SYMBOLS & DISTRIBUTION
SYMBOLISM OF TERRORISM & HATE

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Symbols serve several purposes for terrorist groups. Appearing on flags, communiqués, the Internet and as graffiti, they announce a group’s identity and purpose, deepen its sense of unity, appeal to the like-minded and frighten those to whom the group is opposed.

Each symbol is an arrangement of visual information drawn from the culture in which the group operates. The information has been arranged in order to convey, in a dramatic manner, ideas about the group’s founding, ideology, aims and methods. It is important to bear in mind that the elements in a symbol, taken by themselves, often have no innate connection to terrorism or political and religious radicalism.

Anti-Defamation League, 2013

A group founded by far right political Rabbi Meir Kahane in the early 70s. Currently considered a terrorist organisation they deploy violence in their goal of ridding Israel, The West Bank and Gaza of Arabs.

A clenched fist outlined in black is raised through the middle of a black star of David. The fist conveys strength, courage and militancy. The Star of David represents the group’s Jewish Identity.
A Pakistani based terrorist organisation with a focus on ridding Kashmir of Indian security forces.

The sun denotes the wisdom and righteousness that radiates out of the Koran, the bedrock of Islam. The rifle (AK47) represents a commitment to violence.
The KKK originated as a secret society organized in the South after the American Civil War to reassert white supremacy through terrorism and intimidation.

The blood drop in the centre of the cross represents the blood shed by Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for the White Aryan Race.
Creating an Islamic state in Somalia by ridding the country of foreigners and outside influences and stresses a literal and rigid interpretation of the Koran.

The Horn of Africa map shows the group’s geographical location. The Koran highlights the goal to establish an Islamic state in Somalia by ridding the country Ethiopians and outside forces, and the central ideology of Islam. The rifles symbolize a commitment to violent jihad.
The swords reinforce the group’s militancy and, as traditional weapons, symbolize historic Islam and reference the group’s commitment to jihad. The Koran denotes the group’s spiritual foundation.

**MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD**  Founded in Egypt in 1928 with goal of establish theocracy in Egypt, the middle east and ultimately world wide.
ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT

Formed in the US in 1977 with an aim to liberate animals from abuses from laboratories, factories and farms. They use surveillance, video footage as well as violence to achieve their objectives.

The Animal Liberation front acronym sits within the anarchy ‘A’ symbol, a common symbol of anarchist movements.
**WHITE ARYAN RESISTANCE (WAR)**

WAR is a Neo-Nazi, skinhead organization that espouses white separatism and hatred towards Jews and other minorities. W.A.R., led by Tom Metzger, is based in Fallbrook, California.

An image of a Skull and Crossbones (a symbol of death once used by pirates and now used as a warning label on poisons) over a shield.
The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was a secessionist group in Sri Lanka that seeks to seize control of the country from the ethnic Sinhalese majority. Eelam is the Tamil name for the island of Sri Lanka. The yellow tiger is an emblem deeply rooted in Tamil culture that represents heroism, militancy and patriotism, signifying the group’s goal of self-determination. The black rifles and bullets represent a commitment to violence.
PALESTINIAN LIBERATION FRONT

Founded in 1977 with a main goal of the destruction of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state. One of their most well known attacks was the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship MS Achille Lauro in 1985.

The star is a Marxist-Leninist reference. The green map of Israel represents the aim of eliminating (as the group believes) the wrongful rule of Israel. A rifle for the commitment to armed struggle and red, green and black colours (Palestinian flag) evoke Palestinian nationalism.
The largest Neo Nazi group in the United States that calls to deny citizenship to Jews, non-whites and homosexuals.

The stars and stripes of the US flag divide the shield shape with the black and red colours of Nazi Germany. The letters NSM sit upon the Nazi swastika symbol.
Al Qaeda in Iraq

The mountain represents the region of northern Iraq where the group was established. Hands raising the flag show the unification of Iraq’s terrorist Sunni organizations under one name. The clenched fists holding the flag also represent militancy.

Seeks to establish Islamic rule in Iraq that can expand throughout the region. The group’s immediate goal is to defeat the US-led coalition forces in Iraq and topple the current Shi’a-led government by provoking civil war between Iraq’s Sunni and Shi’i populations.
The skinheads use many symbols to represent their various groups.
Palm trees, particularly date palms, are inextricably linked to Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, and Islamic cultures. In jihadi imagery, palm trees are often employed in order to evoke a sense of Arab or Islamic pride and concern. Palms can also be used as geographical markers – that is, shorthand references to places where palm trees are common.
The eagle is used to denote fierceness in battle. It generally suggests qualities of strength, power, speed, and victory in the jihadi struggle. Unlike the falcon, however, it is not usually used as a reference to martyrdom. It is used to highlight and emphasize specific individual jihadi fighters or groups, especially in Palestine and among the Palestinian diaspora.
There is perhaps no greater inspiration for jihadi activists than the belief that they will be rewarded for their sacrifice by being granted entrance into the garden (janna) of heavenly paradise. Symbols and images may allude to paradise indirectly or directly. The word used to indicate heaven, janna, also means “garden” and indicates the garden of paradise that awaits those Muslims who have lived particularly just, obedient, and pious lives.
The red rose, like the white rose, is a symbol of martyrdom. More specifically, it suggests martyrdom through violent means. Other kinds of red flowers may be used in this way, and can be considered symbolically synonymous with red roses. The red rose/red flower motif lacks the inherent purity of the white rose, and so it may be used to signify violent (jihadi) struggle more broadly.