Saraya Awliya al-Dam (SAD) is a minor façade group with probable links to Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), used by AAH to occasionally claim bombing attacks on U.S. supply convoys and rocket attacks on the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

**Name:** Saraya Awliya al-Dam (SAD), (Companies of the Guardians of Blood).

**Type of Movement:** Facade group. Kinetic military operations. Domestic
counter-U.S. operations.

**History and objectives:**

- Minor facade group.
- SAD appeared in August 2020, and claimed an attack on a convoy of Iraqi trucks allegedly carrying U.S. goods that took place on August 24 with a dramatic video posted to its own channel. The group also claimed a convoy attack on September 7 via a branded statement posted on Sabereen news on September 8.
- Between October 2020 and January 2021 the group went defunct. Then on January 26, 2021 Sabereen posted claims that the group had again targeted U.S. convoys. This occurred again on February 2 (this time accompanied by a branded statement).
- In the early hours of February 16, 2021, Sabereen broke the news that Saraya Awliya al-Dam was claiming the rocket attack on coalition forces in Erbil, (comprising 14 rockets). One minute later the Sabereen account posted the 133 word statement purported to be from Saraya Awliya al-Dam claiming the attack. An official “branded” statement by Saraya Awliya al-Dam was posted later on February 16, again by Sabereen. Kurdish intelligence later extracted confessions from individuals who claimed to belong to Kataib Sayyed al-Shuhada. The U.S. government has stated that it believes KSS and KH carried out the Erbil attack.

**Chain of Command:**

- Preponderance of the evidence shows links to Asaib Ahl al-Haq (based on analysis of media linkages between SAD and AAH-run channels).
- Preponderance of the evidence shows links to KSS and KH (in light of these groups’ apparent involvement in the Erbil attack).

**Affiliate relationships:**

- Sabereen News.
- Asaib Ahl al-Haq. While Sabereen and other major AAH affiliated channels have mentioned Saraya Awliya al-Dam by name many times, prominent KH “insider” online channels such as Unit 10,000, Kaf, Kyan KF, and others have not once mentioned the group by name. This, despite SAD’s high profile claims following February 2021 rocket attack on Erbil.

**Subordinate elements:**

- SAD has a media channel on telegram that does appear to be “official.” However, the channel is not influential, having only posted four statements and one attack video between August 2020 and March 2021. The majority of SAD’s claims and statements are published by Sabereen, which has a vastly larger audience.
Militia Spotlight: Profiles

How to Use Militia Spotlight: Profiles

Profile: Saraya Awliya al-Dam

Profile: Qasem al-Jabbarin

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BRIEF ANALYSIS

Profile: Ahd Allah Islamic Movement

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