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Iraqi National Arrested and Charged with Providing Material Support to Iranian-Backed Terrorist Organizations and Directing Attacks Targeting U.S. Citizens and Interests

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department announced today the arrest of Mohammad Baqer Saad Dawood Al-Saadi, an Iraqi national and senior member of Kata'ib Hizballah, a U.S. designated foreign terrorist organization (FTO). Al-Saadi was charged by complaint with six counts of terrorism-related offenses for his activities as an operative of Kata'ib Hizballah and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), including his involvement in nearly 20 attacks and attempted attacks throughout Europe and the United States. Al-Saadi was arrested on the charges contained in the complaint, which was unsealed today, transferred into U.S. custody overseas, and transported to the United States. Al-Saadi was presented earlier today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Sarah Netburn in Manhattan federal court and ordered detained pending trial.

“Thanks to the dedication and vigilance of law enforcement, this alleged terrorist commander is now in U.S. custody,” said Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche. “As alleged in the complaint, Al-Saadi directed and urged others to attack U.S. and Israeli interests and to kill Americans and Jews in the U.S. and abroad, and in doing so advance the terrorist goals of Kata'ib Hizballah and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. These charges show American law enforcement will never let such evil go unchecked and will use all tools to disrupt and dismantle foreign terrorist organizations and their leaders.”

“The FBI's successful FTOC of Mohammad Al-Saadi, another high-value target responsible for mass global terrorism, is just the latest success in this administration's historic work to bring terrorists to justice,” said FBI Director Kash Patel. “This was a righteous mission executed brilliantly by our agents, investigators, CIRG tactical units and interagency partners who delivered yet again. We are greatly appreciative of the work of our allies around the world—especially to Ambassador Tom Barrack, who led this joint sequenced operation and has been instrumental in bringing this successful mission home to the United States.”

“As alleged, Al-Saadi coordinated a wave of attacks across Europe, including bombings, arson, and assaults targeting American communities and interests,” said Assistant Attorney General for National Security John A. Eisenberg. “The complaint further alleges that Al-Saadi discussed attacking locations in New York, California, and

Arizona and presented a serious threat to our national security. We will continue to work closely with international partners to hold terrorists accountable in U.S. courts.”

“Mohammad Baqer Saad Dawood Al-Saadi, a commander for the terrorist organization, Kata’ib Hizballah, faces serious charges for his role in numerous attacks against U.S. interests across the globe, including his efforts to kill on U.S. soil,” said U.S. Attorney Jay Clayton for the Southern District of New York. “As alleged, for years, Al-Saadi committed himself to furthering the terrorist goals of Kata’ib Hizballah and the IRGC, two terrorist organizations dedicated to harming the United States and its allies. More recently, Al-Saadi attempted to carry out attacks in the United States, including in New York City. Al-Saadi attempted to disrupt American society through intimidation and violence. In a righteous and just contrast, his prosecution will highlight the best of our country. Those who engage in or support terrorism against Americans and on U.S. soil should take note: the whole of the federal government is committed to dismantling terrorist organizations and bringing their members to justice. I commend our law enforcement partners for their outstanding investigative work resulting in the arrest of Al-Saadi, who will now face justice in a U.S. court.”

“In the span of just three months, Mohammad Al-Saadi allegedly directed 18 terrorist attacks throughout Europe—including against United States citizens and interests—and planned to conduct a similar attack here in our country,” said FBI Assistant Director in Charge James C. Barnacle, Jr. “The FBI New York’s Joint Terrorism Task Force maintains its unwavering resolve to hold accountable leaders of foreign terrorist organizations who utilize mass fear and suffering to further their anti-American agenda.”

“This case puts into stark relief the global threats posed by the Iranian regime and its proxies like Kata’ib Hizballah—Foreign Terrorist Organizations that have repeatedly targeted Jewish communities across Europe and the United States since the war began,” said NYPD Commissioner Jessica S. Tisch. “Working with our law enforcement partners, we disrupted a plot against a Manhattan synagogue, and in partnership with the synagogue’s leadership, ensured its security when the threat was elevated. The NYPD’s work in this case, from officers assigned to the JTTF, to intelligence analysis provided through our international liaison program, helped protect the streets of our city. The NYPD has the most robust municipal counterterrorism and intelligence capacity of any city in the world, which is only strengthened by our partnership with federal agencies on cases like this one.”

Al-Saadi is a commander for Kata’ib Hizballah, a U.S. designated FTO operating in Iraq that is closely aligned with the IRGC. The IRGC, which is also a U.S. designated FTO, is an Iranian military and counterintelligence agency that operates under the authority of Iran’s Supreme Leader. The IRGC has publicly stated its desire and intention to conduct operations targeting those perceived to be enemies of the Iranian regime, and it has plotted and conducted attack operations targeting, among others, U.S. citizens residing abroad and in the United States, including attacks that resulted in the deaths of U.S. citizens. Iran and the IRGC use other terrorist and paramilitary proxies in the region to take lethal action and to carry out operations against the United States and its allies. These proxies include Kata’ib Hizballah, which has received

extensive training, funding, logistical support, weapons, and intelligence from the IRGC's external operations force, the IRGC Qods Force (IRGC-QF).

