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Iran-backed Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, Kata'ib Hizballah, and Harakat al-Nujaba — all U.S.-designated terrorist organizations — and other Iran-backed Iraqi militias continued to maintain an active presence in Iraq targeting U.S., Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and Iraqi forces and logistics convoys. These groups claimed responsibility for multiple attacks on U.S. interests, including Embassy Baghdad, throughout the year. Terrorists conducted more than 100 IED attacks on Defeat-ISIS-contracted convoys and launched at least 40 indirect fire attacks against U.S. interests in Iraq. Iran-aligned militias launched several drone and rocket attacks against Erbil Air Base during the year and killed a U.S. contractor with a rocket attack in February.

While ISIS has been defeated territorially and its leadership ranks have been significantly degraded, the group remains a serious threat to the stability of Iraq and to U.S. and Defeat-ISIS Coalition interests in the region. Methods of attack included bombings, indirect fire, IEDs, sniper fire, and ambushes. ISIS fighters continue to wage a low-level insurgency in northern and central Iraq, seeking to regain territory while also endorsing violence abroad through ISIS's branches and networks and inspiring lone-actor attacks. Supported by the 85-member Defeat-ISIS Coalition, the Government of Iraq maintained nominal control of the territory retaken from ISIS. ISIS continued to carry out assassinations, as well as suicide, hit-and-run, and other asymmetric attacks throughout the country. The United States continued to engage with Iraqi government officials, including officials in the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, to deny ISIS access to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials, including in areas with reduced government regulatory control over and/or law enforcement access to CBRN facilities and enterprises. The United States worked to strengthen the expertise and ability of Iraq's government, academic institutions, and private sector to secure weaponizable chemical and biological materials and to detect, disrupt, and respond effectively to suspected CBRN activity. The United States and Iraq also maintain a bilateral partnership to counter nuclear smuggling under the framework of the 2014 Joint Action Plan on Combating Nuclear and Radioactive Materials Smuggling.