

Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH)

Type of Organization: militia, religious, terrorist, transnational, violent

Ideologies and Affiliations: Iranian-sponsored, Islamist, jihadist, Khomeinist, Shiite

Place(s) of Origin: Iraq

Year of Origin: 2006¹–2007²

Founder(s): Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)³

Place(s) of Operation: Iraq, Syria⁴

Also Known As:

Battalions of Hezbollah⁵

Battalions of the Party of God⁶

Brigades of the Party of God⁷

Hezbollah Brigades⁸

Hizballah Brigades⁹

Hizballah Brigades in Iraq¹⁰

Hizballah Brigades–Iraq¹¹

Hizballah Brigades–Iraq of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq¹²

Islamic Resistance in Iraq¹³

¹ “Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations,” U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

² Michael Knights, “The Evolution of Iran’s Special Groups in Iraq,” Combatting Terrorism Center, November 1, 2010, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>.

³ Farnaz Fassihi, Jay Solomon, and Sam Dagher, “Iranians Dial Up Presence in Syria,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 16, 2013, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323864604579067382861808984>.

⁴ Ned Parker and Raheem Salman, “In Defense of Baghdad, Iraq Turns to Shi’ite Militias,” Reuters, June 14, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/14/us-iraq-security-volunteers-idUSKBN0EP00920140614>.

⁵ Michael Eisenstadt, “Iran Primer: Iran and Iraq,” PBS Frontline, October 28, 2010, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2010/10/iran-primer-iran-and-iraq.html>.

⁶ Alaa Bayoumi and Leah Harding, “Mapping Iraq’s Fighting Groups,” Al Jazeera, June 27, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/mapping-out-iraq-fighting-groups-201462494731548175.html>.

⁷ Jay Solomon, “Iran Funnels New Weapons to Iraq and Afghanistan,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 2, 2011, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303763404576420080640167182>.

⁸ American Forces Press Service, “Coalition Captures Kataib Hezbollah Suspects, Numerous Others,” U.S. Department of Defense, August 26, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=50931>.

⁹ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹⁰ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹¹ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹² “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹³ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

Kataib Hizb Allah¹⁴
Kataib Hizbollah¹⁵
Kata'ib Hezbollah¹⁶
Kata'ib Hizballah¹⁷
Kata'ib Hizballah fi al-Iraq¹⁸
Kataib Hizbullah¹⁹
Katibat Abu Fathel Al A'abas²⁰
Katibat Zayd Ebin Ali²¹
Katibut Karbalah²²
Khata'ib Hezbollah²³
Khata'ib Hizballah²⁴
Khattab Hezbollah²⁵

Executive Summary:

Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH) is an Iranian-sponsored, anti-American Shiite militia operating in Iraq.²⁶ During the U.S.-led war in Iraq that began in 2003, KH earned a reputation for planting deadly roadside bombs and using improvised rocket-assisted mortars (IRAMs) to attack U.S. and coalition forces.²⁷ According to U.S. diplomat Ali Khedery, KH is responsible for “some of the

¹⁴ Michael Knights, “The Evolution of Iran’s Special Groups in Iraq,” Combatting Terrorism Center, November 1, 2010, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>.

¹⁵ Saif Hameed, “Iraq special forces advance in Tikrit, U.S. coalition joins fight,” Reuters, March 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/27/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MM0R220150327>.

¹⁶ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹⁷ “Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations,” U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

¹⁸ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹⁹ Michael Knights, “Shia strength - Iraqi militants adapt to the US drawdown,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy, September 30, 2011, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/opeds/4e8b0eba7c0a2.pdf>.

²⁰ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

²¹ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

²² “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

²³ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

²⁴ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

²⁵ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

²⁶ Farnaz Fassih, Jay Solomon, and Sam Dagher, “Iranians Dial Up Presence in Syria,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 16, 2013, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323864604579067382861808984>.

²⁷ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>; *Terrorist Groups in Syria: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives*, 113th Cong. 17-24 (2013) (statement of Phillip Smyth, Middle East research analyst, University of Maryland), <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg85643/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg85643.pdf>.

most lethal attacks against U.S. and coalition forces throughout the [U.S.-led war in Iraq].”²⁸ The group’s leader, Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes, is the alleged mastermind behind the U.S. and French embassy bombings in Kuwait in 1983 and the assassination attempt on Kuwait’s emir in 1985.²⁹

After the U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq in December 2011, KH sent fighters to defend the Assad regime in Syria, allegedly at the behest of Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Quds Force of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).³⁰ As KH switched from fighting U.S. forces in Iraq to combating Sunni rebels and extremists in Iraq and Syria, KH has continued to prioritize its anti-American agenda, repeatedly boycotting battles against ISIS in which the U.S. participates.³¹

KH is the only Iraqi Shiite militia designated as a terrorist organization by the United States.³² It is also reportedly the “most secretive” and elite of Iraq’s predominantly Shiite militias.³³ KH has long-standing ties to Iran’s external military branch, the IRGC-Quds Force, as well as to Iran’s proxy in Lebanon, Hezbollah.³⁴

Doctrine:

According to the U.S. Department of State, KH is “a radical Shia Islamist group with an anti-Western establishment and jihadist ideology.”³⁵ The group is virulently anti-American. During

²⁸ Ali Khedery, “Iran’s Shiite Militias Are Running Amok in Iraq,” *Foreign Policy*, February 19, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/19/irans-shiite-militias-are-running-amok-in-iraq/>.

²⁹ Richard R. Brennan et al., eds., *Ending the U.S. War in Iraq: the Final Transition, Operational Maneuver, and Disestablishment of United States Forces-Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 138-139, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR232/RAND_RR232.pdf; Ali Khedery, “Iran’s Shiite Militias Are Running Amok in Iraq,” *Foreign Policy*, February 19, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/19/irans-shiite-militias-are-running-amok-in-iraq/>; “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

³⁰ Michael R. Gordon and Steven Lee Myers, “Iran and Hezbollah Support for Syria Complicates Peace-Talk Strategy,” *New York Times*, May 21, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/22/world/middleeast/iran-and-hezbollahs-support-for-syria-complicates-us-strategy-on-peace-talks.html>; Suadad al-Salhy, “Iraqi Shi’ite militants fight for Syria’s Assad,” Reuters, October 16, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/16/us-syria-crisis-iraq-militias-idUSBRE89F0PX20121016>.

³¹ David D. Kirkpatrick, “Shiite Militias Pose Challenge for U.S. in Iraq,” *New York Times*, September 16, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/17/world/middleeast/shiite-militias-pose-challenge-for-us-in-iraq.html>; Saif Hameed, “Iraq special forces advance in Tikrit, U.S. coalition joins fight,” Reuters, March 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/27/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MM0R220150327>.

³² Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

³³ Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>; *Terrorist Groups in Syria: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives*, 113th Cong. 17-24 (2013) (statement of Phillip Smyth, Middle East research analyst, University of Maryland), <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg85643/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg85643.pdf>.

³⁴ Farnaz Fassihi, Jay Solomon, and Sam Dagher, “Iranians Dial Up Presence in Syria,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 16, 2013, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323864604579067382861808984>.

