

U.S. Treasury Sanctions Iran-Aligned Militias in Iraq

November 17, 2023

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is designating six individuals affiliated with the Iran-aligned militia group (IAMG) Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) based in Iraq. Trained, funded, and supported by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF), KH is behind a spate of recent attacks against the United States and partners in Iraq and Syria following the horrific attacks by Hamas against Israel. The U.S. Department of State is also designating Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada (KSS) and KSS leader Hashim Finyan Rahim al-Saraji. KSS, another Iraq-based IAMG that receives support from the IRGC, has planned and been involved in attacks against U.S. personnel in Iraq and Syria.

"Today's action sends a message to Kata'ib Hizballah and all other Iran-backed groups that the United States will use all available measures to hold to account any opportunistic actors who seek to exploit the situation in Gaza for their own ends," said Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. "We remain fully committed to security and stability in the Middle East and are steadfast in our efforts to disrupt these destabilizing activities."

KH was previously designated by the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) in 2009 for having been responsible for numerous terrorist attacks against U.S. and Iraqi government targets in Iraq, many on behalf of the Government of Iran and the IRGC-QF. KH has continued to launch unprovoked drone and rocket attacks on Iraqi and U.S. military locations in Iraq and Syria.

KATA'IB HIZBALLAH SENIOR LEADERS AND SUPPORTERS

Imad Naji al-Bahadli (al-Bahadli) is a member of KH's governing Shura Council, the lead decision-making body for KH. Prior to his appointment to the Shura Council, al-Bahadli was responsible for KH's operational elements involved in conducting attacks and kidnappings. Al-Bahadli recruited members of KH to join teams to carry out operations in Iraq that had been planned and authorized by the IRGC. In coordination with U.S.-designated KH Secretary

General Ahmad al-Hamidawi, al-Bahadli made plans to intimidate Iraqi politicians who did not support the removal of U.S. forces from Iraq and other KH political priorities. At the direction of senior KH officials, al-Bahadli sought to identify U.S. military installations and U.S. companies that could serve as targets for future KH attacks, which would be launched on the orders of the IRGC-QF. In preparation for these attacks on U.S. interests, al-Bahadli sent KH militants to train in Lebanon with U.S.-designated terrorist organization Lebanese Hizballah, where he himself had been trained.

Habib Hasan Mughamis Darraji (Darraji) serves as KH's foreign affairs chief. Darraji has coordinated the training of KH fighters in Iran with the IRGC and facilitated the smuggling of goods from Iran to KH members in Iraq.

Ja'afar al-Husayni (al-Husayni) is one of KH's main media spokesmen and has coordinated with KH fighters planning attacks against U.S. military personnel in Iraq.

Khalid Kadhim Jasim al-Skeni (al-Skeni) is a senior KH military commander who has worked with the IRGC to train KH fighters.

Basim Mohammad Hasab al-Majidi (al-Majidi) is the KH commercial development chief and works directly with members of KH's Shura Council. **Al-Majidi** has also been the executive director of the KH-affiliated satellite TV station Al-Ittijah and sought Iranian technical expertise to create news and propaganda in support of KH.

Mojtaba Jahandust (Jahandust) is an IRGC-QF official who facilitates the travel and training of KH fighters in Iran.

Al-Bahadli, Darraji, al-Husayni, al-Skeni, and al-Majidi are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, KH. Jahandust is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13224, as amended, for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, KH.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC, or

exempt, OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all transactions by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons.

In addition, financial institutions and other persons that engage in certain transactions or activities with sanctioned entities and individuals may expose themselves to sanctions or be subject to an enforcement action. The prohibitions include the making of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services by, to, or for the benefit of any designated person, or the receipt of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services from any such person.

The power and integrity of OFAC sanctions derive not only from OFAC's ability to designate and add persons to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List (SDN List), but also from its willingness to remove persons from the SDN List consistent with the law. The ultimate goal of sanctions is not to punish, but to bring about a positive change in behavior. For information concerning the process for seeking removal from an OFAC list, including the SDN List, please refer to [OFAC's Frequently Asked Question 897 here](#). For detailed information on the process to submit a request for [removal from an OFAC sanctions list](#), please [click here](#).

[Click here for identifying information on the individuals and entities designated today.](#)

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