

# 'Most wanted' Al-Qaeda man held in Africa

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A **TERRORIST** named by President George W Bush as one of the 22 most dangerous men in the world has been captured in Africa, according to US intelligence sources.

A senior militant from Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network is being held at a high-security prison in the capital Khartoum.

He was named as "Abu Anas", thought by some officials to be a Libyan terrorist who once claimed asylum in Britain and has a \$25m ( £17.5m) reward on his head.

Abu Anas Al-Liby was accused of plotting the American embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania which killed 224 people. If his arrest is confirmed it would make him the first from Bush's FBI list of "most-wanted terrorists" to be caught alive.

Last week negotiations were continuing between US and Sudanese officials to complete the handover of the suspect into American custody.

One source close to the CIA said it was believed to be Al-Liby: "He is one of nine militants seized in Khartoum and now being handed over to US authorities. This information is regarded as highly sensitive by the Sudanese authorities." In the days following September 11, between 30 and 40 Al-Qaeda militants were secretly rounded up in Sudan and flown to Egypt. A further 10 were arrested last month, including Abu Anas, who is being held in a high-security prison.

Al-Liby, a member of Al-Qaeda for at least a decade, lived in Manchester before fleeing Britain two years ago as an arrest warrant was issued for him by America.

It was in Al-Liby's flat in the city that Special Branch detectives obtained the copy of Al-Qaeda's notorious "manual of terror" which provided the first chilling insight into the terrorists' aims of killing civilians, their methods of bombing targets and infiltrating western society. Known by a variety of pseudonyms and described on an Interpol wanted notice as 6ft tall with a scar on the left side of his face, Al-Liby's potential arrest has been kept a closely guarded secret.

The first contacts between Al-Liby and Bin Laden can be traced to 1992, when the Libyan joined Al-Qaeda in Sudan. Al-Liby was one of a group of militants who had fled the regime of Colonel Gaddafi, the Libyan leader.

His technical know-how meant that he quickly became Bin Laden's computer expert, gaining promotion to Al-Qaeda's shura, or ruling council. He played a key role in the planning of Bin Laden's bombing of the embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, travelling to Kenya to take surveillance pictures, according to court documents.

Al-Liby was forced to leave Sudan, first for Syria and then Qatar, later for Britain, after pressure from the Libyan government on the Sudanese to expel him and other militants.

In Britain police tracked down Al-Liby, who was claiming political asylum, to his flat in Manchester in May 2000, but he had left by the time it was raided. Among the possessions hurriedly discarded was a terror manual entitled Military Studies in the Jihad against Tyrants.

The 180-page book, stored on a computer disk, provided the first detailed account from within Al-Qaeda of its murderous ambitions. Setting out its intention to "overthrow" secular governments for an Islamic regime, it details how enemy soldiers and tourists should be killed so that jailed brothers could be "set free".

It described the best methods of attack, favouring explosives, as they strike the enemy with "sheer terror and fright". It also showed how to kill with knives, cudgels, ropes and poison. There were even guidelines for "beating and killing hostages".

Al-Liby was believed to have fled Britain for Afghanistan. He may have chosen to slip back into Sudan to evade capture.

America has long accused Sudan of harbouring terrorists, including Bin Laden between 1991 and 1996. However, from 1995 onwards the country has consistently offered to provide access to intelligence files and to hand over suspects - offers which were declined by Clinton's government.

Since September 11, the Bush administration has successfully opened up an exchange of information with the regime. According to sources, the Islamic government, which is embroiled in a civil war with rebels in southern Sudan, was deeply concerned by reports that the country would face American military action for harbouring terrorists.

If the arrest is confirmed, Al-Liby would be one of the most senior Al-Qaeda members in custody. Until his detention, an Al-Qaeda camp commander, Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi, also a Libyan, was the highest ranking of Bin Laden's followers in custody. He was captured on the Pakistan border after fleeing the fighting in the Tora Bora mountains last December.