³⁵ “Designation of Kata’ib Hizballah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization,” U.S. Department of State, July 2, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/125582.htm>.

the U.S.-led war in Iraq, KH built its reputation by targeting U.S. personnel and interests and killing numerous U.S. soldiers in terrorist attacks.³⁶ Since the U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq in December 2011, KH has retained its anti-American ideology. In KH's efforts to fight ISIS in Iraq, KH remains opposed to any cooperation with the United States. In September 2014, for example, KH released a statement saying, "We will not fight alongside the American troops under any kind of conditions whatsoever. [Our only contact with Americans will be] if we fight each other."³⁷ In March 2015, KH's military spokesman reaffirmed the group's anti-American position, saying, "It is not possible for Kataib Hezbollah or any of the resistance factions to be in the same trench as the Americans."³⁸

KH's loyalty to Iran is key to the group's ideology. A RAND Corporation report claims that "Kata'ib Hezbollah, like Lebanese Hezbollah, is used as a tool to 'export the Islamic revolution' as practiced in Tehran."³⁹ KH openly accepts Iran's vision of *velayat-e faqih* (Guardianship of the Jurists), a strain of political theology that entrusts Iran's Supreme Leader with unique authority in the Shiite faith.⁴⁰ Members of KH swear an oath of loyalty to Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and accept him as their own spiritual leader.⁴¹

Organizational Structure:

KH is considered the most secretive Shiite militia operating in Iraq.⁴² Little is known about the group's structure, aside from the fact that KH is led by Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes, the *nom de guerre* of former Iraqi MP Jamal al-Ibrahimi.⁴³ In addition to acting as leader of KH, al-Mohandes also serves as Iraq's deputy national security advisor and the deputy commander of the Haashid Shaabi (also called the popular mobilization forces, or PMF), Iraq's umbrella group

³⁶ "Hezbollah threatens withdrawal over Baghdad 'lack of support'," April 24, 2015, <http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/240420151>.

³⁷ David D. Kirkpatrick, "Shiite Militias Pose Challenge for U.S. in Iraq," *New York Times*, September 16, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/17/world/middleeast/shiite-militias-pose-challenge-for-us-in-iraq.html>.

³⁸ Saif Hameed, "Iraq special forces advance in Tikrit, U.S. coalition joins fight," Reuters, March 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/27/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MMOR220150327>.

³⁹ Richard R. Brennan et al., eds., *Ending the U.S. War in Iraq: the Final Transition, Operational Maneuver, and Disestablishment of United States Forces-Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 139, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR232/RAND_RR232.pdf.

⁴⁰ Richard R. Brennan et al., eds., *Ending the U.S. War in Iraq: the Final Transition, Operational Maneuver, and Disestablishment of United States Forces-Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 139, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR232/RAND_RR232.pdf.

⁴¹ Richard R. Brennan et al., eds., *Ending the U.S. War in Iraq: the Final Transition, Operational Maneuver, and Disestablishment of United States Forces-Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 139, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR232/RAND_RR232.pdf; Ned Parker and Raheem Salman, "In defense of Baghdad, Iraq turns to Shi'ite militias," Reuters, June 14, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/14/us-iraq-security-volunteers-idUSKBN0EP0O920140614>.

⁴² Babak Dehghanpisheh, "Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran," Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

⁴³ Michael Knights, "The Evolution of Iran's Special Groups in Iraq," *Combating Terrorism Center*, November 1, 2010, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>; Phillip Smyth, "There Is No 'Good' Shia Militia in Iraq," *Daily Beast*, April 17, 2015, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/04/17/is-there-a-good-shia-militia-in-iraq.html>; Babak Dehghanpisheh, "Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran," Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

of anti-ISIS Shiite militias.⁴⁴ The PMF coordinates anti-ISIS military ventures between KH, Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), the Badr Organization, and other predominantly Shiite and Iranian-sponsored militias.

Financing:

As of 2008, KH was funded by Iran's IRGC Quds Force, according to the U.S. Treasury Department.⁴⁵ Though little is publicly known about Iran's financing of KH since then, it is widely believed that Iran continues to finance KH's operations.

In November 2014, wounded U.S. military veterans and family members of deceased U.S. soldiers filed a lawsuit against European banks for processing money from Tehran that bankrolled terrorist attacks in Iraq. According to the lawsuit, KH allegedly received money from Iran to finance terrorist attacks against U.S. soldiers.⁴⁶

Recruitment and Training:

Recruitment:

During the U.S.-led war in Iraq, KH filmed attacks against U.S. and coalition targets, publishing the films online for propaganda and recruitment purposes.⁴⁷ During the Arab Spring, KH and fellow Shiite militia Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) also attempted to attract recruits to fight anti-Assad rebels in Syria by advertising their involvement there. They did so by holding public funerals for fighters in Shiite neighborhoods in Baghdad, and by posting updates on the groups' Facebook pages.⁴⁸ The two groups also posted phone numbers around Baghdad to attract potential recruits.⁴⁹

As of May 2015, KH maintains its own website. There, the group advertises that it will have an English version of its website "coming soon."⁵⁰

Training:

⁴⁴ Liz Sly, "Pro-Iran militias' success in Iraq could undermine U.S.," *Washington Post*, February 15, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/iraqs-pro-iranian-shiite-militias-lead-the-war-against-the-islamic-state/2015/02/15/5bbb1cf0-ac94-11e4-8876-460b1144cbc1_story.html; Phillip Smyth, "There Is No 'Good' Shia Militia in Iraq," *Daily Beast*, April 17, 2015, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/04/17/is-there-a-good-shia-militia-in-iraq.html>.

⁴⁵ "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁴⁶ Alison Frankel, "U.S. veterans sue banks, claim they should pay for Iraq attacks," *Reuters*, November 10, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/10/us-usa-courts-banking-iran-idUSKCN0IU1Q120141110>.

⁴⁷ "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁴⁸ Ned Parker and Raheem Salman, "In defense of Baghdad, Iraq turns to Shi'ite militias," *Reuters*, June 14, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/14/us-iraq-security-volunteers-idUSKBN0EP0O920140614>.

⁴⁹ Ned Parker and Raheem Salman, "In defense of Baghdad, Iraq turns to Shi'ite militias," *Reuters*, June 14, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/14/us-iraq-security-volunteers-idUSKBN0EP0O920140614>.

⁵⁰ "Kataib Hezbollah," *Kataib Hezbollah*, accessed May 11, 2015, <http://kataibhezbollah.com/>.

In the past, KH members have received training from Iran's external military wing, the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), as well as from Lebanese Hezbollah, another Iranian proxy.⁵¹ As of 2008, the Quds Force and Lebanese Hezbollah ran training camps in four locations in Iraq (Tehran, Qom, Ahvaz, and Mashhad). There, KH and Iran's other Shiite militias were trained on the use of small arms and explosives.⁵² Lebanese Hezbollah also ran training camps in southern Iraq until the group was forced to relocate the camps to Iran in April 2008.⁵³ As of 2010, training camps in Iran continued to provide KH with training related to small arms, surveillance, small unit tactics, and communications.⁵⁴ By November 2013, KH members were reportedly being trained in either Iran or Lebanon and then flown to Syria to fight alongside Assad regime forces.⁵⁵ As of spring 2015, some KH members have received military training at a base near the city of Samarra in northern Iraq.⁵⁶ KH has developed especially close ties with Unit 3800, the Lebanese Hezbollah wing devoted to arming and training Iraqi Shiite militias.⁵⁷

Key Leaders:

- Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes (a.k.a. Jamal al-Ibrahimi) – leader;⁵⁸ deputy commander of Iraq's popular mobilization forces (PMF), a.k.a. the Haashid Shaabi⁵⁹ [[image](#), source: AFP/Getty Images]
- Jaafar al-Husseini – military spokesman⁶⁰ [image not available]

⁵¹ Bill Roggio, "Iran continues to train Shia terror groups for attacks in Iraq," *Long War Journal*, August 15, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/08/map_details_irans_op.php; "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁵² Bill Roggio, "Iran continues to train Shia terror groups for attacks in Iraq," *Long War Journal*, August 15, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/08/map_details_irans_op.php.