As alleged in the complaint, Al-Saadi worked closely with Qasem Soleimani, the longtime commander of the IRGC-QF who was killed during a U.S. airstrike in or about 2020, as well as Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who was the leader of Kata'ib Hizballah until he was killed in the same airstrike that killed Soleimani. Below are photographs from one of Al-Saadi's social media accounts of Al-Saadi with Soleimani, including at a military-related facility:



Al-Saadi with Soleimani



Al-Saadi with Soleimani

In addition, as alleged, Al-Saadi has called on others to attack and kill Americans, including in retribution for Soleimani's and al-Muhandis's deaths. On or about July 2, 2020, for example, Al-Saadi published on one of his social media accounts the following image of the U.S. capitol in rubble projected against the faces of Soleimani and al-Muhandis, with the text "our revenge for the martyred leaders is ongoing. No negotiations with the occupier."



In recent months, Al-Saadi has also allegedly directed and urged others to attack U.S. and Israeli interests, including by killing Americans and Jews, to further the terrorist goals of Kata'ib Hizballah and the IRGC. In or about February 2026, for example, Al-Saadi posted on one of his social media accounts a message in Arabic, which read in part, “Do not abandon the blood of your Imam of the time, oh Shiites of Iraq. Kill everyone who supports America and Israel. Do not leave any of them remaining. Civil and military targets, as well as voices of discord, kill them everywhere.”

As alleged, over the last several months, Al-Saadi and his associates have planned, coordinated, and claimed responsibility for at least 18 terrorist attacks in Europe (the “European Terrorist Attacks”), as well as two additional attacks in Canada, in the name of Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya, a component of Kata'ib Hizballah. On or about March 9, 2026—the day of the first of the European Terrorist Attacks—Al-Saadi posted on one of his social media accounts a message calling on “warriors of Islam” to engage in “jihad,” or violent holy war. From that point on, Al-Saadi and his associates allegedly have carried out attacks against U.S. interests. Al-Saadi and Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya have also published videos of the attacks.

For example, on or about March 15, 2026, individuals carried out an attack involving explosives against the Bank of New York Mellon, an American bank, in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The next day, on or about March 16, 2026, AL-SAAD I posted a propaganda video of the attack, in which Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya claimed responsibility for the attack. The video also showed aspects of the attack planning, including maps of the location of where the attack would be and a message which read: “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful This is the Final Warning[.] To all the peoples of the world, especially in the European Union, Immediately distance yourselves [] from all American and Zionist interests, facilities, and what is affiliated with them.”

Similar attacks continued in or about March and April 2026, accompanied by videos allegedly published by Al-Saadi in which Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya claimed responsibility for the attacks. In one such attack, on or about April 12, 2026, an arson was allegedly committed against a synagogue in Skopje, North Macedonia. On or about April 16, 2026, Al-Saadi posted a video showing the site of that attack with a red target

symbol and surveillance footage of the synagogue on fire, as depicted in the screenshots below with the logo of Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya in the upper right corner of the images (circled in red):



In another attack, on or about April 29, 2026, two Jewish men—including a dual U.S.-British citizen—were stabbed and seriously injured in London, United Kingdom.

In addition, in or about April and May 2026, Al-Saadi, on behalf of Kata'ib Hizballah and the IRGC, allegedly attempted to coordinate and carry out terrorist attacks to kill individuals in the United States, including by targeting Jewish institutions in New York, New York, and elsewhere. On or about April 3, 2026, Al-Saadi spoke to an undercover law enforcement officer (“UC-1”) whom Al-Saadi believed could carry out attacks in the United States. That day, Al-Saadi texted UC-1 photographs and maps showing the exact location of a prominent Jewish synagogue located in New York, New York (the “New York Synagogue”), as well as two additional U.S.-based Jewish institutions in Los Angeles, California, and Scottsdale, Arizona, respectively, and directed UC-1 to carry out terrorist attacks against those targets. Al-Saadi also spoke on the phone with UC-1, and discussed with UC-1, with respect to the New York Synagogue, whether UC-1 would use an improvised explosive device or “set the place on fire.” Fortunately, no such attacks occurred at the time.

Al-Saadi, 32, of Iraq, has been charged with: (i) conspiring to provide material support to Kata'ib Hizballah, a foreign terrorist organization, which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison; (ii) conspiring to provide material support to the IRGC, a foreign terrorist organization, which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison; (iii) conspiring to provide material support for acts of terrorism of attempting and conspiring to murder nationals of the United States, and bombing and conspiring to bomb a place of public use, which carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison; (iv) providing material support for acts of terrorism, which carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison; (v) conspiring to bomb a place of public use, which carries a maximum penalty of life in prison; and (vi) attempted destruction of property by means of fire or explosive, which carries a mandatory minimum term of five years in prison and a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.

The statutory maximum and mandatory minimum penalties are prescribed by Congress and provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by a judge.

The case was investigated by FBI's New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, which consists of investigators and analysts from the FBI, the NYPD, and over 50 other federal, state, and local agencies, and the FBI Washington Field Office, Counterterrorism Division, and with the assistance of the Department of Justice's National Security Division, Counterterrorism Section, the Office of International Affairs of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the NYPD, and the New York State Police.

This prosecution is being handled by the Office's National Security and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeffrey W. Coyle and Sarah L. Kushner are in charge of the prosecution, with assistance from Trial Attorneys Paul Casey and James Donnelly of the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice's National Security Division.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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