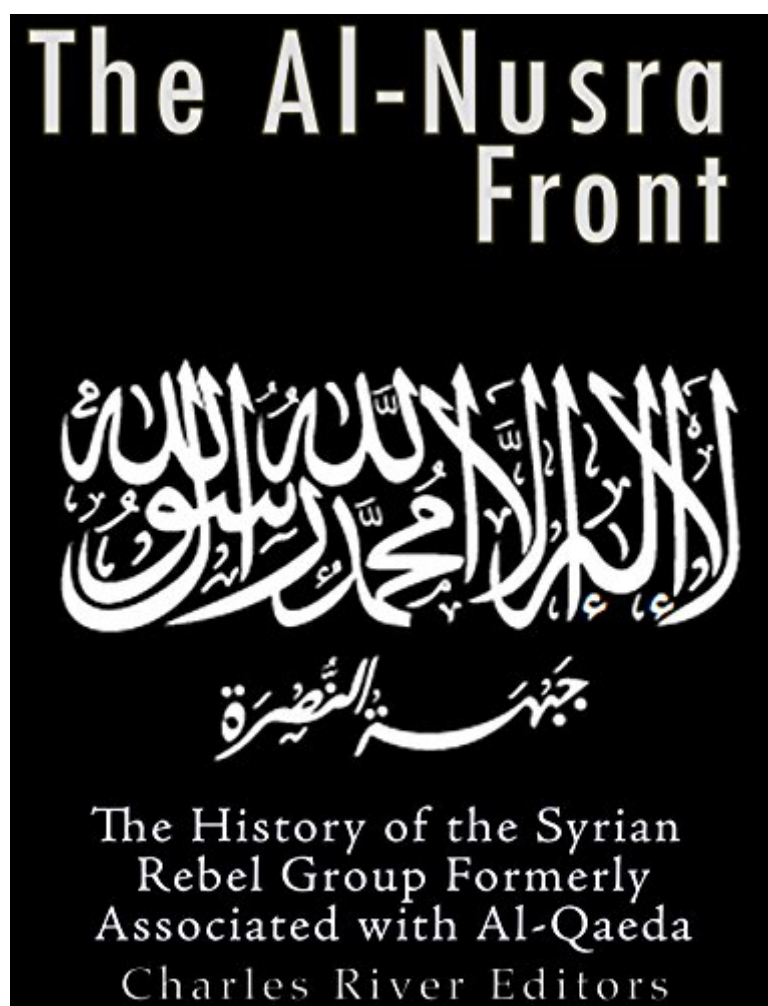


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The Al-Nusra Front: The History Of The Syrian Rebel Group Formerly Affiliated With Al-Qaeda



Synopsis

*Includes pictures*Explains the group's ideology and differences with the Islamic State*Includes online resources, footnotes, and a bibliography for further reading*Includes a table of contents

Since the Arab Spring uprising of 2011, reports of terrorist attacks around the world have flooded international media. Syria, a country about one and half times the size of Texas, has become the central battleground for many terrorist groups; those the world often focuses on and has heard much of--such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (also known as ISIS and Da'ash, but from here on referred to as ISIL)--and those the world rarely hears about and is unable to make distinctions between others--such as Jabhat Al-Nusra. Despite the lack of focused attention on its activities, Jabhat Al-Nusra (or, the Nusra Front as it is sometimes referred to) has built quite a reputation in Syria and the greater Middle East for its seemingly endless supply of weapons, ability to ally with strategic partners, and its peculiar mix of international, albeit notorious, supporters inside the country. Jabhat Al-Nusra's formal name is, "Jabhat Al-Nusra li-Ahl al-Sham," or, the "Victorious Support Front for the People of Sham (or, Syria)" and the group first emerged on the international scene in early 2012 as a localized Syrian affiliate of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. The group has carried out numerous terrorist attacks and kidnappings, and has been involved in a variety of battles against Bashar Assad's Syrian government forces as well as against other anti-government factions such as ISIL. The complexity of the Syrian Civil War is most definitely reflected in the complexity of the groups fighting for power within and around its borders; Jabhat Al-Nusra is no exception. The group's relationship with ISIL, Al-Qaeda, and the other militant factions within Syria is complicated and appears often conflictual: as of the time of this writing, Jabhat Al-Nusra had announced its split from Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) but analysts believe this is nothing more than a re-branding technique to attract all fighting elements in Syria to be under its own umbrella of control. The international community's response to the Syria Civil War has been quite disorganized. The United States was quick to support the protester movements across the region during the Arab Spring which put Syrian President Bashar Assad on high alert. As the war commenced inside Syria, Russia was quick to rush to Assad's defense and aid both inside the country and to the international community more generally. This situation pitted the U.S. and Russia against each other once again which left the Syrian people in between. Jabhat Al-Nusra took this as an opportunity to fill in the gap where the world's superpowers failed them. Not only is Al-Nusra attempting to gain legitimacy within the country, they want to show the world they are the only force fighting for the Sunnis of Syria. From the summer of 2014 to 2016, the U.S.-led coalition has focused much of its effort on destroying the brutal ISIL whose territory encompasses parts of both

Iraq and Syria. Al-Nusra has capitalized on ISIL's time in the spotlight and carved its own niche among Syrians, developing relationships and carrying out small scale battles against the Assad regime and rival rebel militant groups around the country. This has been particularly attractive to countries like Turkey and Qatar, whose feel their own position in the region may shift depending on the outcome of the war and the United States' changing relationship with Iran. Al-Nusra certainly appears more appealing than ISIL. In late July 2016, Al-Nusra evolved once more by changing its name to Jabhat Fatah Al-Sham and officially cutting ties with Al-Qaeda. According to analysts, this move is just another step in a long-term effort for Al-Nusra to make itself seem different than the other groups it competes with in the region.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book *The Al-Nusra Front: The History of the Syrian Rebel Group Formerly Affiliated with Al-Qaeda* was a complex read. I like the words of the title formally affiliated with Al-Qaeda, the book seems to describe this group as more of a re-branding instead of a complete break from Al-Qaeda. To me it seems like this group was an affiliate of ISIL than Al-Qaeda. The major difference between this group and ISIL was leadership and tactics, this group prefer to work with the established

leadership of the area that they took over first before Al-Nusra completely took over. My impression is that this group is more like Hezbollah. Even though I felt that this was a difficult e-book to read and comprehend, this is an important book because it explains more about one of the groups that will almost certainly come into power in Syria at some point.

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