⁵³ Associated Press, "US: Quds, Hezbollah training hit squads in Iran," *USA Today*, August 16, 2008, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/washington/2008-08-15-3191382404_x.htm.

⁵⁴ "U.S. Policy Towards the Islamic Republic of Iran: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services," United States Senate One Hundred Eleventh Congress Second Session, U.S. Government Printing Office, April 14, 2010, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg85643/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg85643.pdf>.

⁵⁵ *Terrorist Groups in Syria: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives*, 113th Cong. 17-24 (2013) (statement of Phillip Smyth, Middle East research analyst, University of Maryland), <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg85643/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg85643.pdf>.

⁵⁶ Alice Fordham, "After Retaking Iraqi City, Shiite Militias Accused Of Targeting Sunnis," NPR, April 7, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2015/04/07/398004441/after-retaking-tikrit-shiite-militias-accused-of-violence-against-sunnis>.

⁵⁷ Matthew Levitt and Phillip Smyth, "Kataib al-Imam Ali: Portrait of an Iraqi Shiite Militant Group Fighting ISIS," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 5, 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/kataib-al-imam-ali-portrait-of-an-iraqi-shiite-militant-group-fighting-isis>.

⁵⁸ Babak Dehghanpisheh, "Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran," Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>; "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁵⁹ Phillip Smyth, "There Is No 'Good' Shia Militia in Iraq," *Daily Beast*, April 17, 2015, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/04/17/is-there-a-good-shia-militia-in-iraq.html>.

⁶⁰ Saif Hameed, "Iraq special forces advance in Tikrit, U.S. coalition joins fight," Reuters, March 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/27/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MM0R220150327>; Alice Fordham, "After Retaking Iraqi City, Shiite Militias Accused Of Targeting Sunnis," NPR, April 7, 2015,

- Omar Abdullah al-Jbara – a leader (as of April 2015)⁶¹ [image not available]
- Jassim al-Saidi – commander (as of December 2014)⁶² [image not available]
- Abu Hamza – commander (as of November 2014)⁶³ [image not available]
- Abu Abdullah – commander (as of November 2014)⁶⁴ [image not available]
- Raad Al Kafaji – commander (as of November 2014)⁶⁵ [image not available]
- Abu Mustafa al-Khazali – commander (as of January 2012)⁶⁶ [image not available]

History:

March 2007 - June 2008: KH launches a number of rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and improvised rocket-assisted mortars (IRAMs) at U.S. targets in Iraq.⁶⁷

February 19, 2008: KH launches an IRAM attack at a U.S. base southeast of Baghdad. The attack kills one U.S. civilian and injures U.S. civilians and additional coalition forces personnel.⁶⁸

March 2008 – July 2008: Iraq launches a campaign against the Mahdi Army and allied Shiite terrorist groups, including KH.⁶⁹

May 13, 2008: KH launches an RPG attack on a U.S. tank in northern Baghdad.⁷⁰

June 4, 2008: KH is believed responsible for an attack that kills 18 Iraqi civilians, injures 29, and destroys 19 homes. The attack reportedly was intended to target coalition forces.⁷¹

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2015/04/07/398004441/after-retaking-tikrit-shiite-militias-accused-of-violence-against-sunnis>.

⁶¹ Maria Khan, “Suspected Saddam Hussein deputy Izzat Douri's body handed to Iraq government,” *International Business Times*, April 21, 2015, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/suspected-saddam-hussein-deputy-izzat-douris-body-handed-iraq-government-1497459>.

⁶² Missy Ryan and Loveday Morris, “The U.S. and Iran are aligned in Iraq against the Islamic State — for now,” *Washington Post*, December 27, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/the-us-and-iran-are-aligned-in-iraq-against-the-islamic-state--for-now/2014/12/27/353a748c-8d0d-11e4-a085-34e9b9f09a58_story.html.

⁶³ Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

⁶⁴ Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

⁶⁵ Janine di Giovanni, “Nemesis: The Shadowy Iranian Training Shia Militias in Iraq,” *Newsweek*, November 27, 2014, <http://europa.newsweek.com/nemesis-shadowy-iranian-training-shia-militias-iraq-287610>.

⁶⁶ Aref Mohammed, “Iraq militia says to keep weapons, citing instability,” Reuters, January 17, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/17/us-iraq-militia-idUSTRE80G1OA20120117>.

⁶⁷ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁶⁸ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁶⁹ Bill Roggio, “Iran continues to train Shia terror groups for attacks in Iraq,” *Long War Journal*, August 15, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/08/map_details_irans_op.php.

⁷⁰ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁷¹ American Forces Press Service, “Operations Continue Against al-Qaida, Hataib Hezbollah,” U.S. Department of Defense, October 19, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51560>.

July 2008: KH rises in prominence. On July 8, the group claims responsibility for an attack in northern Baghdad that injures one U.S. soldier and an interpreter.⁷² On July 21, coalition forces capture a KH propagandist in Baghdad.⁷³ On July 31, coalition forces capture two KH members in eastern Baghdad.⁷⁴

August 2008: KH films seven attacks on U.S. and coalition forces.⁷⁵ By mid-August, coalition forces have captured 12 KH operatives, including three propagandists.⁷⁶ Coalition forces continue to capture suspected KH operatives throughout the month.⁷⁷

September 2008: KH continues to target U.S. military bases, coalition and U.S. vehicles, and contractors working with coalition forces.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, coalition forces continue to detain and arrest suspected KH operatives. Coalition forces have reportedly captured more than 30 KH operatives since the beginning of August.⁷⁹

October 2008: Coalition forces continue to capture and arrest KH operatives.⁸⁰

November 2008: On November 11, coalition forces capture two suspected KH operatives.⁸¹ On November 29, KH launches a rocket attack that kills two U.N. contractors and injures 15 others.⁸²

⁷² Bill Roggio, "Hezbollah Brigades propaganda specialist captured in Baghdad," *Long War Journal*, July 21, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/07/hezbollah_brigades_p.php.

⁷³ Bill Roggio, "Hezbollah Brigades propaganda specialist captured in Baghdad," *Long War Journal*, July 21, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/07/hezbollah_brigades_p.php.

⁷⁴ Bill Roggio, "Coalition forces capture Hezbollah Brigades operative in Baghdad," *Long War Journal*, July 31, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/07/coalition_forces_cap.php.

⁷⁵ "Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations," U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

⁷⁶ Bill Roggio, "Iran continues to train Shia terror groups for attacks in Iraq," *Long War Journal*, August 15, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/08/map_details_irans_op.php.

