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## *Cellphone Contacts in Paris Attacks Suggest Foreign Coordination*

By ALISSA J. RUBIN DEC. 30, 2015

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“We don’t know yet actually who was the real mastermind of the attack,” said Claude Moniquet, a veteran of France’s intelligence service and now the director of the European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center.

“It’s clear it was not Abaaoud and it was probably not a European,” he said, speculating that it could have been someone with ties to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State. The group, also known as ISIS and ISIL, claimed responsibility for the attacks less than 24 hours after they were carried out.

“The attacks must have been decided by someone at the top of ISIS, very likely someone close to Baghdadi, and probably an Iraqi from Saddam Hussein’s intelligence or military,” Mr. Moniquet added.

The Islamic State’s ranks include some experienced Iraqi intelligence and military figures who worked for Saddam Hussein and lost their jobs when he was ousted by the United States-led coalition in 2003.

“But it’s clear they had to have commanders on the ground,” Mr. Moniquet said. “We know that Abaaoud was a commander on the ground,” along with Mr. Abdeslam, who appears to have been less senior but still had some authority.