

8 October 2002

In response to your question on when did 'Asbat al-Ansar form?

'Asbat al-Ansar (The League of the Followers or Partisan's League) first emerged in 1993. Lebanese officials report that the group follows an extremist interpretation of Islam that justifies violence against civilian targets to achieve political ends, according to Embassy reporting.

(b)(3):50 USC §403(g) Section 6



11.

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we judge that PFLP would not consider it to be in their political interests at present to conduct terrorist attacks in the West or against Western interests anywhere.

* Asbat al Ansar

12. AaA is predominantly a Palestinian group, with Palestinian leadership, and some Lebanese and other Arab members (totalling an estimated 600 - 700 in Lebanon). Its attacks have targeted Lebanese Christians, the government and the army. AaA also has an international agenda.

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14. We judge that AaA represents a threat to Western interests in the region. There are some indications of an intent also to conduct attacks outside the region. But AaA's ability to do so remains uncertain.

Prospects

15. The threat from AaA will be influenced by Al Qaida's plans for the group and the region. AaA would be prepared to support Al Qaida attacks both in and possibly outside the region.