⁷⁷ American Forces Press Service, "Troops Capture Suspected Hezbollah Associates in New Baghdad," U.S. Department of Defense, August 22, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=50903>; American Forces Press Service, "Coalition Captures Kataib Hezbollah Suspects, Numerous Others," U.S. Department of Defense, August 26, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=50931>; American Forces Press Service, "Coalition Forces Capture 18 in Baghdad, Tikrit," U.S. Department of Defense, August 31, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=50994>.

⁷⁸ "Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations," U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

⁷⁹ American Forces Press Service, "Coalition Forces in Iraq Round Up Suspects, Find Weapons," U.S. Department of Defense, September 2, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51003>; American Forces Press Service, "Coalition, Iraqi Forces Continue Pressure on Insurgents," U.S. Department of Defense, September 28, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51323>.

⁸⁰ American Forces Press Service, "Coalition Forces Apprehend Kataib Hezbollah Suspects," U.S. Department of Defense, October 7, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51417>; American Forces Press Service, "Operations Continue Against al-Qaida, Hataib Hezbollah," U.S. Department of Defense, October 19, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51560>; American Forces Press Service, "Coalition Forces in Iraq Apprehend Terrorism Suspects," U.S. Department of Defense, October 21, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51586>; American Forces Press Service, "Coalition Forces in Iraq Capture Suspects, Seize Caches," U.S. Department of Defense, October 28, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51687>.

December 2008: On December 3, U.S. forces capture two suspected KH operatives.⁸³ On December 7, coalition forces capture one known and two suspected KH operatives.⁸⁴

June 24, 2009: The U.S. State Department designates KH as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO).⁸⁵

July 2, 2009: The U.S. Treasury Department designates KH and its leader, Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes, for threatening stability in Iraq, claiming that KH and al-Mohandes “committed, directed, supported, or posed a significant risk of committing acts of violence against Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces.”⁸⁶ The U.S. State Department notes that in addition to executing attacks against U.S., Iraqi, and coalition forces, KH has threatened the lives of Iraqi politicians, as well as civilians, who support Iraq’s political process.⁸⁷

October 2009: Iraqi security forces arrest at least three KH operatives.⁸⁸

November 2009: Iraqi forces continue to arrest suspected KH operatives.⁸⁹

December 2009: On December 23, Iraqi forces arrest three suspected Kata’ib Hezbollah operatives, including one wanted for executing mortar attacks in September.⁹⁰ On December 31, KH carries out a rocket attack in the Green Zone.⁹¹

⁸¹ American Forces Press Service, “Coalition Kills, Captures Multiple Suspects in Terrorist Sweep,” U.S. Department of Defense, November 12, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51908>.

⁸² Katherine Zoepf, “Rocket Kills 2 Contract Workers at U.N. Compound in Baghdad,” *New York Times*, November 29, 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/30/world/middleeast/30iraq.html?_r=0; “Kata’ib Hizballah (KH),” GlobalSecurity.org, accessed May 11, 2015, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/kataib-hizballah.htm>.

⁸³ Associated Press, “U.S.: Attacks in Iraq at lowest level since 2003,” NBC News, December 3, 2008, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/28036313/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/us-attacks-iraq-lowest-level/#.VUkYNflViko.

⁸⁴ American Forces Press Service, “Coalition Forces Continue to Target Terror Network Members,” U.S. Department of Defense, December 7, 2008, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=52214>.

⁸⁵ “Designation of Kata’ib Hizballah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization,” U.S. Department of State, July 2, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/125582.htm>.

⁸⁶ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

⁸⁷ “Designation of Kata’ib Hizballah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization,” U.S. Department of State, July 2, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/125582.htm>.

⁸⁸ Bill Roggio, “Iraqi forces detain Iranian Revolutionary Guards operative,” *Long War Journal*, October 19, 2009, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/10/iraqi_forces_detain_3.php.

⁸⁹ American Forces Press Service, “Forces Arrest Terrorism Suspects in Iraq,” U.S. Department of Defense, November 9, 2009, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=56606>; American Forces Press Service, “Iraqi Forces, U.S. Advisors Capture Terrorism Suspects,” U.S. Department of Defense, November 20, 2009, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=56803>.

⁹⁰ American Forces Press Service, “Iraqi Forces Arrest 7 Terrorism Suspects,” U.S. Department of Defense, December 23, 2009, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=57242>.

⁹¹ Michael R. Gordon and Andrew W. Lehren, “Leaked Reports Detail Iran’s Aid for Iraqi Militias,” *New York Times*, October 22, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/23/world/middleeast/23iran.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

January 2010: Iraqi forces arrest a suspected Kata'ib Hezbollah member wanted for executing rocket and mortar attacks in Baghdad.⁹²

February 2010: Iraqi forces arrest 22 KH suspects and kill at least five more when U.S. and Iraqi forces clash with KH in a southern Iraqi border town.⁹³

March 2010: On March 18, coalition forces capture a suspected KH operative.⁹⁴

July 2010: U.S. General Ray Odierno warns of an imminent threat posed by KH and says that Iran continues to provide the group with funds, training, weapons, and ammunition.⁹⁵

June 2011: On June 6, an IRAM attack on a U.S. military camp near Baghdad International Airport kills six U.S. soldiers. KH claims responsibility for the attack.⁹⁶ KH also claims responsibility for an IRAM attack that kills three U.S. soldiers at a base on June 29.⁹⁷ June is considered the deadliest month in Iraq for U.S. forces in over two years.⁹⁸ U.S. military officials say that Shiite militias, including Kata'ib Hezbollah, are ramping up attacks in an effort to claim credit for the impending U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq.⁹⁹

July 2011: KH issues a statement threatening Kuwait and the workers who are building a port near Kuwait's border with Iraq.¹⁰⁰

⁹² American Forces Press Service, "Iraqi Forces Arrest 20 Terrorism Suspects," January 13, 2010, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=57489>.

⁹³ American Forces Press Service, "Forces in Iraq Target Iranian-backed Terrorists," U.S. Department of Defense, February 12, 2010, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=57937>; "Five killed as U.S., Iraqi troops raid border village," Reuters, February 12, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/02/12/us-iraq-violence-iran-idUSTRE61B24Y20100212>; Bill Roggio, "Iraqi, US forces kill 10 during clash with Hezbollah Brigades near the Iranian border," *Long War Journal*, February 12, 2010, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/02/iraqi_us_forces_kill.php.

⁹⁴ American Forces Press Service, "Iraqis Arrest Terrorism Suspects," U.S. Department of Defense, March 18, 2010, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=58377>.

⁹⁵ Scott Peterson, "Odierno: Militants trained in Iran prepare to attack US bases in Iraq," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 13, 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0713/Odierno-Militants-trained-in-Iran-prepare-to-attack-US-bases-in-Iraq>; Bill Roggio, "Iranian-backed Shia terror group remains a threat in Iraq: General Odierno," *Long War Journal*, July 13, 2010,

http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/07/iranianbacked_shia_t_1.php; Bill Roggio, "Iran backs three Shia terror groups in Iraq: General Odierno," *Long War Journal*, July 22, 2010, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/07/iran_backs_three_shi.php.

⁹⁶ Jay Solomon, "Iran Funnels New Weapons to Iraq and Afghanistan," *Wall Street Journal*, July 2, 2011, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303763404576420080640167182>.

⁹⁷ Michael Knights, "Shia strength - Iraqi militants adapt to the US drawdown," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, September 30, 2011, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/opeds/4e8b0eba7c0a2.pdf>.

