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USDOS – US Department of State

COUNTRY REPORT ON TERRORISM 2017 - CHAPTER 5 - KATA'IB HIZBALLAH

aka Hizballah Brigades; Hizballah Brigades in Iraq; Hizballah Brigades-Iraq; Kata'ib Hezbollah; Khata'ib Hezbollah; Khata'ib Hizballah; Khattab Hezbollah; Hizballah Brigades-Iraq of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq; Islamic Resistance in Iraq; Kata'ib Hizballah Fi al-Iraq; Katibat Abu Fathel al-A'abas; Katibat Zayd Ebin Ali; Katibut Karbalah

Description: Formed in 2006 and designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on July 2, 2009, Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) is an anti-Western Shia group with a terrorist ideology. Prior to the withdrawal of U.S. troops in 2011, the group conducted attacks against Iraqi, U.S., and Coalition targets in Iraq, and threatened the lives of Iraqi politicians and civilians supporting the legitimate political process in Iraq. The group is notable for its extensive use of media operations and propaganda, including filming and releasing videos of attacks. KH has ideological ties to and receives support from Iran.

Activities: KH has claimed responsibility for numerous terrorist attacks since 2007, including improvised explosive device bombings, rocket-propelled grenade attacks, and sniper operations. In 2007, KH gained notoriety for its attacks against U.S. and Coalition Forces in Iraq. In June 2011, five U.S. soldiers were killed in Baghdad when KH assailants fired multiple rockets at U.S. military base, Camp Victory. The group remained active in 2015, participating in fighting in Syria in support of the Assad regime, and in Iraq against ISIS. In June and July 2015, the group broadcast its recruitment contact information and an appeal for donations on a pro-Iran channel and on YouTube in an effort to recruit fighters to Syria and Iraq.

In 2016, KH continued to fight ISIS alongside the Iraqi Army and participated in the operation to liberate Mosul, though they were only active outside the city. In 2017, the group threatened to fight "American occupiers" in Iraq, in an article published on the group's official website.

Strength: Exact membership numbers are unknown. Estimates range from 1,000 to the group's claim of 30,000 fighters

Location/Area of Operation: Predominately Iraq-based, but the group also fights alongside pro-Assad regime forces in Syria.

Funding and External Aid: KH is heavily dependent on support from Iran.