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Al-Qaeda Endorses ISIS, Suggesting Shifting Sentiment

By Jason Ditz

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Al-Qaeda's positioning in Syria as a rival of ISIS has earned it a bizarre second lease on life in some peoples' estimation, and even gave rise to the term "good al-Qaeda" referring to Jabhat al-Nusra, the official al-Qaeda wing in Syria, as opposed to ISIS, a former al-Qaeda wing turned independent faction.

That seems to be changing, however, with al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), an al-Qaeda affiliate in good standing, issuing a statement today urging jihadists support ISIS against the United States.

It's not quite the same thing as a statement from the parent al-Qaeda, but AQAP's assessment is a reasonable facsimile, and suggests that even if the parent organization isn't there yet, al-Qaeda is warming up to ISIS.

Which was perhaps inevitable, as the US war in Syria was launched against ISIS, but immediately expanded to include "Khorasan," a US-invented term for Nusra, and gave the two groups another common enemy, and one who is attacking both at the same time.