⁹⁸ Jay Solomon, "Iran Funnels New Weapons to Iraq and Afghanistan," *Wall Street Journal*, July 2, 2011, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303763404576420080640167182>.

⁹⁹ Mohammed Tawfeeq and Chelsea J. Carter, "Iraq's self-imposed deadline passes without decision on U.S. troops," CNN, July 25, 2011, <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/07/25/iraq.us.withdrawal/>.

¹⁰⁰ Rafid Fadhil Ali, "Iraq's Kata'ib Hezbollah Seek Greater Popularity through Threats to Kuwaiti Port Development," *Terrorism Monitor* 9, no. 33 (August 19, 2011), http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=38344#.VUtzlVlViko.

October 2012: A Reuters report mentions that Shiite fighters from KH have been traveling to Syria to defend the Assad regime.¹⁰¹

March 2013: After Lebanese Hezbollah, KH becomes the second group to declare it has lost fighters in Syria.¹⁰²

May 2013: Intelligence officials say that Qasem Soleimani, leader of Iran's IRGC Quds Force, has called upon KH and Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) to send several hundred fighters to Syria.¹⁰³ KH and AAH fighters pour into Syria to fight Sunni rebels near Damascus.¹⁰⁴

September 2013: KH publishes a video claiming U.S. agents are attempting to destabilize Iraq.¹⁰⁵ Meanwhile, the Maliki-led Iraqi government talks of combining Shiite militias KH, AAH, and the Mehdi Army into a single force to combat al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI).¹⁰⁶

April 2014: Shiite politicians in Iraq say that members of KH and AAH comprise the majority of Shiite forces helping Iraqi security forces fight al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), which is now called the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). KH and AAH are part of the Sons of Iraq, a year-old paramilitary organization attached to the prime minister's military office and formed by Prime Minister Maliki to combat ISIS.¹⁰⁷

June 2014: Human Rights Watch finds that KH, AAH, and other Shiite militias have carried out "indiscriminate attacks in civilian areas" and have also conducted kidnapping operations and carried out summary executions of Sunnis. These attacks have occurred in the Iraqi towns of Buhriz, Mada'in, al-Heetawy, and others, according to Human Rights Watch's findings.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ Suadad al-Salhy, "Iraqi Shi'ite militants fight for Syria's Assad," Reuters, October 16, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/16/us-syria-crisis-iraq-militias-idUSBRE89F0PX20121016>.

¹⁰² Matthew Levitt and Phillip Smyth, "Kataib al-Imam Ali: Portrait of an Iraqi Shiite Militant Group Fighting ISIS," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 5, 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/kataib-al-imam-ali-portrait-of-an-iraqi-shiite-militant-group-fighting-isis>.

¹⁰³ Michael R. Gordon and Steven Lee Myers, "Iran and Hezbollah Support for Syria Complicates Peace-Talk Strategy," *New York Times*, May 21, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/22/world/middleeast/iran-and-hezbollahs-support-for-syria-complicates-us-strategy-on-peace-talks.html>.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Hegghammer and Aaron Y. Zelin, "How Syria's Civil War Became a Holy Crusade," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, July 7, 2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/how-syrias-civil-war-became-a-holy-crusade>.

¹⁰⁵ Ali Mamouri, "Iraq's Civil Society Under Siege," *Al-Monitor*, October 23, 2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/10/iraq-hostility-civil-society-politics.html>.

¹⁰⁶ Suadad al-Salhy and Sylvia Westall, "Insight: Iraqis hesitate on the edge of chaos," Reuters, September 19, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/19/us-iraq-sectarian-insight-idUSBRE98I0FA20130919>.

¹⁰⁷ Ned Parker, Ahmed Rasheed, and Raheem Salman, "Before Iraq election, Shi'ite militias unleashed in war on Sunni insurgents," Reuters, April 27, 2014, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/04/27/uk-iraq-strife-idUKBREA3Q0FO20140427>.

¹⁰⁸ "Iraq: ISIS Advance Threatens Civilians," Human Rights Watch, June 12, 2014, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/06/12/iraq-isis-advance-threatens-civilians>.

July 25, 2014: KH members mark Iran's anti-Israel holiday known as "Quds Day" by marching on an Israeli flag.¹⁰⁹

September 2014: As the U.S. conducts airstrikes and ramps up its presence of military advisers in the region, KH pledges that it will abandon the battlefield if U.S. forces join in the ground fight against ISIS.¹¹⁰

November 2014: Wounded U.S. veterans and family members of deceased U.S. soldiers sue European banks for processing money from Iran that bankrolled terrorist attacks in Iraq. According to the lawsuit, KH is one of the groups that have allegedly received money from Iran to finance terrorist attacks against U.S. soldiers.¹¹¹

March 21, 2015: Two Iraqi local officials and a police officer accuse KH militants of burning and looting homes in the Iraqi town of al-Dour after capturing it from ISIS. Both a KH spokesman and a security commander in the area deny the claim.¹¹²

March 26, 2015: Protesting the expanded U.S. role in the fight for Tikrit, KH ends its participation in the military campaign to retake the city from ISIS militants.¹¹³ KH military spokesman Jaafar al-Husseini explains, "It is not possible for Kataib Hizbollah or any of the resistance factions to be in the same trench as the Americans."¹¹⁴

March 31, 2015: Kata'ib Hezbollah joins Iraqi federal police and army forces in pushing forward to retake Tikrit from ISIS militants after Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi calls off U.S. airstrikes in the area.¹¹⁵

Early April 2015: Sunnis from liberated Tikrit and its surrounding towns claim that KH militants are responsible for looting and burning Sunni homes. Residents claim that the attacks by KH were motivated by sectarian hatred.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ Reuters, "Iraqi Shi'ite Muslim men from the Iranian-backed group Kataib Hezbollah wave the party's flags during a parade marking the annual Quds Day in Baghdad," Thomson Reuters Foundation, July 25, 2014, <http://www.trust.org/item/20140725110922-1mkl1/>.

¹¹⁰ David D. Kirkpatrick, "Shiite Militias Pose Challenge for U.S. in Iraq," *New York Times*, September 16, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/17/world/middleeast/shiite-militias-pose-challenge-for-us-in-iraq.html?_r=0.

¹¹¹ Alison Frankel, "U.S. veterans sue banks, claim they should pay for Iraq attacks," Reuters, November 10, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/10/us-usa-courts-banking-iran-idUSKCN0IU1Q120141110>.

¹¹² "Iraqi Sunnis accuse Shi'ite paramilitaries of burning homes outside Tikrit," Reuters, March 21, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/22/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MH0R720150322>.

¹¹³ Saif Hameed, "Iraq special forces advance in Tikrit, U.S. coalition joins fight," Reuters, March 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/27/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MM0R220150327>.

¹¹⁴ Saif Hameed, "Iraq special forces advance in Tikrit, U.S. coalition joins fight," Reuters, March 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/27/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MM0R220150327>.

¹¹⁵ Mahdi Talat, "Iraqi forces drive Islamic State out of central Tikrit: PM," Reuters, March 31, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/01/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-tikrit-idUSKBN0MR1G420150401>.

¹¹⁶ Alice Fordham, "After Retaking Iraqi City, Shiite Militias Accused Of Targeting Sunnis," NPR, April 7, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2015/04/07/398004441/after-retaking-tikrit-shiite-militias-accused-of-violence-against-sunnis>.

