

Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba (The Movement of the Noble of Hezbollah)



Logo: Raised fist with AK-47 on yellow field, similar to Hezbollah banner

Flag Text: Above rifle: “And strive in His cause as ye ought to strive. He has chosen you” (Quran 22:78); middle: “Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba”

FOUNDING

- 2013

KEY LEADERS

- Secretary General Akram al-Kaabi
- Spokesman Hashim al-Mousawi

SIZE

- Claims 10,000 overall
- Claims 1,500-3,000 deployed to Syria

IDEOLOGICAL ALLEGIANCE

- Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Sadeq al-Sadr (d. 1999)

POLITICAL WING

- None

WEAPONS

- Has publicized its use of U.S.-made vehicles such as MRAPs, HUMVEEs, and M113 armored personnel carriers in Iraq; has access to Iranian and Soviet-era weapons and vehicles

ATROCITIES

- Accused by UN of killing over 60 civilians in Aleppo in December 2016

LEGAL STATUS IN IRAQ

- 12th Brigade of the Popular Mobilization Forces

AREAS OF OPERATION

- Focused on Syria, where it has fought in the vicinity of Aleppo, Hama, and Deir al-Zour; in Iraq, it has claimed operations in Ninewa, Salahuddin, and Anbar provinces.

CONNECTIONS TO OTHER MILITIAS

- Kaabi previously a senior figure in Asaib Ahl al-Haq
- Kataib Hezbollah helped to create Nujaba

CURRENT DESIGNATIONS

- Kaabi is designated as a terrorist pursuant to E.O. 13438; Nujaba a proposed target of terrorism sanctions under House bill H.R. 4238

SOCIAL MEDIA

- www.alnujaba.com, www.alnujaba.tv, previously used Facebook



BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba openly declares its loyalty to the leaders of Iran and their revolutionary ideology. Nujaba Secretary General Akram al-Kaabi has said he would overthrow the Iraqi government if ordered to do so by Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.¹ Kaabi was previously a leading figure in Asaib Ahl al-Haq, another Iranian proxy force. The U.S. designated him as a terrorist in 2008, a fact of which he claims to be “proud.”

After leaving Asaib in 2012, Kaabi founded Nujaba with Iranian support for the purpose of mobilizing Iraqi militants to fight in Syria. While many Iraqi Shiites returned home from Syria to fight the Islamic State in 2014, Nujaba continued its deployments in Syria and became one of the largest Iraqi contingents.

In 2015, Nujaba published a photograph on its Facebook page showing Kaabi near Aleppo with IRGC-Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani.²

In 2016, Nujaba participated in the reconquest of Aleppo. Around that time, Kaabi had told Iranian media that the militia had 3,000 fighters in Syria.³ According to the UN, Nujaba and Syrian troops in Aleppo shot dead scores of civilians, including women and children.⁴ Also in 2016, Kaabi met with Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and declared their two organizations to be “twins of the resistance.”⁵ In 2017, Nujaba fought in both eastern Damascus and in Hama, as well as fighting the Islamic State in Iraq.⁶ It has announced the formation of a “Golan Liberation Brigade” and has vowed to support Hezbollah in a future war against Israel.⁷

1. Bill Roggio and Caleb Weiss, “Iraqi Shiite militia leader says he would overthrow government if ordered by Iran’s supreme leader,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, November 12, 2015. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/11/us-designated-terrorist-of-iraqi-militia-reportedly-in-aleppo.php>)

2. Bill Roggio and Caleb Weiss, “Qods Force commander spotted with US-designated terrorist in Aleppo,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, November 16, 2015. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/11/qods-force-commander-spotted-with-us-designated-terrorist-in-aleppo.php>)

3. Amir Toumaj, “Iraqi militia leader receives warm reception in Tehran,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, September 9, 2016. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/09/iraqi-militia-leader-receives-warm-reception-in-tehran.php>)

4. Stephanie Nebehay and Tome Miles, “Syrian army, Iraqi militia accused of ‘slaughter’ of civilians in Aleppo,” *Reuters*, December 13, 2016. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-un/syrian-army-iraqi-militia-accused-of-slaughter-of-civilians-in-aleppo-idUSKBN1420ZX>)

5. Bill Roggio and David Daoud, “‘Hezbollah and Harakat al Nujaba are the twins of resistance,’ Iraqi militia spokesman says,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, March 18, 2016. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/03/hezbollah-and-harakat-al-nujaba-are-the-twins-of-resistance-iraqi-militia-spokesman-says.php>)

6. Amir Toumaj, “IRGC-controlled Iraqi militia deploys to eastern Damascus battle,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, March 23, 2017. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/03/irgc-controlled-iraqi-militia-deploys-to-eastern-damascus-battle.php>); Amir Toumaj, “Assad regime bolstered in Hama province by Iranian-controlled Iraqi militia,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, March 24, 2017. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/03/assad-regime-bolstered-in-hama-province-by-iranian-controlled-iraqi-militia.php>)

7. Amir Toumaj, “IRGC-controlled Iraqi militia forms ‘Golan Liberation Brigade,’” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, March 12, 2017. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/03/irgc-controlled-iraqi-militia-forms-golan-liberation-brigade.php>)