that Bin Laden's killing is "not big news," as he expected the news long time ago. Nonetheless, Khashoggi explained that the death of Bin Laden comes at a time "when Al Qaida ideology has been completely rejected by the Arab world. Al Qaida was in eclipse ... to be very specific it was buried on January 2011 in Tahrir Square in Cairo." Khashoggi added "the rise of the nonviolent movement in the Arab world was the complete rejection of the Al Qaida philosophy."*



US Military Operations



IRAN: WITH BIN LADEN DEAD, WHO WILL BECOME AMERICA'S NEXT TOP ENEMY?

BLUF: Early reporting on the death of Usama Bin Laden contains a high degree of speculation about ongoing US motives. Bin Laden is dismissed as a villain, but questions are asked about Washington's next move as Tehran urges the US military to leave the region.

OBSERVED: Among the online outlets that first reported the death of Usama Bin Laden, there is no sign of anger at US actions that led to the killing of the Al Qaida leader. If anything, the news appears to be tacitly welcomed even among pro-regime outlets. A closer look at the comments left behind by readers on the various outlets' sites show numerous references to Bin Laden as a "terrorist who got what he deserved"; "justice has been done" and that "[Bin Laden] badly damaged the reputation of Islam." Among readers' comments on the site of opposition *Kalame*, there were also comments that sought to link the character of the extremist Bin Laden with the ruling elite in Tehran. One comment said "No Taliban in Kabul or in Tehran," a motto of the Green opposition movement. Meanwhile, pro-regime outlets were also swift to engage in the debate about whether pictures that are online showing the corpse of Bin Laden are real or fake, but there were no immediate suggestions that the US announcement of the killing was fabricated.

Pro-regime *Fars News* appeared to be the first outlet to carry an editorial on the subject, and it looked beyond the news of Bin Laden's death. The writer, Mehdi Pur-Safa, depicted Bin Laden as someone who had been "useful to the US strategic goals" in the Middle East, whose actions and hiding enabled the arrival of US armies to the Muslim lands. Meanwhile, the notion that Al Qaida is an invincible foe of the US was rejected. The editorial claimed that Al Qaida's operations in Afghanistan have been taking place under the leadership of Pakistani ISI [that cooperates with the US] while it said that US ally Saudi Arabia is behind Al Qaida's activities in places such as Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon. Pur-Safa wrote off Bin Laden as an "extremist" and the editorial asked that now with these "extremist Islamists [Al Qaida] sidelined" who will take their place as America's enemy number one, and act as a "pretext for the US" to stay in the region? It put Bin Laden's death in the context of ongoing Arab Revolts and said the present regional upheaval is a double-edge sword for the US. "How can the US go around the issue of dealing with democratic uprisings that in the end might undermine US and Zionist interests in the Middle East? It concluded that Washington therefore needs to find "new enemies" or "projects" to replace Al Qaida, and highlighted China and Iran but said the US has too many economic investments to pick a fight with China at this moment in time. Instead, the article argued that a US-instigated Shia-Sunni rift that pits Iran against Sunni Arab states might be the option that Washington seek to implement.

ASSESSMENT:

N] The only major official reaction has so far come from the Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson who argued the demise of Bin Laden removes any need for the continuing US military presence in the region. This lack of a clear-cut reaction reflects the fact that while the Shia Iranian regime never had any sympathy for the radical Sunni agenda of Al Qaida, Tehran nonetheless sees all regional events in the prism of its broader rivalry with the US.



US Military Operations



AFGHANISTAN: KARZAI URGES NATO TO GO AFTER TERRORISTS IN PAKISTAN AS BIN LADEN IS KILLED IN US RAID

BLUF: President Karzai urged the Taliban to take a lesson from Bin Laden's fate and lay down their arms. Media expected that the killing of Bin Laden deep inside Pakistan would authenticate the Afghan government's allegation that Bin Laden had a safe haven in Pakistan.

OBSERVED: According to [Taand](#) and [Pajhwok](#) reports, following the killing of Usama Bin Laden in a US special forces operation deep inside Pakistan, President Hamid Karzai urged the Taliban to lay down their arms. The president said that the Taliban should learn a lesson from the fate of Bin Laden, who used Afghans to implement his terrorist designs. President Karzai went on to argue that the killing of Bin Laden in the garrison city of Abbottabad, just outside Pakistan's capital Islamabad, clearly indicated that Afghanistan was right to urge the international community to fight terrorists in Pakistan where they have sanctuaries, not in Afghanistan villages and towns. Describing Bin Laden as "murderer of Afghans," he repeated that Afghans were only victims, and had nothing to do with international terrorist networks. Earlier [Tolo News](#) and [Taand](#) reported that President Barack Obama announced that US Navy Seals killed Usama Bin Laden during a raid on a farmhouse in Abbottabad on Monday. [Taand](#) further reported that local residents said one of the two Apache helicopters involved in the raid was shot down by Bin Laden's fighters. [Taand](#) separately reported that a well-known former Taliban ambassador to Islamabad, Abdul Salam Zaeef, said that the killing of Bin Laden would not affect the war in Afghanistan because the insurgency in Afghanistan is Afghan-led. Meanwhile, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) threatened to attack Pakistani and the US officials to retaliate the loss of Bin Laden. Ehsanullah Ehsan, a purported TTP spokesman told [Reuters](#) from the undisclosed location that the Pakistani President and Army Chief would be among the TTP's main targets.