April 20, 2015: KH publishes a video showing its fighters allegedly unveiling the dead body of Ezzat Ibrahim al-Douri, former aide to Saddam Hussein.¹¹⁷

Violent Activities:

March 2007 - June 2008: KH launches a number of rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and improvised rocket-assisted mortars (IRAMs) at U.S. targets in Iraq.¹¹⁸

February 19, 2008: KH launches an IRAM attack at a U.S. base southeast of Baghdad. The attack by KH kills one U.S. civilian and injures additional coalition force personnel and U.S. civilians.¹¹⁹

May 13, 2008: KH launches an RPG attack on a U.S. tank in northern Baghdad.¹²⁰

June 4, 2008: KH is believed responsible for an attack that kills 18 Iraqi civilians, injures 29, and destroys 19 homes. The attack reportedly was intended to target coalition forces.¹²¹

July 8, 2008: KH claims responsibility for an attack in northern Baghdad that injures one U.S. soldier and an interpreter.¹²²

August 2008: KH films seven attacks on U.S. and coalition forces.¹²³

September 2008: KH continues to target U.S. military bases, coalition and U.S. vehicles, and contractors working with coalition forces.¹²⁴

November 29, 2008: KH launches a rocket attack that kills two U.N. contractors and injures 15 others.¹²⁵

¹¹⁷ "Iraqi Shi'ite militia says DNA tests prove Saddam aide dead," Reuters, April 20, 2015,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/20/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-douri-idUSKBN0NA10T20150420>.

¹¹⁸ "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹¹⁹ "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹²⁰ "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

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¹²² Bill Roggio, "Hezbollah Brigades propaganda specialist captured in Baghdad," *Long War Journal*, July 21, 2008, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/07/hezbollah_brigades_p.php.

¹²³ "Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations," U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

¹²⁴ "Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations," U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

¹²⁵ Katherine Zoepf, "Rocket Kills 2 Contract Workers at U.N. Compound in Baghdad," *New York Times*, November 29, 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/30/world/middleeast/30iraq.html?_r=0; "Kata'ib Hizballah (KH)," GlobalSecurity.org, accessed May 11, 2015, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/kataib-hizballah.htm>.

July 2, 2009: The U.S. Treasury Department designates Kata'ib Hezbollah and its leader, Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes, for having “committed, directed, supported, or posed a significant risk of committing acts of violence against Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces.”¹²⁶ The U.S. State Department notes that in addition to executing attacks against U.S., Iraqi, and coalition forces, KH has threatened the lives of Iraqi politicians, as well as civilians, who support Iraq's political process.¹²⁷

December 2009: On December 23, Iraqi forces arrest three suspected Kata'ib Hezbollah operatives, including one wanted for executing mortar attacks in September.¹²⁸ On December 31, KH carries out a rocket attack in the Green Zone.¹²⁹

July 2010: U.S. General Ray Odierno warns of an imminent threat posed by KH, and says that Iran continues to provide the group with funds, training, weapons, and ammunition.¹³⁰

June 2011: On June 6, an IRAM attack on a U.S. military camp near Baghdad International Airport kills six U.S. soldiers. KH claims responsibility for the attack.¹³¹ KH also claims responsibility for an IRAM attack that kills three U.S. soldiers at a base on June 29.¹³² June is considered the deadliest month in Iraq for U.S. forces in over two years.¹³³ U.S. military officials say that Shiite militias, including Kata'ib Hezbollah, are ramping up attacks in an effort to claim credit for the impending U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq.¹³⁴

July 2011: KH issues a statement threatening Kuwait and the workers who are building a port near Kuwait's border with Iraq.¹³⁵

¹²⁶ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹²⁷ “Designation of Kata'ib Hizballah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization,” U.S. Department of State, July 2, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/125582.htm>.

¹²⁸ American Forces Press Service, “Iraqi Forces Arrest 7 Terrorism Suspects,” U.S. Department of Defense, December 23, 2009, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=57242>.

¹²⁹ Michael R. Gordon and Andrew W. Lehren, “Leaked Reports Detail Iran's Aid for Iraqi Militias,” *New York Times*, October 22, 2010,

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/23/world/middleeast/23iran.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

¹³⁰ Scott Peterson, “Odierno: Militants trained in Iran prepare to attack US bases in Iraq,” *Christian Science Monitor*, July 13, 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0713/Odierno-Militants-trained-in-Iran-prepare-to-attack-US-bases-in-Iraq>; Bill Roggio, “Iranian-backed Shia terror group remains a threat in Iraq: General Odierno,” *Long War Journal*, July 13, 2010,

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terror groups in Iraq: General Odierno,” *Long War Journal*, July 22, 2010,

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¹³¹ Jay Solomon, “Iran Funnels New Weapons to Iraq and Afghanistan,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 2, 2011,

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303763404576420080640167182>.

¹³² Michael Knights, “Shia strength - Iraqi militants adapt to the US drawdown,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy, September 30, 2011, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/opeds/4e8b0eba7c0a2.pdf>.

¹³³ Jay Solomon, “Iran Funnels New Weapons to Iraq and Afghanistan,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 2, 2011,

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303763404576420080640167182>.

¹³⁴ Mohammed Tawfeeq and Chelsea J. Carter, “Iraq's self-imposed deadline passes without decision on U.S. troops,” CNN, July 25, 2011, <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/07/25/iraq.us.withdrawal/>.

¹³⁵ Rafid Fadhil Ali, “Iraq's Kata'ib Hezbollah Seek Greater Popularity through Threats to Kuwaiti Port

Development,” *Terrorism Monitor* 9, no. 33 (August 19, 2011),

http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=38344#.VUtzlVlViko.

October 2012: A Reuters report mentions that Shiite fighters from KH have been traveling to Syria to defend the Assad regime.¹³⁶

February 2013: KH is linked to a February 9 attack on a camp in Iraq hosting Iranian dissidents.¹³⁷

June 2014: Human Rights Watch finds that KH, AAH, and other Shiite militias have carried out “indiscriminate attacks in civilian areas,” and have also conducted kidnapping operations and carried out summary executions of Sunnis. These attacks have occurred in the Iraqi towns of in the towns of Buhriz, Mada’in, al-Heetawy, and others, according to Human Rights Watch’s findings.¹³⁸

March 21, 2015: Two Iraqi local officials and a police officer accuse KH militants of burning and looting homes in the Iraqi town of al-Dour after capturing it from ISIS. Both a KH spokesman and a security commander in the area deny the claim.¹³⁹

Early April 2015: Sunnis from liberated Tikrit and its surrounding towns claim that KH militants are responsible for looting and burning Sunni homes. Residents claim that the attacks by KH were motivated by sectarian hatred.¹⁴⁰

Designations by U.S. Government:

U.S.

July 2, 2009

The U.S. Department of State designated “Kata’ib Hizballah” as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on July 2, 2009.¹⁴¹

U.S.

July 2, 2009

The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated “Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes” as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) on July 2, 2009.¹⁴²

¹³⁶ Suadad al-Salhy, “Iraqi Shi’ite militants fight for Syria’s Assad,” Reuters, October 16, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/16/us-syria-crisis-iraq-militias-idUSBRE89F0PX20121016>.

¹³⁷ Ashish Kumar Sen, “Rocket attack kills 2 Iranian dissidents, wounds dozens in Iraq,” *Washington Times*, June 15, 2013, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/jun/15/rocket-attack-kills-2-iranian-dissidents-wounds-do/?page=all>.

¹³⁸ “Iraq: ISIS Advance Threatens Civilians,” Human Rights Watch, June 12, 2014, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/06/12/iraq-isis-advance-threatens-civilians>.

¹³⁹ “Iraqi Sunnis accuse Shi’ite paramilitaries of burning homes outside Tikrit,” Reuters, March 21, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/22/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MH0R720150322>.

¹⁴⁰ Alice Fordham, “After Retaking Iraqi City, Shiite Militias Accused Of Targeting Sunnis,” NPR, April 7, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2015/04/07/398004441/after-retaking-tikrit-shiite-militias-accused-of-violence-against-sunnis>.

¹⁴¹ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

Designations by Foreign Governments:

United Arab Emirates

November 2014

The United Arab Emirates designated “Hizbollah Brigades in Iraq” as a terrorist organization in November 2014.¹⁴³

Associations:

Ties to Extremist Entities:

Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH): Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH), Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), and the Badr Organization are considered “Iran’s three big Iraqi militias.”¹⁴⁴ All three groups are part of the Haashid Shaabi, an umbrella organization of Shiite militias also called the popular mobilization forces (PMF). As of April 2014, KH and AAH were making up the bulk of Shiite militia forces aiding the Iraqi security forces (ISF) in combatting Sunni extremists. At the time, KH and AAH members were, according to senior Shiite politicians, defending the country as part of an organization called the Sons of Iraq, a group reportedly attached to the prime minister’s military office.¹⁴⁵ Members of both AAH and KH have been trained in Iranian training camps. The two groups have similarly recruited Iraqis to fight in Syria, allegedly at the behest of IRGC Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani.¹⁴⁶

Badr Organization: Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes, the leader of KH, joined the Badr Organization’s predecessor, the Badr Corps, in 1985. By 2001, he had risen to become one of the deputy commanders of the Badr Corps.¹⁴⁷ Al-Mohandes’s connection to the Badr Corps is not unique. According to U.S. intelligence officers, the majority of KH’s members as of 2010 had served in the Badr Corps before 2003.¹⁴⁸ The connection between KH and the Badr Organization (so renamed in 2003) has continued. In early 2013, KH and the Badr Organization formed Kataib Sayyid al-Shuhada (KSS or “The

¹⁴² “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹⁴³ “List of groups designated terrorist organisations by the UAE,” *National* (Abu Dhabi), November 16, 2014, <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/government/list-of-groups-designated-terrorist-organisations-by-the-uae>.

¹⁴⁴ Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

¹⁴⁵ Reuters, “Sectarian Strife Threatens Iraq Ahead of Election,” *New York Times*, April 27, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2014/04/27/world/middleeast/27reuters-iraq-strife.html?_r=0.

¹⁴⁶ Ned Parker and Raheem Salman, “In defense of Baghdad, Iraq turns to Shi’ite militias,” Reuters, June 14, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/14/us-iraq-security-volunteers-idUSKBN0EP00920140614>; Michael R. Gordon and Steven Lee Myers, “Iran and Hezbollah Support for Syria Complicates Peace-Talk Strategy,” *New York Times*, May 21, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/22/world/middleeast/iran-and-hezbollahs-support-for-syria-complicates-us-strategy-on-peace-talks.html>.

¹⁴⁷ Michael Knights, “The Evolution of Iran’s Special Groups in Iraq,” Combatting Terrorism Center, November 1, 2010, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>.

¹⁴⁸ Michael Knights, “Shia strength - Iraqi militants adapt to the US drawdown,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy, September 30, 2011, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/opeds/4e8b0eba7c0a2.pdf>.

Master of the Martyrs Brigade”) to fight in Syria.¹⁴⁹ Further, while KH does not affiliate with any one political party in Iraq, the group is reported to have a “familial” relationship with political figures within the Badr Organization, according to a RAND Corporation report.¹⁵⁰ KH and the Badr Organization, along with Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) comprise “Iran’s three big Iraqi militias,” according to Reuters.¹⁵¹ All three groups are part of the Haashid Shaabi, an umbrella organization of Shiite militias also called the popular mobilization forces (PMF).

Hezbollah (Lebanon): While Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) and Lebanese Hezbollah share a name, the two Iranian proxies operate independently. KH has ideological ties to Lebanese Hezbollah and may have received support from the latter group, according to the U.S. State Department.¹⁵² In particular, KH has developed especially close ties with Unit 3800, the wing of Lebanese Hezbollah devoted to arming and training Iraqi Shiite militias.¹⁵³ The U.S. State Department wrote in 2010 that KH is suspected to receive its aid from Iran through its Lebanese Hezbollah proxy.¹⁵⁴ The U.S. Treasury Department wrote more explicitly in 2008 that KH had been receiving weapons training and support from Lebanese Hezbollah.¹⁵⁵

As described in a report by the RAND Corporation, “Kata’ib Hezbollah, like Lebanese Hezbollah, is used as a tool to ‘export the Islamic revolution’ as practiced in Tehran.”¹⁵⁶ According to 70 USF-I staff officers, KH, like Lebanese Hezbollah, “should be considered a direct action arm of the Quds Force.”¹⁵⁷

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC): Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) formed KH in 2006 or early 2007, during the U.S.-led war in Iraq.¹⁵⁸ As of

¹⁴⁹ Phillip Smyth, “All the Ayatollah’s Men,” *Foreign Policy*, September 18, 2014, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/09/18/all-the-ayatollahs-men/>.

¹⁵⁰ Richard R. Brennan et al., eds., *Ending the U.S. War in Iraq: the Final Transition, Operational Maneuver, and Disestablishment of United States Forces-Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 139, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR232/RAND_RR232.pdf.

¹⁵¹ Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

¹⁵² “Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations,” U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

¹⁵³ Matthew Levitt and Phillip Smyth, “Kataib al-Imam Ali: Portrait of an Iraqi Shiite Militant Group Fighting ISIS,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 5, 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/kataib-al-imam-ali-portrait-of-an-iraqi-shiite-militant-group-fighting-isis>.

¹⁵⁴ “Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations,” U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

¹⁵⁵ “Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>.

¹⁵⁶ Richard R. Brennan et al., eds., *Ending the U.S. War in Iraq: the Final Transition, Operational Maneuver, and Disestablishment of United States Forces-Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 139, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR232/RAND_RR232.pdf.

¹⁵⁷ Richard R. Brennan et al., eds., *Ending the U.S. War in Iraq: the Final Transition, Operational Maneuver, and Disestablishment of United States Forces-Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 140, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR232/RAND_RR232.pdf.