ASSESSMENT:

[N] *The surprise news of the killing of the Al Qaida leader dominated local media coverage. The independent monitored outlets predicted that the fact that Bin Laden was able to hide in a farmhouse just outside Islamabad would give the Afghan government a unique opportunity to accuse Pakistan of giving sanctuaries to terrorists. Dismissing the repeated Afghan government claims that Bin Laden had a safe haven in Pakistan, the Pakistani government suggested that Bin Laden was either in eastern Afghan provinces or in the tribal areas along the border between the two countries. According to the Afghan media, it will be interesting to see whether or not the Pakistani government will criticize the US for violating the country's sovereignty while conducting the raid. Pakistan has recently intensified its efforts to urge the US to cease its drone strikes against targets in the Pakistani tribal area. Pakistani authorities have kept arguing strongly that the US drone strikes undermine the army image as the protector of the national sovereignty.*

[N] *Afghan observers believed the killing of Bin Laden would weaken the Taliban insurgency only to a limited extent, despite the fact that many Taliban fighters viewed him as a source of inspiration and employed his organizational model and combat tactics. However, neither the media nor observers have so far commented on what implications Bin Laden's killing will have on the planned US troop pullout that begins this July.*



US Military Operations



CENTRAL ASIA: REGIONAL MEDIA SWIFTLY REACTS TO OBAMA'S ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT BIN LADEN'S DEATH

BLUF: Central Asian media provided broad reporting on Usama Bin Laden's death while the governments are cautious to express their reaction.

OBSERVED: The announcement of US President Barak Obama that Usama Bin Laden was killed as a result of a special operation by the US Navy Seals in Pakistan garnered prominent coverage in local media outlets in all Central Asian states. The publications provided plain reporting and reprints from foreign media. Most of reporting on Bin Laden's death appeared in the independent media while many official outlets either have not offered coverage on this subject yet or provided primarily brief reports. Several comments of influential figures were published in Kyrgyz and Tajik media. For example, a former leader of Tajik Islamists, presently the Islamic scholar and a member of Tajik parliament, Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda, stressed that "unless the attitude of the US and Europe toward the Islamic world does change in a positive direction, no one can guarantee that new terrorist groups and new leaders similar to Usama Bin Laden will not appear." Turajonzoda also pointed out that until the problem of Palestine is solved, there is no certainty that new terrorists will not come after Bin Laden's death. A member of the Kyrgyz parliament and an activist of opposition Ar-Namys party, Kanybek Osmonaliev, welcomed the news and stated that "Bin Laden got what he deserved and his death will be an example for other terrorists using religion for evil purposes."

ASSESSMENT:

[N] *Initial media reaction in Central Asia to the killing of Usama Bin Laden by the US military in Pakistan was largely straightforward. None of the government leaders or key officials in the region has so far made any statements regarding the news, while in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan a few public figures commented on Bin Laden's death. Among all five states, media in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan provided the least coverage, whereas Kyrgyz and Tajik press broadly reported the event. For the time being, no negative comments toward the US or positive remarks about Usama Bin Laden's death have been observed in the media. Regional terrorist groups such as the Islamic Jihad Union and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which usually issue statements on all important occasions, have not yet reacted to the killing of the leader of Al Qaida that maintains close ties with Central Asian terrorist organizations operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan.*



Terrorism



UGANDA: SOMALI PRIME MINISTER SAYS AL QAIDA LEARNING NEW TERROR TECHNIQUES FROM PIRATES

BLUF: *Daily Monitor* published a neutral article regarding possible new Al Qaida terror delivery methods. Somalia's prime minister told UN Security Council members that pirates were teaching Al Qaida how to hijack ships which could then be used to stage attacks.

OBSERVED: In a brief 2 May article, *Daily Monitor* published warnings from Somali Prime Minister Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed suggesting that entrenched Al Qaida members could use captured shipping tankers to attack regional targets. Prime Minister Mohamed, himself a US citizen, made the statement to UN Security Council members, and said Al Qaida members were learning maritime vessel capture techniques from the country's numerous pirates. He compared the strategy to when 9/11 hijackers used planes against US targets. Mohamed rhetorically asked, "why bother with a small plane when you can capture a tanker?" Mohamed, who is the leader of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), described his country as "the first line of defense against two evils," and claimed pirates and terrorists were "working in tandem" and "learning from each other."

ASSESSMENT:

[-] Somalia's political instability continues to be of major concern for Ugandan policymakers and the public. Al Shabaab's role in the 11 July 2010 Kampala bombings remains fresh on peoples' memories, and any new terror attack methodology is bound to cause trepidation for readers of the independent outlet Daily Monitor. Although Mohamed does raise concerns regarding Al Qaida's willingness to team with Somali pirates, the group's ability to change tactics is well understood. Certainly the use of hijacked super tankers would be a unique terror mechanism. However, at first glance, the logistics seem difficult, and Mohamed could only be trying to raise the alarm to obtain greater support from the international community to stabilize Somalia.



Notes and Methodology

SOSi analysts monitor daily 140 newspapers published in 47 countries around the world. Articles are not translated; they are read in the original languages. The consistent longitudinal monitoring of a core set of outlets is a priority.

Analysts collect and analyze STRATCOM-related information according to the following broad collection criteria (may be adjusted according to STRATCOM needs):

- **Weapons of Mass Destruction** (ex. technology proliferation, transportation, international controls)
- **Nuclear Energy Programs** (ex. technology research and development, international/domestic support)
- **Strategic/Theater Missile Programs** (ex. systems employment, movement and stationing, deterrence)
- **Cyberspace** (ex. threats, defensive plans and measures, cyber terrorism)
- **Space** (ex. US and allied surveillance, policies and strategies, militarization of space)
- **Energy Security** (ex. use of energy as a weapon, energy supply, energy infrastructure development and threats)

Analysts also collect quantitative coding data according to Combatant Command priorities. Volume (number of unique references) and sentiment of coverage in the regular sample of outlets is captured.

Questions or comments may be directed to SOSi Chief Analyst, Andrew Katona, at andrew.katona@fma.sosiltd.com.

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