¹⁵⁸ Farnaz Fassihi, Jay Solomon, and Sam Dagher, “Iranians Dial Up Presence in Syria,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 16, 2013, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323864604579067382861808984>; “Country Reports on Terrorism 2009: Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations,” U.S. Department of State, August 5, 2010,

2008, KH was being funded, trained, and controlled by the IRGC.¹⁵⁹ In September 2010, Michael Knights of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy wrote that the interaction between KH and the IRGC goes both ways, as KH leader Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes has acted not only as the head of his militia, but as an adviser to Iran's military envoy to Iraq, IRGC Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani.¹⁶⁰ Soleimani reportedly oversees the three main Shiite militias in Iraq – KH, the Badr Organization, and AAH.¹⁶¹ The IRGC's Quds Force is charged with spreading Iran's Islamist ideology and system of governance beyond the country's borders.¹⁶² In al-Mohandes's first press conference in January 2015, he described himself as a military commander and "defector" from the IRGC.¹⁶³

Ties to Extremist Individuals:

Bashar al-Assad: KH has sent fighters to defend the Assad regime in Syria, allegedly at the behest of IRGC-Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani.¹⁶⁴ In March 2013, KH became the second group to declare it has lost fighters in Syria, although the group had begun recruiting and sending fighters to defend the Assad regime in Syria long before.¹⁶⁵ As of January 2015, KH claims to have lost around forty fighters in total to the war in Syria. The group has even built a new martyrs section in Najaf's Wadi al-Salam cemetery devoted to these fighters. In support of Assad's regime, KH has also helped build Syria-based Shiite militias such as Liwa Abu Fadl al-Abbas (LAFA).¹⁶⁶

Qasem Soleimani: KH leader Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes works closely with the commander of Iran's IRGC Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani. In September 2010, Michael

<http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>; Michael Knights, "The Evolution of Iran's Special Groups in Iraq," Combatting Terrorism Center, November 1, 2010, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>.

¹⁵⁹ "Treasury Designates Individual, Entity Posing Threat to Stability in Iraq," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 2, 2009, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg195.aspx>; Michael Knights, "The Evolution of Iran's Special Groups in Iraq," Combatting Terrorism Center, November 1, 2010,

<https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>.

¹⁶⁰ Michael Knights, "The Evolution of Iran's Special Groups in Iraq," Combatting Terrorism Center, November 1, 2010, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>.

¹⁶¹ Babak Dehghanpisheh, "Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran," Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

¹⁶² Martin Chulov, "Qais al-Khazali: from kidnapper and prisoner to potential leader," *Guardian* (London), December 31, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/dec/31/iran-hostages-qais-al-khazali>.

¹⁶³ Othman al-Mukhtar, "Fugitive from international justice now militia leader in Iraq," al-Araby al-Jadeed, January 4, 2015, <http://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/politics/2015/1/4/fugitive-from-international-justice-now-militia-leader-in-iraq#sthash.Cmu7vyP5.dpuf>.

¹⁶⁴ Michael R. Gordon and Steven Lee Myers, "Iran and Hezbollah Support for Syria Complicates Peace-Talk Strategy," *New York Times*, May 21, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/22/world/middleeast/iran-and-hezbollahs-support-for-syria-complicates-us-strategy-on-peace-talks.html>; Suadad al-Salhy, "Iraqi Shi'ite militants fight for Syria's Assad," Reuters, October 16, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/16/us-syria-crisis-iraq-militias-idUSBRE89F0PX20121016>.

¹⁶⁵ Suadad al-Salhy, "Iraqi Shi'ite militants fight for Syria's Assad," Reuters, October 16, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/16/us-syria-crisis-iraq-militias-idUSBRE89F0PX20121016>.

¹⁶⁶ Matthew Levitt and Phillip Smyth, "Kataib al-Imam Ali: Portrait of an Iraqi Shiite Militant Group Fighting ISIS," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 5, 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/kataib-al-imam-ali-portrait-of-an-iraqi-shiite-militant-group-fighting-isis>.

Knights of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy wrote that al-Mohandes acts not only as the head of his militia, but as an adviser to Soleimani.¹⁶⁷ In his post as commander of the Quds Force, Soleimani has reportedly overseen military operations for the three main Shiite militias in Iraq – KH, the Badr Organization, and AAH.¹⁶⁸ U.S. diplomat Ali Khedery has confirmed Soleimani’s strong connection with KH leader Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes in particular. According to Khedery, “I heard from Sunni, Shiite, Kurdish officials and virtually all of them told me that the real prime minister of [Iraq] is Qasem Soleimani and his deputy is Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis.”¹⁶⁹

Rhetoric:

Jaafar al-Husseini, KH military spokesman, March 2015

“It is not possible for Kataib Hezbollah or any of the resistance factions to be in the same trench as the Americans.”¹⁷⁰

Anti-American

KH Website, September 2014

“We will not fight alongside the American troops under any kind of conditions whatsoever. [Our only contact with Americans will be] if we fight each other.”¹⁷¹

Anti-American

Jassim al-Saidi, KH commander, December 2014

“Iran never left Iraq. This very close relationship has made Iran support Iraq all they can.”¹⁷²

Pro-Iranian Regime

Raad Al Kafaji, KH commander, November 2014

“[D]on’t forget there is a big difference between Hezbollah in Iran and Hezbollah in Iraq. Philosophically, we have the same enemy – Daish (ISIS) and Israel – but we are fighting here for justice.”¹⁷³

Anti-Israel

Anonymous KH member, July 2014

¹⁶⁷ Michael Knights, “The Evolution of Iran’s Special Groups in Iraq,” Combatting Terrorism Center, November 1, 2010, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-evolution-of-iran%E2%80%99s-special-groups-in-iraq>.

¹⁶⁸ Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112>.

¹⁶⁹ Michael Weiss and Michael Pregent, “The U.S. Is Providing Air Cover for Ethnic Cleansing in Iraq,” *Foreign Policy*, March 28, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/28/the-united-states-is-providing-air-cover-for-ethnic-cleansing-in-iraq-shiite-militias-isis/>.

¹⁷⁰ Saif Hameed, “Iraq special forces advance in Tikrit, U.S. coalition joins fight,” Reuters, March 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/27/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0MMOR220150327>.

¹⁷¹ David D. Kirkpatrick, “Shiite Militias Pose Challenge for U.S. in Iraq,” *New York Times*, September 16, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/17/world/middleeast/shiite-militias-pose-challenge-for-us-in-iraq.html>.

¹⁷² Missy Ryan and Loveday Morris, “The U.S. and Iran are aligned in Iraq against the Islamic State — for now,” *Washington Post*, December 27, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/the-us-and-iran-are-aligned-in-iraq-against-the-islamic-state--for-now/2014/12/27/353a748c-8d0d-11e4-a085-34e9b9f09a58_story.html.

¹⁷³ Janine di Giovanni, “Nemesis: The Shadowy Iranian Training Shia Militias in Iraq,” *Newsweek*, November 27, 2014, <http://europe.newsweek.com/nemesis-shadowy-iranian-training-shia-militias-iraq-287610>.

“I was surprised how young these [KH recruits] were. They didn’t know how to load a magazine or shoot their gun. I asked and they told me they were born in 1997 and 1998 [16- and 17-year-olds].”¹⁷⁴

Pro-Child Soldiers

KH Website, September 2011

“When the [U.S.] occupation gets out of the country with his agents, the Iraqi nation will be unified. Whoever calls for keeping the occupation is linking his destiny with the occupation and has sold himself as cheap, and he should leave the country with his masters.”¹⁷⁵

Anti-American

¹⁷⁴ Maggie Fick, “Underage fighters drawn into Iraq sectarian war,” Reuters, July 11, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/11/us-iraq-security-teenagers-insight-idUSKBN0FG1UG20140711>.

¹⁷⁵ Associated Press, “Iraqi cleric: Don’t attack U.S. troops,” *Politico*, September 11, 2011, <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0911/63169.html>.